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# HEGEMONY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE G8-BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA PARTNERSHIP FROM 2004-2013

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**HEGEMONY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD:  
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE G8-BROADER MIDDLE EAST  
AND NORTH AFRICA PARTNERSHIP FROM 2004-2013**

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DISSERTATION

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**December 2016**

## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my father who I would not have done anything in my life without his support. He was a great man who came ahead of his time. His passing is a lifelong pain and agony; may he rest in peace!

This accomplishment is dedicated to my mother, who I love dearly, and also to my lovely wife. I also recognize my brothers and sisters whom I appreciate their support, especially my brother Ali who was there for me in health and sickness. I also appreciate the support and encouragement of my friends.

**Hegemony in a Globalized World:**  
**A Critical Discourse Analysis of the G8-Broader Middle East and North Africa**  
**Partnership from 2004-2013**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study addresses current educational, political, and social challenges that many marginalized countries face, especially nations in the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) region. The study examines the types of hegemony and its effects by addressing political, social, and educational ramifications. It scrutinizes the political, educational, and social history of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and uses it as an example for the region because of its political influence on the region. The study engages in a critical analysis of globalization alongside its tools to highlight its advantages and disadvantages to marginalized countries. It discusses the spread of the English language in marginalized communities, together with the status of the Arabic language in both lexical and mental dimensions. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was the methodology used to analyze the G8-Broader Middle East and North Africa G8-BMENA Partnership through examining documents produced by two entities in their annual meetings: first, government officials, and second, representatives of civil societies. These documents are organized by the type of discourse: first, official discourse (dominant) by government

representatives, and second, public discourse by civil societies. The idea is to examine the connections and disconnections between the two discourses in the proposed reform efforts by the partnership. The study analyzes documents issued from 2004 to 2013, and it reveals evidence of a hegemonic relationship between the G8 countries, BMENA countries, and civil societies. It also uncovers some possible and dangerous political changes affecting not only the BMENA but also the world.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

I start my introduction with questions that I have constantly asked myself in order to give the reader an insight about the ideas that shape my thinking regarding this research.

- Why did I need to change who I am socially and culturally to be considered a success in the eyes of my community?
- Why was the English language imposed on me when I was 6 years old?
- Why did I think less of myself when I wasn't able to speak English?
- Why did I enroll in the English language department for my bachelor's degree?
- Why did we look up to the West with admiration and with an opposite sentiment to ourselves?
- Why do we try to distance ourselves from our culture and values and strive to adopt Western values?
- Why do we see a connection between the West and civilization and intellect?
- Why do we trust the West and dismiss the Rest?
- Is it just my experience or is it a global phenomenon?
- Why the Rest continues to send students to the West, spending billions of dollars on their education, when the money could have been invested otherwise?
- Will the Rest ever be independent to decide for itself?

I do not claim to have the answers to these questions nor do I attempt to answer them in this research. But it is astonishing to me when I see the connection made between being educated, civilized, and enlightened with the ability to speak English fluently or with having a Western credential. This connection has been made by people across the

spectrum, from people with no formal education to those with the highest educational credentials. I can share two examples, from many, that I recently experienced. First, I was in Saudi Arabia on an airplane on a domestic flight in December of 2014 and found myself sitting next to an older man; both of us were wearing our thawb and ghutra (traditional Saudi dress for men). I was watching something on my iPad, and then we started conversing in Arabic about local topics, and I was so excited to hear in our native language his perspective about things, especially when I had been away from home for much of the previous eight years, except for vacations to my homeland about once a year. Then suddenly he spoke to me in English, saying, “I am an educated man.” I was perplexed and disturbed by his reasoning to prove himself to me that he is an educated man *in English* even though the entire conversation had been in Arabic and was cordial in nature. My first reaction was surprise—which I am certain he noticed by my facial expression. Subsequently, I brought the conversation back to Arabic. It was ironic that he felt a need to prove his value to me by speaking English. I suppose that he believed that by doing so he was showing to me, a much younger man, that his ability to speak English was evidence that he was “educated.” I was crestfallen. I had wanted to hear his perspectives on local matters, but he turned the conversation back to the topic of my dissertation. In essence, due to his sudden use of the English language, the conversation shifted from what I considered to be one of a substantive nature to a superficial one.

The second example occurred at Johns Hopkins Hospital in February 2015 when I was talking to a physician who was from East India, but he was trying to hide his foreign accent. He said to me: “I don’t know about your background, but you seem to be highly educated when I hear you speak in English.” His comment was related to specific exams I

was preparing to take and whether I needed a translator. These two examples—with the man on the airplane and the doctor at the hospital—were hurtful to me because of the general assumption or perception that for one to be considered educated and to be an intellectual, it is necessary to be able to speak English. Such a viewpoint ignores one's personal accomplishments in a host of other venues. It appears that this common perception is not limited to any geographical location on the map regardless of race, color, level of education, or cultural background. I see this scenario in the Middle East and in countries in East Asia—which speaks to the ingrained or imposed ways of judging and stereotyping people.

Those two experiences, and others, have impacted me in a great way. They have altered my view of the world and its peoples. Sometimes, when I speak English, I even try to accentuate a heavier Middle Eastern accent—just to see the reaction of native speakers and the level of respect I might receive from them, depending on the fluency of my English. It is of great importance to me to try to understand why this perception persists and why it is reproduced in many different cultures. It also makes me wonder: Is there a way to stop this, what I consider to be a vicious circle? Therefore, I chose to analyze formal documents produced by global entities, such as the United Nations, World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Association in my literature review. Not only that, I analyzed local documents in the Middle East region and the Gulf States to try to determine to what this phenomenon is attributed. My experience with the English language and with Western education has not been a pure choice of mine but rather was the dominant discourse in my society. At the time, I looked at immersing myself into Western culture and into the

English language as a *strategic choice* to gain personal benefits, such as social status and employment. When I graduated from college with an English language degree, I was told, “Now you have the key to knowledge and science,” referring to the ability of knowing the English language, which in essence meant that the Arabic language would not get me anywhere. I was happy at the time and even proud of the accomplishment. But today, I think about it differently because I think I could be more successful and competent if I had immersed myself into other fields during my undergraduate years. It is true that English has given me a window to see and understand the world from a different lens, but I am certain that I lost part of the original me in the transaction. I think I am lost between two or rather many cultures—or what Martin and Nakayama (2007) described as living on the border. By that, they meant physically living on the border by traveling frequently to different countries or a psychologically by interacting with different people from different cultural backgrounds, which in return creates bicultural or multicultural individuals such as me.

I came to a realization that this is a macro-level challenge (global structure), and it takes deeper local and global analysis, starting with my local society and its people and also by looking at different nations and their experiences with Western hegemonic influence, not only in the realm of education but in economy, society, and even in our aspirations. My approach to this endeavor stemmed from my own transitional positionality due to my extended stay in the United States and to my visits to my homeland and to other nations in the Middle East. Furthermore, I come from a place of antinomy, and now hope to re-envision a better future for my nation, language, and personal and collective identities from the United States rather than from my homeland.

But the main reason for such irony is because of an evolvement in my thinking and understanding of education and language and their purposes. I was faced with two options, either to be a functionalist and reap the most benefits that I can because I am seen in a higher status, according to current global arrangements, or to expose the superstructure of the world and its hierarchy. I chose the latter because I believed it was my moral obligation, and as a *scholar in-training*, I needed to set my own expectations for future projects.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In response to globalization, nations are faced with *reform* choices that do not necessarily respond to local needs, whether we are talking about education, economy, language, or even politics. In turn, policymakers and educators operate in a homogenizing fashion when looking at policy or reform (Broadfoot, 2001). I use the word *choices* loosely because I claim that some nations do not have the luxury to choose but rather must adhere to international agendas. With this in mind, I am afraid that globalization in this sense will generate inequalities, because it stems from the neoliberalism that dominates the world. It promotes competition, and with competition there are winners and losers. Therefore, we can see a *legitimized* stratification within a society and even between countries. That is to say, the system portrays itself as fair, but people do not begin from equal starting points, and when they compete for the same privileges, those studying at *bad* schools with limited resources and unequipped teachers will be the losers at the end of the day. Yet, the elite blame the *underachievers* in their eyes as opposed to looking at the structure critically. Hoogvelt (2001) considered globalization as a new form of colonization. In other words, this covert arrangement in



the world strips nation states and societies from their natural right to create or reform their educational systems without foreign influences guided or misguided by economic factors and neoliberal agenda. I believe that there is a greater power and structure that supersedes local communities that follow a prescribed approach, whether in educational and economic reforms or improvements to mainly benefit the center and at the same time restrict the periphery regions' advancement. In other words, globalization maintains a hierarchical relationship between the West and the Rest. I argue that globalization has an increasing influence socially, politically, and educationally. The question becomes: How and why is this hegemonic relation maintained and preserved across the planet? I wonder if there is an uprising, counter-hegemonic movement that may help us visualize alternative realities.

### **Research Outline**

In my dissertation, prior to addressing my research questions, I planned to study three major areas that are inseparable in my literature review. My starting point was to go back in history and understand the genesis of the Saudi educational system. Not only that, but also go deeper and research the establishment of the country—its political and socioeconomic conditions and the introduction of modern education. This research would address the Saudi social structure and social stratification as well as look for contradictions between the official purpose—dominant discourse—of education by the government and what actually was happening with the Saudi population and how it was affected by educational policies or political structure.

I examined the influence of religion on the construction of Saudi Arabia and its educational apparatus (Akkari, 2004; Moaddel, 2006; Saleh, 1986; Trial & Winder,

1950). I investigated the stakeholders of that era and how they gravitated to their positions and the reasons behind their collaboration. I was skeptical because of the outcomes that I witness today on a wide range of issues, and therefore, I questioned their reasons for that collaboration.

It appears that there are two campaigns when it comes to education; one that advocates for secular and the other for traditional, and I think it is imperative to know the basis for each. Furthermore, I researched the foreign influence on the Saudi educational apparatus as well as the Saudi influence on other nations, either educationally or ideologically (Abir, 1988). It was equally important to investigate the purpose and policy of education in Saudi Arabia as the first step in my analysis because it had a lot in common with the Broader Middle East and North Africa region. What was the mission and vision of introducing education in the modern sense? I also needed to learn about the nature of the relationship between education and society. I needed to explore the connections and disconnections between the two and find out who and what shaped the Saudi social structure. Was it education that shaped society, or vice versa? Or did different factors shape what we know today as the Kingdom Saudi Arabia?

My second interest in this research was the role of globalization in education and society. Because of the global economy and the promise of free markets, nations are under pressure to adhere to the roles of the markets and the nations that control those markets. Globalization influences, or rather threatens, several dimensions in many nations. That includes economic, social, political, and educational influences caused by liberalism, neoliberalism, and capitalist ideologies (Conway, 1995; Fitzsimons, 2000; King, 1995; Wells et al., 1998).

I explored cultural effects of globalization (Barber, 1996) and its influence on social structures, not only in peripheral areas but also in dominant countries such as the United States. I investigated the different types and aspects of globalization and its positives and negatives (Pieterse, 1994). We always hear that people have equal access to education and the benefits of “free market” in the age of globalization; however, my research investigated the premise that many consider to be a fallacy. With that in mind, locating the Saudi society or country on the globalization spectrum was useful for my understanding of this phenomenon, and it helped me understand similar trends in similar countries (Abo-Arrad, 2004).

The role of globalization is well documented in curriculum, schools, and the overall facade of the educational apparatus. Some claim that globalization uses education as a hegemonic tool that perpetuates economic and social inequalities (Apple, 1990). I believe it is imperative to juxtapose the role of different countries in this dynamic, and I analyzed this dialectical relationship, not only on an educational level but also on social and political levels.

There seem to be different views in the periphery region about education, even though some have experienced the same overt or covert fashions of colonization and exploitation and most importantly, of mental decapitation. The region of the Middle East is in a state of stagnation, with many observers seeing the role of Western powers as the reason for this backwardness, yet at the same time, the Western influence is seen as the savior for better social, economic, and political conditions (Neal & Finlay, 2007). Therefore, I examined the global education view, regardless of economic classes or national GDP because education—content, communication style, medium of instruction

and even human values—has aspired to follow a Eurocentric model in countries such as Japan, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and many others. In my research, I attempted to uncover this hegemonic discourse, even by researchers who are considered followers of critical theory. I hear some rhetoric highlighting the deficit theory that marginalized people have in many areas such as science, business, and even in human traits such as progressive values, honesty, and hard work (Neal & Finlay, 2007).

I looked for cross-cultural examples and reasons behind failed educational alternatives. With this work, I strived to offer hope for better education for generations to come, considering globalization pressure and challenges. I undertook this work fully understanding it would not be an easy task. I did not know what the outcomes might be, but I planned to challenge the system and its structure. My view stemmed from a critical school of thought, and I planned to utilize its methods of analyzing the status quo.

The third part of my research dealt with language and its importance in human lives and its role in shaping identity. I was intrigued to know what views there are regarding language and its influence in communities. It is important to know the meaning or the concept of a national language in a nation. What does it mean, and is it *normal* to only have one language? The reason for my interest grew from my experience as a native speaker of Arabic. I believe Arabic is underutilized, even neglected. Not only that, it is not seen as an important language or even necessary to know for one's success.

The global spread of the English language is vital to address in my work because it is intricately connected to educational policies, success, socioeconomic status, social perception, and social stratification. I addressed the debate between two campaigns: one that advocated for more English and Western models and one that called for complete

resistance. I hoped to analyze the situation critically and arrive at alternative views that might inform society and policymakers. I examined the language aspect in the Saudi society from a worldwide superstructure that was connected to globalization, race, and imperialism.

The fourth part of my dissertation was about answering my research questions through analyzing an international initiative that was created in 2004; it is known as the G8-BMENA Partnership, which is dedicated to educational, economic, and social reforms in the Broader Middle East region using critical discourse analysis (CDA) as my methodology to learn more about its inception, agenda, ideology, and outcomes. I wanted primarily to critically analyze this partnership to uncover power relations between some Western countries and the BMENA region and their understanding of reforms by looking at their expectations. This research helped me to establish connections between this partnership and the global structure discussed in the literature review by using the tools of CDA to understand the types of discourse, discourse control, and mind control and how they were present in the documents produced by the G8-BMENA. My analysis focused on 41 documents published by the partnership via its two main sources: government representatives and representatives of civil societies, which I discussed in Chapter 3.

### **Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study first was to understand education and its purpose in society. However, my main concern was education and modern education in developing countries or the so-called *Third World* countries. I needed to understand the working of the system and its role in shaping identities and realities. My specific focus was on Saudi Arabia and the BMENA region. Another important aspect of the study was to examine

the role of globalization in creating norms and realities. The English language has a major role, and I intended to demystify its hidden agenda and the damage it does to the structure of society. I do not think it is just a language or a tool that helps nations achieve their potentials. Rather, I assert that it destructs societies, values, communication styles, and it influences expectations, intellectual abilities, and perceptions. Furthermore, the introduction and use of the English language in a nation in which English is not the primary spoken and written form of communication causes low self-esteem for second-language speakers and adds a layer of discrimination known as linguicism (Tsuda, 2008). Such discrimination affects not only ordinary people but also many intellectuals and even me as the researcher, because I often find myself looking at the world from a colonizer lens. That is because we Saudi Arabian natives already have the expectation ingrained in our consciousness, and it is the only standard or model we know. Therefore, I examined this internalized colonizer's view from the psyche of a marginalized people. It is crucial to end the cycle of dependency and self-flagellation in order to end the reproduction of inequalities (Bourdieu, 1977). It is important to highlight the power of hegemony that marginalized people specifically adhere to, consciously or unconsciously (Gramsci, 2000).

The significance of my research is to contribute to the resistance and critical literature, which I believe is categorically lacking, in the Saudi context and the BMENA region. I argue that these countries should decide for themselves when addressing and considering any type of reform. It is important to address the history of the Saudi education system in order for us to understand the status quo through highlighting the tactics used by local or international powers to domesticate the masses. I hope that my

study contributes to the social reproduction theory by looking at it from two angles: first, social construction within a nation due to the type of education and medium of instruction (the English language), and second, the position of Saudi Arabia as a nation and its people in the world hierarchy.

Finally, when civilizations are faced with challenges (such as what I propose in this research), they tend to respond to challenges in one of two ways: Zealotism or Herodianism (Toynbee, 1948). Toynbee explained Herodianism as mimicry where nations try to find the secrets of the colonizer or the hegemon and then try to become like them. This appears in non-Western nations as they imitate Western models in education, language, communication styles, music, etc. On the other hand, Zealotism is a rigid and nostalgic structure that some nations use when under distress, which is an attempt to fall back on the past. There are problems with the two reactions: First, mimicry is a pale imitation and would never become as good as the original, and second, Zealotism is a dead end (Toynbee, 1948). There has to be a third way to gain true psychological and mental emancipation, such as by investing in indigenous educational and social institutions.

### **Research Questions**

1. How has the G8 and the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) Partnership affected and shaped educational and social reforms in the region since its establishment in 2004?
2. What type of discourse was deployed to perpetuate hegemonic and hierarchical relationships that sustain unequal status between the G8 and BMENA countries?
3. How do the G8 representatives control the BMENA public discourse?

4. How does such discourse control the mind and the action of the BMENA countries, and what are the social consequences of such control?



## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### A Historical Look at Saudi Arabia: Political, Educational, and Social Structures

Saudi Arabia is the largest geographical and political entity in the Arabian Peninsula. Early on, the Ibn-Saud royal family envisioned that improvements and investments in education would be a great tool in legitimizing the regime. Before indulging in the details of the establishment the new kingdom, it is imperative to understand the sociocultural and political circumstances of the Arabian Peninsula and the region due to the importance of those circumstances in the construction of education and society.

The most important factor in the region's construction was and remains the religion of Islam, which includes education (Trial & Winder, 1950; Moaddel, 2006; Akkari, 2004; Saleh, 1986). This took us back to the 600s A.D. and the force of the new Islamic faith when it grew rapidly from the region to the world. The Ottoman Empire controlled most of the Arab region in 1517 and withdrew from the region in 1917. The 400 years of Turkish rule of the region impacted the construction of all aspects of life. However, the Turks could not subjugate the inner Arabia. This was evident in a new movement in the Arabian Peninsula known today as Wahhabism, named after its leader, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. He was a native of the center of Arabia (Najd). The essence of his movement was to influence the tribes to return to the *pure* version of the faith and to again become Unitarians (Moaddel, 2006; Prokop, 2003; Trial & Winder, 1950). This movement became a spiritual and political one that created allegiance with the house of Saud that became again the royal family ruling what today is known as Saudi Arabia. King Abd al-aziz Ibn-Saud was described as tactician and firm, both of

which contributed to the unification of the tribes in 1932 that at one time feuded constantly with one another. In that year, King Abd al-aziz proclaimed the existence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prior to the declaration of the kingdom as we know it today, Ibn-Saud in 1926 created a smaller kingdom in the western region of Arabia; this area was known as the Kingdom of Hijaz. His educational ambitions started there; I will elaborate on it later in this paper.

The kingdom was a poor and mostly desert region, but the collaboration of Ibn-Saud and the Wahhabi group's leader remained intact. Educational opportunities at that time were both formal and traditional, and the people generally were characterized as "cultured but illiterate" (Trial & Winder, 1950, p. 122). That is because people in that era were able to narrate their history, were able to recite the Quran from memory, and were exposed to poetry.

### **Modern Education**

Traditionally, the ulama (religious scholars) had the greatest influence on educational activities. For example, the ulama opposed the collaboration with the Arabian-American Oil Co. or Aramco (Rugh, 1973) that was established in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to drill for oil. At the time, Aramco established vocational schools for the natives to educate them with the necessary knowledge and work for the company. The hope was that any cultural invasion among the Saudi youth by Western values and education styles would be limited (Trial & Winder, 1950). The first sign of modern education in Arabia in the Western sense was in 1926 when Ibn-Saud created the Directorate of Education by hiring an Egyptian adviser (Abir, 1988). This decision set the tone of the educational

policy in Arabia for many years afterwards. The directorate of education opened the first secondary school and reformed existing schools. The directorate also introduced modern subjects in addition to religion and the Arabic language (traditional education) where they were dominant.

From 1926 to 1931, many teachers from Egypt were hired, and some local students were sent to Egypt for education purposes, and that created tension with the ulama. However, the king found it important for his new and expanding Kingdom and therefore tried to pursue his agenda without confronting the religious clerics. The king also realized the value of compromise, a strategy that sometimes let remain on clerics' good side. During the 1930s, education was negatively impacted because of an economic recession; this gave the ulama a de facto domination over education. For a snapshot of education status in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it must be noted that the illiteracy rate was as high as 95 percent (Abir, 1988).

### **Modern Education 1946-1958**

The Saudi government increasingly understood the importance of education and hired more teachers from Egypt and other Arabic-speaking countries, hoping to create a pool of Saudi-educated graduates who could replace the foreign experts. However, financial difficulties hindered the acceleration of this process in the 1940s. Nonetheless, in 1946 and with the commercial exploitation of oil, the Saudi government had progressively "Egyptianized" the nation's educational system by hiring more Egyptian teachers and sending Saudi students to Egypt. Not only that, the government transferred the Egyptian educational model, which was imposed by the United Kingdom in the era of overt colonization.

In 1949, Aramco launched its first development plan for its employees, including Saudis, by sending them to American universities in the region or in the United States (Abir, 1988; Trial & Winder, 1950). Aramco was not motivated necessarily by philanthropy per se but rather by a desire to improve its operations. Abir (1988) believed that this contribution by Aramco should not be underestimated in the realm of modern education, especially in the eastern province of Arabia where oil is concentrated. As what could be considered as a counter effort by the ulama and probably as a compromise by the king, the ulama established their version of modern educational facilities, which focused primarily on Islamic studies and Arabic studies, including history and civilization. The ulama resented the evolution of what once was their domain (education), but they eventually realized that they could not turn back the clock. Rather, the ulama realized that they needed to be adaptive and to function in a supervisory fashion over education in general. It appears that this was the period where competition became visible between two educational systems: an education system controlled by religious agenda and another controlled by the state, in other words, traditional versus secular. However, the latter could not deviate from general Islamic principles or from what was perceived as Islamic at that time. King Saud became the new king after his father's death and restored the relationships with the ulama, in part by ordering all Saudi students were studying abroad to return home. That demand was a clear signal to the religious establishment that was worried about foreign influence that could undermine the coveted political and religious power of the ulama.

There were also other major highlights in this era, one of which was the foundation of the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1953; that development triggered a

tripling and quadrupling of the number of students and played a key role in increases in the Saudi budget allocated for education. Another highlight of the era occurred in 1957, when the first university was established in Saudi Arabia. In 1958, the MOE adopted the current three-cycle sequence of education: six years of elementary school, three of intermediate school, and three years of secondary education.

### **Modern Education 1958-1986**

Faysal became the new king and followed the example his father's (Abd al-aziz) leadership style by keeping a strong alliance with ulama and featuring the relationship with concessions and compromises. A historic event occurred in 1960 when female education became formalized and legal. The new king faced violent opposition from the ulama after this innovation, but Faysal established new General Directorate of Girls' Education under the Grand Mufti (Abir, 1988). Consequently, education for girls fell under the control of the ulama, and this is why the kingdom has been a gender-segregated school system ever since. The segregation also included teachers, and if there is a need for a male teacher to teach females, it is done via closed-circuit television. In the 1970s, female student enrollment reached 50 percent, and by the 1980s, the number of females nearly equaled the number of male students.

Ironically, in its initial stages, the ulama opposed modern education, but they controlled the educational system during the Faysal ruling period. This has affected the curriculum as Islamic and Arabic studies constituted a third of the curriculum in all elementary school, intermediate school, and secondary school levels (Abir, 1988; Prokop, 2003). Furthermore, elementary school graduates could opt for religious studies for their

remaining schooling years, but even if they did not, religion had an organic—unbreakable—relationship with Saudi state education.

In 1960, there was a slowdown in the development of the national education system due to financial constraints, and the focus shifted from increasing the number of schools to the quality of education (Rugh, 2002a). This period also revealed something about Saudi society and its distaste of manual work because it was not as prestigious as formal education, and that attitude led to a decrease in student enrollment in vocational and trade schools (Prokop, 2003). The greatest boom of the Saudi modern education system occurred in the 1970s and 1980s because of the increased state revenue with the expansion of the Saudi oil production machine. The government also issued its first five-year plan for education from 1970-1975. It was generally characterized by massive expansion at all levels of education. Nevertheless, the quality of education suffered in both periods when foreigners were in charge of educating Saudi nationals and also when the Saudi teachers assumed powerful positions, especially at the elementary school level because these teachers were trained by others who had low standards.

The number of students had risen in 1986 by 35 percent (Abir, 1988), and there was an impressive decline of illiteracy rates in comparison with the illiteracy rate of the 1960s. However, Abir raised a concern about the lower standards in the country. Educational programs and opportunities differed according to the geographical location and the social backgrounds of students. For example, Bedouin (nomadic) people tended to drop out from school because education did not fit their lifestyle and thus did not help them economically because they needed to work and help their families, which is not the case with middle class Saudi society.

I believe that this marked the initial signs of divergence between social classes in Saudi Arabia. Abir (1988) stated that the Saudi statistics did not pay attention to the disparity between social classes. However, only one third of the lower class students make it to the intermediate level, and only 6 percent make it to the secondary level. Abir (1988) stated that middle class and upper class students (urban population), especially from major towns or areas such as Hijaz and Najd, were much more prepared for modern education because they were taught by better qualified teachers and their schools were better. Consequently, middle class and upper class students dominated secondary school education and also were the beneficiaries of university education abroad.

The government was aware that the first two education plans (1970-1980) focused on the schools and students in urban areas, but it planned to rectify the situation in the rural areas in third and fourth plans (1980-1990). Interestingly, Abir (1988) claimed that having minimal education in the rural areas did not hinder the ability of the “lower class” people to move up socially, and they were accepted in the middle class.

King Fahd assumed power in 1982, and he understood the need to maintain and maybe even advance the relationship with the ulama because it was a great contribution to the kingdom’s political stability, especially because of economic struggles, political turmoil in the region, and the struggle in the ruling class. Therefore, the ulama were the best political ally for Ibn-Saud and the government, and this was effective because the population could not dispute anything stemming from their *trusted* religious leaders. Consequently, the liberal movement from 1960 to 1970 was reversed, and religious studies were again at the heart of education at the expense of secular education (Abir, 1988).

## **Higher Education**

According to Abir (1988), the journey of higher education in Saudi Arabia started in (1957), and there was a rivalry between the government and the ulama in establishing institutions reflecting each of their views of education. The ulama focused on religious teaching and did what was possible to attract students by giving generous scholarships to join their institutions. The population trusted the ulama because they were seen as the true representation of their faith.

The first university, in the Western sense, was established in 1957, and it facilitated the second boom in higher education, which occurred between 1957 and 1975. The universities followed the Egyptian model, which in essence followed the British system of higher education. However, since 1975, Saudi universities adopted the American higher education system. In 1985, Saudi Arabia had seven universities and 14 colleges for women colleges, and by 2011, according to Denman and Hilal (2011), the number has increased to 24 government universities, 15 private universities, and 20 private colleges.

The American influence on the Saudi education started with Aramco in 1958 (Abir, 1988) and was formalized in 1975 by establishing the United States and Saudi Arabia Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation, which dealt with education and was a bilateral agreement between the two countries. The ulama were not thrilled with this development, especially because of the increasing number of Saudi students studying in the United States. That was seen as a threat to the Saudi people's faith and culture. The ulama viewed it as westernization of Saudi Arabia, and this triggered tension between the religious establishment and the government. Furthermore, conflict grew between Saudi



university graduates and American university graduates because each saw the other as a threat to them, economically and to their country, ideologically.

Abir (1988) acknowledged the massive development of the Saudi education system, especially when the illiteracy rate was 95 percent in the 1950s, but also questioned “whether Saudi Arabia can afford its extensive, wasteful and inadequate educational system” (p. 49).

### **Education in the 1990s**

The status of education remained the same in the 1990s, generally balancing the relationship between modern education and the ulama and expanding education to increase the rate of students admitted to Saudi’s higher education system. On the one hand, “Islam continues to be the main legitimizing source of al-Saud family; however, the strong identification with Islam invites the regime’s opponents to use it as a standard by which to judge their rulers” (Prokop, 2003, p. 77). Therefore, the government had to make concessions to the religious leaders and give them (even in the ideological sense) control over the educational apparatus.

In essence, the education system represented by both the state and the ulama agreed on the same message regarding education, which promoted loyalty and obedience.

The state and the ulama expected education to:

. . . promote a spirit of loyalty to Islamic law by denouncing any system or theory that conflicts with it and by behaving with honesty and in conformity with Islamic tenets; it should ‘awaken the spirit of Islamic struggle, fight our enemies, restore our rights, resume our glory, and fulfill the mission of Islam’ and project the unity of Muslim nation. (Prokop, 2003, p. 79)

It is crucial to magnify this cooperation between the state and the ulama and its impact on Saudi society. It is clear that a political and ideological struggle existed between the two, and in the same time, it is ironic that they claim working for the people without including the people in the pursuit.

Interestingly, the discipline of history taught in Saudi schools reveals an intended or perhaps casual dismissal of other histories within Saudi society. In schools, one particular region, Najd, is the focus of history books and its people, who are described by Abir (1988) and Prokop (2003) as the aristocratic class. However, history books try to unify the country around the first king (and then the royal family), who unified the tribes, and how he chose the path of Islam to do that. However, the history books neglect the bloodshed and the battles preceding the conquest of the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, history books also neglect to mention critical events in the neighboring countries, such as revolutions and the collaboration between the king and United Kingdom in the early days of establishing the kingdom.

A major characteristic of the Saudi education system (Prokop, 2003; Rugh, 2002b; Roy, 1992) is its focus on rote learning, memorization, and unquestioning attitudes—because obedience is at the core of the system. Schools also lack an emphasis on analytical and creative thinking, which is not a surprise because the system (educational and political) wants to sustain its legitimacy and domination.

### **Saudi Influence on Education Abroad**

Prokop (2003) addressed the global Saudi influence financially and ideologically. In other words, the Saudi government was involved in spreading its interpretation of Islam through education in many parts of the world, “from Morocco to Central Asia, to

Bosnia, and elsewhere in Europe . . . African countries . . . and [even] including a province in China” (Prokop, 2003, p. 85). This occurred either by direct funding by the government or by the Saudi missionaries around the world, including those in the United Kingdom and the United States. Furthermore, the Saudi curriculum is taught in Saudi schools in many countries that have high Saudi populations.

This was one of the reasons that the Saudi education system was attacked, especially from Western nations, because it was involved in spreading its version of Islamic teaching, which is characterized by many as promoting extremism (Prokop, 2003; Rugh, 2002b). A great example is the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City in which 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi nationals. In other words, the Saudi education system found itself under new and more scrutiny than ever from the liberals within the country as well as from many Western nations. However, the official government response was the denial of these accusations that blamed the Saudi education system. Some Saudi officials stated that education is just one way of shaping students’ identities. On the other hand, the government has admitted the need for economic and educational reforms, but the debate becomes about who is proposing the reforms and the role of education in the Saudi political system. Prokop (2003) raises the following questions:

To what extent has the education system been shaped by and used by religious, political, and socioeconomic forces and interests? What are the domestic and global factors that are undermining the current system? What are the economic and social ‘side-effects’ of the heavy emphasis on religious teachings? What are

the links—if any—between the education system and the message propagated inside the kingdom, as well as abroad, and Islamic extremism? (p. 79)

### **Government's View and Policy of Education**

Roy (1992) shed light on what he understands as the eight major factors in the Saudi education policy in basic education, listed as follows:

- 1- The planning of education and the use methods of instruction in a manner that is in harmony with the teachings of Islam and derives from its principles.
- 2- The provision of basic religious instruction throughout the period of education, from basic through higher education.
- 3- Given every individual's desire for knowledge, the state must—within the limits of its resources and abilities—give the opportunity to everyone, male or female, to acquire that knowledge.
- 4- Within the dictates of Islam, turning to account all forms of useful human knowledge so as to develop the community and improve its way of life.
- 5- The methodology, writing and teaching of science and learning and their various forms and resources must be in accord with an Islamic orientation.
- 6- The linking of education and instruction at all levels with overall national development planning.
- 7- The judicious use of interaction with international developments in the fields of science, culture, and literature.
- 8- The use of the Arabic language as the language of instruction in all subjects and at all levels, except where it is necessary for teaching to be in another language (for example language courses) (p. 489)

The question remains whether this vision of education was reached or not. It seems that the policies are macro in nature, and nothing is tangible. By the third plan (Roy, 1992), however, there was some evidence of being focused, at least on giving access to education to the majority of students, males and females. Yet the quality of the education was questionable. Further, education was seen as a fight against illiteracy, but that does not necessarily translate to a better economic future for the graduates. Roy (1992) asked: “What then is the logic of educating them?” (p. 482)

Saleh (1986) cited the same vision in his article, placing Islam at the core of any educational endeavor. He stated:

The purpose of education is to have the student understand Islam in a correct comprehensive manner, to plan and spread the Islamic creed, to furnish the student with values, teaching and ideals of Islam, to equip him with the various skills and knowledge, to develop his own conduct in constructive directions to develop the society economically, socially and culturally, and to prepare the individual to become a useful member in the building of his community. (Saleh, 1986, p. 19)

He also highlighted the goals of higher education in the country, which were similar to the previously noted goals.

However, some of the desired outcomes of the development plans and the massive budgets were to decrease the number of Saudi students studying abroad and to limit the reliance on the English language as the medium of instruction in many educational institutions. Such action, I believe, functioned as a gatekeeper that prevented many students who did not have the desire to learn another language in order to be

educated or perceived as such. King Abdullah started a foreign scholarship program that has sent almost 130,000 students abroad since 2006, a third of whom have studied in the United States. Clary and Karlin (2011) stated: “the United States, with 15 times Saudi Arabia’s population, only had 260,000 students studying abroad last year” (p. 17). *Keep in mind the Saudi number is 130,000.* The purpose of the scholarship program was to qualify those students in different fields and hope that those students would become the new reformists in Saudi Arabia when they finished their schooling. Another reason was the huge influx of new high school graduates (half of the population is younger than 24) and the limited chances of gaining access to local universities. In other words, there was no planning to contain the new graduates in the Saudi educational system.

This fact is troubling in so many ways—financially, culturally, and politically. To the observant eyes, the scholarship *agreement* came after a meeting between the king and U.S. President George W. Bush, even though we do not know the nature of the conversation between the two leaders, especially after 9/11 and the real intent of the program. The Saudi government has paid \$5 billion for Saudi students’ education in the United States (Kurtz, 2012). This is a red flag because we do not know about the politics carried out behind closed doors: Was this initiative a free choice by the king, or was it demanded by Bush for other reasons, such as economic benefits to the United States or to expose Saudi youth to Western culture to promote tolerance. However, those billions of dollars could have been invested in the Saudi educational system and its universities to reduce the total dependence on Western educational models that most likely would not fit local Saudi needs and the aspirations of Saudi students.

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the first scholarship for Saudi students to study abroad was offered, the educational situation remains the same, with the government looking for temporary solutions to major problems rather than facing them head on. I ask hypothetically: If the government, which is the responsible for education in Saudi Arabia, were to deal with these challenges with honesty and integrity, what would happen? I speculate that some major political changes would take place, and that belief made me wonder if these challenges are ignored purposefully to maintain the status quo. I consider this situation as the absolute opposite of what Akkari's (2004) depicted education in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as post-colonial education, where the governments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) control the education apparatus for the purpose of developing nations economically and giving all individuals, regardless of their tribes, regions, faith denominations, or religious backgrounds, an equal chance for the upward movement in the society.

Akkari (2004), however, stated clearly that countries in the MENA region have many similarities in their overall construction—socially, religiously, and culturally, as well as with overall achievements in the realm of education, i.e., increased literacy rates and access to schools. Yet, there is a common thread between them that the system did not meet the needs of the poorest and the disadvantaged populations, and therefore, they function in the lowest rung in their societies. Here, they cannot be blamed for their position in society because we realized (Abir, 1988; Trial & Winder, 1950) that schools and teachers were better in the urban areas and its population were able to benefit from the financial resources and gained scholarships to get better education than the rest of the people.

Akkari (2004) cited some reasons behind the dropout rates and slow education growth in MENA's region as the following:

- the inadequate quantity and quality of elementary and secondary schools;
- the excessively long distance from home to school, which is a particularly important obstacle for girls in rural areas;
- the lack of parent responsiveness to the laws mandating compulsory schooling, in light of the low private economic returns of schooling;
- the inability of schools to offer an attractive environment to children;
- the economic difficulties of some families who are forced to put their children to work early. (p. 149)

### **Education and Society**

In this section, I look into possible paradoxes in the official view of education, philosophy, and purpose and compare that with what is actually happening in Saudi society. I would like to investigate whether the education system serves all people equally. Furthermore, I need to know if the education system helps the political stability of the government as its main purpose rather than providing education to the masses.

First, we will look at possible purposes and philosophies of education and try to determine if the Saudi education system aligns with any of the purposes and philosophies in order for us to place the education system in a certain category or give it a label. It is important to note that defining the purpose of education is difficult and depends on many factors, but nonetheless, it is imperative to navigate the possibilities.

The primary purpose of a liberal education . . . is the cultivation of the person's own intellect and imagination, for the person's own sake. . . . True education is



meant to develop the individual human being, the person, rather than serve the state. . . . Formal schooling actually commenced as an endeavor to acquaint the rising generation with religious knowledge: with awareness of the transcendent and with moral truths. Its purpose was not to indoctrinate a young person in civics, but rather to teach what it is to be a true human being, living within a moral order. That person has primacy in liberal education. (Gow, 1989, p. 545)

Furthermore, Descartes (as cited in Vaughan, 1914) believed that the purpose of all education is “to enable one to reach sound judgment” (p. 695). Alexander (1994) indulged in extensive debate about education and its role in advocating for peace, capitalism, and nationalism as its purpose. However, Alexander’s (1994) depiction of the purpose of education is the following:

The purpose of education should be to define and teach the difference between peace for oppression and peace for liberty, the difference between competitive self-interested capitalism and a laissez-faire spirit that provides for a “harmony of interests” for the general uplifting of society. (p. 28)

The final view I consider is the one of Rossides (1984), as the author depicted education and its purpose as a type of monopoly. He summarized his view of the purpose of education as “history’s diverse educational systems have one all-important similarity—they serve the interests of the powerful first and foremost” (p. 16). However, he saw the hidden purpose. Rossides (1984) claimed that the purpose of education, whether agrarian or industrial, is to establish and maintain a class difference in societies independently from any functional purpose. Moreover, Rossides (1984) argued that the situation in modern education becomes tricky because in a feudal society, education is openly for the

elite class without hypocrisy that we witness today because today people are bombarded with an elusive equality. That is to say, when lower class students fail or drop out from modern schooling, society (elite) blames them for their failure, neglecting the inequitable system in the first place. In other words, modern education is used to stratify society, and it was the same idea in ancient Greece, medieval Europe, China, etc. as they used different marks of distinction to separate themselves from lower classes by things such as poetry and dance (Rossides, 1984). At the end of the day, the rules of modern education have evolved, but the purpose remains the same. In other words, the education apparatus functions to legitimize and protect a certain class in societies that Rossides (1984) described as *incompetent elites* by using what seems to be an objective tool (education) that superficially claims equality and fair competition.

### **Saudi Social Structure**

The signs of incongruence between the ruling family and the close circle of elites in Saudi Arabia and the masses started early in the newly born kingdom. Ibn-Saud had established a solid partnership with the so-called Wahhabi movement and the ulama (religious scholars) to establish the new country based on their interpretation of Islam. The message that Ibn-Saud brought to the desert was received with great hopes by the nomadic tribes in which he brought an end to the wars between them, the result of which appeared to be one entity. However, the tribal armies that were instrumental in Ibn-Saud's success in establishing the kingdom were slowly but surely isolated and became antithetical to his administration and the formation of the modern country. Instead, stronger coalitions were formed between the royal family and the elite of Hijaz (western region) and rulers of Najd (the heart of Saudi Arabia) (Abir, 1988; Moaddel, 2006).

When addressing the oneness of the nation, it seems that the condition of the country and the royal family was inseparable.

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a large social divide in the country stemming from limited economic opportunities due to the country's vulnerability because of its reliance on one commodity (oil) and price fluctuations (rentier economy). This type of economy was defined by Luciani (1990) as "an economy where the creation of wealth is centered around a small fraction of the society; the rest of the society are only engaged in the distribution and utilization of this wealth" (p. 87). This situation polarized the country, one group adhering to the Islamic values (their interpretation) to awaken the nation and bring it back to the *right path* and the other group considered to be liberal reformists (Moaddel, 2006). Both groups agreed on the need for restructuring the country. However, a highlighted incident in recent Saudi history was when a group of Muslim militants took control of the Holy Mosque (Mecca) in 1979, forcing the government to consolidate with the religious movement. With that change, the government scored high on peoples' trust because the nation was under attack while their religion was being hijacked by extremists. Consequently, the momentum for the reformists' movement was demolished.

In Saudi society in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, (Abir, 1988; Rugh, 1973; Zuhur, 2011) was described as a society without social classes as we know it today (Western sense) simply because Arabia at the time consisted of mostly nomadic tribes. Exceptions were the merchants in the Hijaz region and the ulama in Najd. Changes occurred after Ibn Saud consolidated power of the new ruling class (aristocracy). With the production of oil in 1938 and modernization efforts after World War II, the system produced new social

classes and social structures. Abir (1988) claimed that this structure did not stem from wealth or education but rather from the degree of affiliation to the royal family or regional origins. However, in later stages, education was used as another crutch to stay on top of the social hierarchy because the elites had better schools and better teachers. Furthermore, their sons were sent abroad to receive better education than the rest of the people, and therefore, they used educational credentials to remain atop the social ladder by using what seemed to be an objective and neutral criterion.

The king's partners, who helped him financially and logistically in consolidating the kingdom, were incorporated into the Saudi aristocracy. It is important to concentrate on this behavior because I believe it set the tone for the entire nation socially and made nepotism and patronage more entrenched in the society. "Together with the royal house and the ulama they are considered to be a component of the ruling class" (Abir, 1988, p. 7). Furthermore, in the 1970s, another component was added to the ruling class, which was the umara (chiefs of tribes). Abir (1988) depicted this situation as rule by oligarchy. The key elements in being part of the ruling class were "origin, seniority, prestige, and leadership qualities" (p. 10) in addition to the overarching element that has been aligned with Wahhabi ideology because it was the hegemonic power in the region. To further legitimize this class and its power, they established a Consultative Council and were members of it. In essence, by being followers of Wahhabism, they domesticated the population because the movement was established on the premise of being a representation of pure Islam (Unitarian), especially with the rise of polytheism. This established the ideological power, and the Consultative Council has given them the political authority to dominate.

Moaddel's (2006) study touched on the social construction and Saudis' attitudes toward many concepts, such as religion, religiosity, and democracy among others. It is interesting to note that the lower class people were proponents of Western style democracy and did not see these changes as a cultural invasion. On the other hand, the elites and the upper class, keeping in mind their easier access to better education, ability to travel and to study abroad, and with more exposure to democratic ideas, were reluctant to accept democracy. This was because democracy would undermine their interests, both political and financial, and protecting the status quo (structure) was more beneficial, especially in the rentier economy. Moaddel asserted that "Rentierism thus reinforces the state's tribal origins, because it regenerates the tribal hierarchy consisting of varying layers of beneficiaries with the ruling elite on top, in an effective position of buying loyalty through their redistributive power" (p. 103).

In a study conducted by Khashan (1984) where the author measured the perception of some Saudi university students and found that unlike what is happening in Western universities where students strive to maintain a middle-class status, Saudi students aspired to join the wealthy segment of the society. The author attributed this to their family socioeconomic background, as most of the university students interviewed in his study belonged to the upper socioeconomic class. In Khashan's study, 58 percent of the students reported that they came from a high income population, and this was reflected in their income expectations as well because they wanted to maintain the status quo. Interestingly, Khashan (1984) claimed that "there is no clear evidence that the lower income groups are excluded from college because the regime wants to keep them out" (p. 21). Nevertheless, he stated that the bureaucracy in Saudi Arabia was corrupt and that

personal relationships get things done and people from upper socioeconomic segments of society get better services, including education. Another observation the author made for the greater enrollment of more affluent segments was that because this segment valued education more than other socioeconomic groups. This observation, in my view, comes from anything but a critical lens, especially when the author immersed himself in Saudi society. I take this stance because as a reader, there is a hidden message that the lower-class population has deficiencies or an intrinsic dislike for education and can be also viewed as less motivated to pursue higher education or education in general. It is vital to look at the history of modern Saudi education and society to at least have a broader understanding of the social construction and stratification.

Nieuwenhuijze (1965), in his book, *Social Stratification and the Middle East*, examined societies in the MENA region and how people attained a position in the middle-class. He compared the situation with that of Europe, concluding that societies in general are bipolar, where one group is on the top (elite) and the other is on the bottom (the masses). His argument was about the creation of the middle class and who becomes eligible to be part of that strata. The author cautions us that we do not attribute upward mobility strictly to modern education because elites throughout the history of mankind did not necessarily have modern education under their belt to attain their status, but rather they had different tools that sustained or prolonged their position at the top. The Saudi case is an example of this situation, where the ruling class established partnerships with representatives of the most sacred element of the mass's life (religion) to legitimize their ability to rule the nation. Also resulting from this partnership was the creation of social stratification.

Furthermore, modern education and certain credentials, for example, Western, enhanced individuals' chances to move up socially. But the question remained: Who is the major beneficiary of that, especially in the foundation of Saudi Arabia and its modern education? I believe that the answer is complicated to some because state historians and scholars would agree with the actions by the government regarding the expansion of education during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and its initial focus on specific regions and populations in order to stabilize the country in its initial stages. But we can look at the elite top—excluding the royal family—and see who they actually represent. We can investigate the important positions in the government and examine who occupies these positions. We realize that most if not all come from a common socioeconomic class, which not only hindered the mass's chance of moving up socially but also kills the aspiration of generations to better themselves socially, economically, and intellectually. Brichs (2013) explained it best:

. . . the process of creation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the consolidation of the ruling elite has led to the identification of the al-Saud family with the state, blurring distinctions between one and the other. The resource 'state' is therefore under absolute control of the core elite, i.e. the royal family and their immediate circle, as are all the resources deriving from it: capital, coercion, ideology, and information. . . . This redistribution (monetary) took place first between the members of the royal family, then between the members of tribal elite comprising the founding elite of the Saudi state and finally the religious, commercial and military elites through different clientelistic mechanisms but mainly through the generation of managerial and administrative positions in the state. (pp. 162-163)

Akkari (2004) paid attention to the situation in the entire Middle East and North Africa region and said, “The least privileged and the poor are those most strongly affected by precarious situation of the education system” (p. 149). However, the Saudi education system adds insult to injury because it is a wealthy country and has huge political and economic influence in the region and in the world. The condition of the education system does not promise a better future. That is to say, the nature of a rentier economy would not be sustainable for a long time, and other economic and educational alternatives should be explored to avoid a disastrous future.



## **Views on Globalization and Saudi Arabia**

### **Overview of Globalization**

There is an interest to discover the genesis of globalization. Wallerstein (1974) suggested that it emerged in the 15<sup>th</sup> century under the world capitalist system. However, the term has been used in a larger scale since the 1970s (Abo-Arrad, 2004) and 1980s (Robertson, 1992). Even though globalization has been commonplace for years, Allen (2001) questioned the recent tendency of Western and even global discourse about globalization and reinforcement even though humans have been globalized for centuries. Jameson (1998) believed that a new and more intense version or form of globalization emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, the globalization in the 15<sup>th</sup> century was different. This difference was crystalized in easier movement beyond borders of commodities, ideas, capital, among others. This could not have happened without advanced technologies.

The discrepancy between those different globalizations was caused not only by material conditions but also by different ideas and perceptions of people who lived during these eras. Robertson (1992) believed that globalization means “the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (p. 8). The world has been compressed politically, economically, and by the nature of cultural relationships, not only among people but also between nation-states, which have become more interconnected. Furthermore, people perceive and discuss the world and its events differently. People see the world as smaller, and some refer to it as a village because of today’s instant exchange of information, ideas, and even recent revolutions through

media and the Internet, such as the recent Egyptian revolution (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011).

It is imperative to shed light on the nature of globalization, as Tomlinson (1999) considered it as multidimensional phenomenon. Previously, globalization was examined from an economic angle, but many scholars, such as Robertson (1992), also have begun to investigate cultural aspects influenced by globalization. Therefore, it is pivotal to deeply understand globalization to investigate it from these two dimensions. Giddens (1991) contributed to an understanding of globalization by framing it as a “dialectic of the local and the global” (p. 22). That is to say, globalization can be seen as both a homogenization and as a heterogenization force. In essence, globalization homogenizes the world through the intensified connectedness between people, ideas, and nations, and at the same time, the world is heterogenized because people and perhaps nations become conscious of the differences between localism and globalism.

### **The Economic Dimension of Globalization**

The economic dimension has polarized people’s perception of globalization because it seems that there are two major perceptions regarding globalization. The first celebrates globalization because it is seen as an economic opportunity for the peripheral countries, and the second condemns globalization because of its negative consequences. Fitzsimons (2000) argued that a parallel relationship with the emergence of globalization and the neo-liberalism movement exists by considering the latter as the theoretical foundation of the latest type of globalization. In other words, neo-liberalism goes hand-in-hand with globalization. Conway (1995) described classic liberalism in action as a civil society that consists of rational individuals who track their interests freely. King

(1995) stated that liberalism ascribes a society as just when there is a free-market exchange. Furthermore, this understanding of liberalism is tied to capitalism because of the postulation that a civil society can be achieved through a capitalist economy. Wells, Carnocha, Slayton, Allen, and Vasudeva (1998) stated that neo-liberalism became prominent over the past two decades because of its advocacy of “free, unregulated markets coupled with aggressive individualism” (p. 324).

Globalization that aligns with neo-liberalism can be seen as positive by some because it weakens formerly rigid borders between nation-states by creating a global market that in return eases economic activities and exchanges between different nations. Marx and Engels (1848/1985) discussed the globalizing nature of the capitalist economy by stating that “the bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country” (p. 83). The purpose of capitalism is to gain profits. In the same vein, Martin (2000) stated that neo-liberals who advocate for a capitalistic economy consider what happens in the peripheral country by being part of globalization and that the global market is the greatest achievement since the end of war. In other words, neo-liberalism considers nation-states as an impediment to the global market. Bryan and Farrell (1996) said it best: “The only participants who can cause real havoc in the global capital markets are the national governments themselves because they have the power to distort the market through their influence on capital flows” (p. 8). On the other hand, national governments in the *Third World* countries most likely would not disturb the current arrangements because they benefit the most from it, and the alternative might erode their elite status. With this in mind, even though nation-states in the periphery may, in theory, hinder capitalism, in

actuality, capitalism needs nation-states as “a defense mechanism” (Wallerstein, 1974, p. 402) to protect capitalism. In other words, Wallerstein (1974) argued that the nation-state system was initiated to protect the interests of capitalists in the core as well as the nation-states but at the same time hurt the nation-state system and weakened the periphery nation-states. Globally, capitalism is connected to racial constructions, and Allen (2001) argued that “the nation-state system is a type of ecosystem for the survival of the white body and white mind” (Allen, 2001, p. 480). In the global sense, I might add, the nation-state system is a type of ecosystem for the survival for the white polity as well.

This shows the complexity of the relationship between nation-states, capitalism, and neo-liberalism. On the one hand, the nation-states in the core were the beneficiary from this system for wealth accumulation via colonialism and exploitation of peripheral areas by preventing the creation of nation-states to resist colonization as countries. On the other hand, in order to control the capitalist economy, the nation-states system functions via strengthening borders for the nation-states, which in return enhances nationalism in the core states.

Allen (2001) analyzed globalization from two lenses: first, through the Marxist viewpoint, which considers capitalism at the core of the global structure, and second, through critical race theory perspective, which considers race and “white supremacy is the most totalizing” (p. 468) superstructure in globalization. Furthermore, Allen considered Marx and Engels’s views that focus on *class* analysis as inadequate and instead asserted that *race* should be at the center of any globalization analysis. That is to say, the Marxist discourse fails to clearly state the role of neoliberalism in racializing the globe into white and nonwhite.

Neoliberalism is not producing a retraction of the nation-states as much as it is restructuring of it for the further perpetuation of white identity politics in national and international domains. (Allen, 2001, p. 473)

Moreover, Allen (2001) engaged further in his critique of the Marxist view of globalization because it did not acknowledge to a satisfactory degree “the European motivation, desire, and racialization for centuries of imperialism, genocide, and slavery” (p. 476).

Globalization, capitalism, and neo-liberalism have shifted the function or the meaning of nation-states. To demonstrate, Harvey (1990) and Miyoshi (1993) paid attention to the economic power by the private corporations that have transitioned to be multinational and finally transnational corporations (TNCs). The TNCs, according to the maximum financial profit, moved its locations overseas, away from restrictions, seeking cheaper labor and lower taxes. This became possible because of the global market and also because of the important role of the nation-state system by controlling the economic and financial activities both in the core and periphery areas (Hirst & Thompson, 1995). Nonetheless, the intensification of the TNCs, which coincided the *superficial* independence from colonialism after World War II, may have shifted the role of nation-states in the core where they become unable to control the former colonies overtly and therefore used TNCs to do the job covertly (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2002). As a result, it seems that these corporations are the main beneficiary of globalization.

What does globalization do? As mentioned, it means further domination over the global market from the TNCs, which results in more capital growth. On the one hand,

Smith (1997) described globalization as an “increasingly pure form of imperialism” (p. 182), and on the other, Miyoshi (1993) considered it as “intensified colonialism” (p.750). It is perceived as such because there is acceleration in unequal development in which globalization widens the gap between the rich and poor, not only between nation-states in the core and periphery but also within nations. Therefore, we have a massive discrepancy between the top socioeconomic class and the lower ones.

### **The Cultural Dimension of Globalization**

Globalization intends to homogenize the globe and at the same time provokes heterogenization (Barber, 1996), which shows a dialectical relationship between the two effects. In other words, people around the world consume the same products (e.g., Hollywood movies) and also impose norms, values, and mass culture (McDonalization) that are foreign to periphery states where people simultaneously develop a parochial localism and nationalism by clinging to their ethnic, local, and national identities (Ritzer, 2000). Hall (1997) stated that “the return to the local is often a response to globalization” (p. 33). Featherstone (1996) said “the difficulty of handling increasing levels of cultural complexity, and the doubts and anxieties they often engender, are reasons why localism, or the desire to return home, becomes an important theme” (p. 47). Due to the huge influence of ideas, products, values, and ideologies disseminated via global avenues, people become more confused because their local view and interpretations is no longer the only way to read and understand the world around them. Therefore, people or nations develop strong local, ethnic, and national attachments to face the homogenizing force of globalization.

The debate remains between scholars in the way they analyze globalization and on what they should concentrate on. For example, Appadurai (1996) considered globalization as more of a heterogenization story, even though he acknowledged its homogenizing force. However, Ritzer (2004) emphasized more of the homogenization thrust of globalization even though heterogenization is considered within the process.

### **Different Globalizations**

The effect of globalization is not the same in different part of the world because it is a multidimensional phenomenon: homogenization and heterogenization. Pieterse (1994) claimed that globalization produces a third type of globalization called hybridization, but he cautioned missing critical aspects of globalization in different contexts, such as “the actual unevenness, asymmetry, and inequality in the global relations” (p. 54). That is to say, globalization has given people from different cultural backgrounds access to other worldviews and products, but there is uneven access for all people to offer counter views, which thereby creates a situation where the hegemonic worldview, values, products (the core and the transnational class) dominate peripheral areas. Therefore, the transnational classes in nation-states in periphery areas are disconnected from the population in their states, and they have more common interests with other transnational classes in other nation-states because they share economic interests, culture, and language. At the end of the day, this creates a gap between the transnational class (elite) in the periphery areas and the population of their state because the elite adopted global economic practices and assimilated to Western cultures (Miyoshi, 1993).

This practice of the transnational class is referred to as globalization from above. However, this triggers transnational activists to initiate globalization from below. To put it in perspective, Brecher, Costello, and Smith (2002) depicted globalization from above as increasing development in communication, technologies, and transportation that at the same time causes inequality, poverty, environment and democracy destruction, and also the spread of neo-liberal ideology in peripheral nations. On the other hand, globalization from above gives transnational activists advanced tools to monitor human rights issues and environmental concerns by pressuring nation-states to tackle local and global concerns. This is considered globalization from below where in essence activists use the tools provided by globalization to resist inequalities or other negatives that emanate from globalization.

Today's globalization highlights local and global problems and helps populations be aware of them via advanced communication tools. Globalization from above that advocates for technological advancement, massive communication, the spread of the Internet and making the world smaller also is accused of promoting colonization, domination, homogenization, inequality, exploitation, capitalism, and neo-liberalism for the world. As a result, globalization triggers a resistance known as globalization from below, where activists aim to fight negative consequences of mythological globalization. How will this resistance (globalization from below) function in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Will it gain more momentum within the transnational class and periphery areas, or will it dissolve between homogenization and heterogenization?



## **Saudi Arabia and Globalization**

Globalization is a domination of economic, educational, and cultural aspects of life, which is considered to be colonization of the market and the mind. Abo-Arrad (2004) argued that globalization from above in the case of Saudi Arabia can be seen in the following three areas: economic, political, and cultural. First, Abo-Arrad (2004) claimed that the economic effect of globalization from above occurs when international groups engage in a capitalization process that takes over the Saudi market. Second, Abo-Arrad (2004) argued that the political effect of globalization from above is where the American influence impacts constructing nations, which creates divisions within nations. As a result, nations become unable to resist capitalism and become reliant on it to survive. Lastly, Abo-Arrad (2004) claimed that the American cultural invasion is a third effect of globalization from above, whereby nations and individuals are not capable of seeking other alternatives that stem from their critical thinking and problem solving, and instead, they rely on Western models.

Abo-Arrad (2004) examined the reasons behind the entrenched globalization in Saudi Arabia and other countries in the *Third World*. He argued that the strategy used to force globalization includes the freeing up of international trade, the flow of international investments, a technological and information revolution, and the role transnational companies. However, the most important aspect of globalization is the technological advancement represented in the use of Internet and other forms of media. Abo-Arrad (2004) asserted that the main aim of globalization is cultural domination, which can be secured by the other factors, such as economic and political.

## Education as Globalizing Instrument

As an effort to explore the concept of hegemony, which I do not distinguish from globalization, Apple (1990) stated that there is nothing known a neutral educational institution. Every institution has an agenda, overt or covert, and that agenda is a result of conscious or unconscious practices. Apple (1990) sought a better understanding of the relationship between education and economic structure, and how that relationship relates to the concepts of knowledge and power. Apple (1990) wanted to find about how education plays a role in perpetuating economic inequalities. Moreover, he questioned the efforts of education to preserve and distribute cultural capital.

Three aspects of education are necessary to investigate: “first, schools as institutions, second, the knowledge form, and third, the educator him or herself” (Apple, 1990, p. 3). The role of schools is creating a false consensus by teaching what is *supposedly* legitimate knowledge. Questions emerge: Who chooses that knowledge to be legitimate? Whose knowledge is it? On the other hand, schools teach students a specific way to inquire, rather than letting or helping students develop their own approach to inquiry. They follow agreed-upon techniques that students are expected to follow (homogenization).

Intellectuals participate in creating relationships between social activity and education that make students objects of hegemony. Intellectuals legitimize the process of education and make it seem to be a fair process—yet that is an illusion. Apple (1990) suggested that reform can be attainable by educators’ efforts to examine the relationship between ideology and curriculum—that is, not only by questioning how students acquire this knowledge but also by including how and how much collective culture are presented

at schools. Furthermore, Apple questioned the hidden curriculum at schools and the norms that have been taken for granted. The nature of the knowledge being taught at schools is problematic, because educators do not fully know, or they ignore, the source of the knowledge and the social strata it supports. To me, education in this scenario functions as an agent for globalization to implement its agenda.

Apple (1990) saw individuals in educational and cultural apparatus interested in social control and reproduction of existing hierarchies. That is to say, schools are more concerned with distribution of dispositions and norms rather than with giving equal chances to learn skills and to acquire qualifications by all, regardless of students' societal attachments. The reason for that behavior is to maintain the hierarchical nature of societies. Apple (1990) addressed ethical obligations by researchers that make life more livable with the hope of making improvements and changes. He saw the fulfillment of that obligation as possible through collective and structured action by educators. They need to continue the journey for a more ethical and poetic understanding of curriculum in order to have a new social order and perhaps social justice.

Wexler and Whitson (1982) explored the failure and disappointing results of some radical education efforts to change the outcome of mainstream education. They noticed the active participation of students in sustaining hegemony and the reproduction of socioeconomic classes. Therefore, they believed that specific analysis of hegemony is important in order to understand the reasons behind the failure of radical changes. At first, Wexler and Whitson attempted to define hegemony as a starting point by paying attention to socio-historical context. The authors considered hegemony as the following:

A lived hegemony is always a process. It is not, except analytically, a system or a structure. It is a realized complex of experiences, relationships, and activities, with specific and changing pressures and limits. In practice, that is, hegemony can never be singular. (Wexler & Whitson, 1982, p. 31)

Moreover, hegemony is defined as “the imposition of dominant culture on non-dominant groups, particularly since the era begun by Reagan and Thatcher international economic policies” (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008, p. 69). In other words, and in a global view, educational hegemony is imposed by economically developed countries (EDCs) on less economically developed countries (LEDCs). Olaniran and Agnello (2008) argued that the globalization era began in the 1970s by the actions of corporations and by manufacturing, in which the focus was on transferring capital and consequently resulted in more production and sales more than anything else. Additionally, the researchers argued that the globalization movement sought not only economic reform but also educational and occupational restructuring. In essence, EDCs attempted to dictate the agenda for the world according to their worldview and how they wanted it to be. In return, the less developed countries have no choice but to adhere to the rules because “resistance is futile” (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008, p. 69). The economically developed countries have information technology, which is the tool and capital in the process of globalization. According to Olaniran and Agnello (2008), globalization has divided the world into the three main powers of Western Europe, America, and Asian Pacific, in addition to the rest of the world, which has no choice but to form alliances with the three main powers and to follow the rules.

Consequently, in order for the rest of the world to survive in the new world order, technologically underdeveloped countries must alter their educational systems and embrace the technological system. If not, it is inevitable that they will remain economically excluded and will reside at a lower economic status. Therefore, it is assumed that transforming local educational systems to be identical to the Western ones would be a successful move across the globe. Yet that would ignore other factors, such as cultural, social, political, and ecological factors that are unique to those countries. In essence, it would be a misuse of brainpower in those nations (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008).

It is imperative to know the dimensions of education, especially in the globalization era where societies tend to be alike in curriculum, structure, and goals due to the political nature of the world. Olaniran and Agnello (2008) stated:

There is an increased realization that globalization policy implies that education control is no longer under the direct control of a given society, especially the LEDCs who have never been involved in globalization policy setting and their chances at influencing the policy is equally small at best. . . . Education has long been seen as a way to control how people learn and also serves as agency for bringing about social and cultural changes and reproduction. . . . The pressure is to create one global culture, education, and economy whether intentional or unintentional is a direct consequence of technology and policies perpetuated and embraced by EDCs. (pp. 72-73, 76)

However, there is confusion about the concept of hegemony, and that was seen in Anderson's criticism of Gramsci's work (as cited in Wexler & Whitson, 1982). Anderson said that "Gramsci's work [is] unsuccessful and contradictory" (p. 31). Hegemony,

according to Gramsci (as cited in Wexler & Whitson, 1982) is more intellectual and moral leadership rather than coercive action. In addition to the former understanding of hegemony as *false consciousness*, the notion of process and ideology is included to become the way a dominant social group articulates the interests of other social groups to benefit itself. This is through making the situation neutral. Wexler and Whitson (1982) saw hegemony (I may add globalization) as one component of the capitalist arsenal in addition to the processes of ideology and coercive power.

Hegemony in Wexler and Whitson's (1982) perspective is shaped by a wide range of cultural domains. They include interaction and identity, organization, and education. They suggest that hegemony is maintained by not only culture and social structure, but it is also "accomplished in our day-to-day interpersonal relations" (p. 38). Hegemony contains any kind of opposition by making it just for display and expression. Therefore, it is permitted as long as it does not challenge existing structures.

### **The Periphery Region**

It is vital to offer background on my targeted education system(s), which are in the Middle East and North Africa. However, Saudi Arabia is my specific concentration, but it is also important to investigate the educational situation in the region because of the similar cultural and educational experiences of nearby peoples. Formal educational systems in some of these countries had been initiated by colonial powers in its current compulsory modern education form. However, according to Akkari (2004), education was limited to natives for two main reasons: First, the colonial powers did not want to provide education to the natives, which could contribute to the natives challenging the colonial power; and second, this restriction in education—especially, European-language

education—has maintained colonial administration and weakened pro-independence tendencies. It is not only important to know that but also to know the aftermath of these policies, which have created a stronger religious education that focuses primarily on opposing Western education and hegemony. The bottom line is that “the story of education has also been the story of post-colonial government control of education for purposes of nation building and economic development” (Akkari, 2004, p. 145). Therefore, I believe that those countries that chose to be *religion* oriented have isolated themselves from the rest of the world and thus are suffering the consequences. In other words, this has diminished the slightest hope of a beautiful (my imagination) organic relationship between the traditional and secular educations because in my assessment, they are not and should not be antithetical.

### **Globalized Education**

Creating a one-size-fits-all global education is evidentially failing, where history shows that societies resist hegemonic endeavors, either subtly or militantly. Olaniran and Agnello (2008) raised questions about the notion that technology would save the LEDCs where in fact it does not and instead deepens the dependence of those countries on industrial cultures and capital and further contributes to monoculturalism, which in return continues to marginalize the less developed countries and their cultures. Ironically, Olaniran and Agnello (2008) claimed that if the less developed countries embraced technological globalization through global education policies, they would not be able to succeed because the policymakers might change the rules of the game, or the rules might not apply equally on all participants.

Neal and Finlay (2007) explored the effects of American hegemony on education in Arab societies. The purpose of the study, which was conducted in Lebanon, was to discover the type of hegemony that existed in the region, both as externally or internally hegemonic to Arab values. Neal and Finlay (2007) raised a question: “Does the spread of American business education involve the spread of progressive business values to unprogressive parts of the world?” (p. 39). Further, the authors stressed the fact that education has a great role in social change, especially with gender inequality and corrupt leaderships in the region. However, what the authors call *Arab values* may prevent such progressive ambitions. Yet, discussing *Arab cultural values* is beyond the scope of this paper and its relation to the outcomes of schooling or of the current economic or political atmosphere.

There is a claim that American hegemony in education might produce good results for the people because the American model has given students a chance to look at corruption differently, especially when students see the Arab traditional values as perpetuating corruption. Therefore, students adapt the progressive spirit from the American textbooks (Neal & Finlay, 2007). In other words, the hegemonic influence might help underdeveloped countries, such as Lebanon, to make desirable changes. To better understand the progressive values in question that are embedded in American textbooks, the authors investigated the following values: equity, tolerance, accountability, consultation, and transparency. The question becomes, are these values embedded in hegemony, or did they pre-exist in the society prior to the introduction of American or Western education? In other words, the authors were not clear about whether the



American education style changes the values of the students to be progressive or if this hegemony reinforced pre-existing human values.

Neal and Finlay (2007) confirmed that American business education is externally hegemonic where worldwide educational systems adopt to their institutions, practices, and systems. This is not necessarily bad because it may result in fighting corruption, as claimed in the article. On the other hand, examining the idea that American education is *internally hegemonic* is not as clear as the external notion, for two reasons: First, it is incorrect and unsustainable to have Western ownership of progressive values, and second, the accuracy of measuring the change in Arab students' values because of exposure of American textbooks is hard to prove. However, the authors believed that American business education was internally hegemonic in two fashions: First, it may reinforce *pre-existing* progressive values such as tolerance and consultation, or second, it may change some traditional values antipathetic to progressive values. However, I can argue that such values (transparency, accountability, and equity) used to be the norm in Arab and Islamic societies, but something in history changed that and made them seem foreign to the region, which evidentially confirms the dynamic nature of societies where values change according to many factors.

Neal and Finlay (2007) did not believe that “the hegemonic dominance of American systems, standards, curricula, resources, and textbooks is meeting the educational needs of students in the majority world” (p. 66). The authors had reasons to believe the monopolization of the American mainstream ignored local issues and circumstances. Furthermore, this might have prevented meaningful learning because students could not relate knowledge to their local communities and realities. On another

note, students in the Arab world would be working in the region and the constant marginalization of their realities would not help them to be creative, and therefore, their local issues and realities should be the center of education.

According to Neal and Finlay (2007), there are challenges in changing the status quo. First, the *completeness* of American textbooks does not allow for inner desire or room for local creativities that discuss the local problems. In addition, busy teachers do not have the time to be creative and thus rely on materials provided by the school. Second, using the English language as a medium of instruction is troubling as well because students cannot read as fast as native speakers of English and they end up with no time to focus on local issues. Another problem is that Arab universities lack materials in Arabic that touch on local issues and, therefore, busy teachers see it as practical to use the readily available option of American textbooks. Moreover, the reliance on foreign material also introduces pedagogical problems when marginalizing local issues. Neal and Finlay (2007) summed up the education struggle in the Arab world in the following statement: “there is tripartite struggle going on between hegemony, tradition, and education” (p. 67). I argue here that the profit for international companies from textbook production supersedes local interests, and this can be done in a globalized world and capitalist societies.

### **A Cross-cultural Example**

I am an advocate of the improvement of educational systems because there is always an opportunity for better educational practices. But the questions are how we can do that and who has the right to perform this laborious task. Baker (1997) discovered this after spending lengthy time in different parts of the world, including Sri Lanka, Vietnam,

Morocco, Tanzania, Cuba, Ethiopia, and aboriginal Australia. Those countries represent different cultures, religions, customs, and traditions; however, they have one common feature, which Baker (1997) classified as resistance to Western hegemonic influences. Baker (1997) found that their ways of resisting were diverse but that restoring their cultures and values was the motive (globalization as heterogenization). Most of the nations he visited follow formal teaching approaches and understand education differently.

The idea of reforming educational systems is important, but, at the same time, is complicated. The process of reformation includes three primary obstacles: First, who the legitimate entity would be to undertake the process; second, the knowledge (curriculum) must be legitimate and relevant; and third, the method of implementing change is crucial. Therefore, these complex situations require complex solutions that stem from specific cultural contexts. In contrast, pedagogical imperialism does not produce great results but rather worsens the relationships between the dominant groups and the dominated groups. It created interruptions and misunderstanding because minorities did not fully conform to dominance; therefore, the time for new alternatives was overdue, and hopefully trust and good intentions would be the driving force for reformation efforts.

### **Possible Reasons behind Failed Educational Alternatives**

Wexler and Whitson (1982) addressed the reasons behind the distortion of other educational alternatives to change the nature of reproduction and globalized education. The failure is attributed to external constraints and mixed agendas. First, external constraints are the result of bureaucratic states and political accountability. These political constraints determine what is attempted in schools as well as distorting

unwanted alternatives. Mixed agendas, on the other hand, are related to the ambiguous role of teachers and their teacher-student relationships. This ambiguity results in a number of dilemmas that could be solved only if the teacher-student interpersonal relationship were repaired. However, the authors stated that there is no general solution for these dilemmas, but apparently interpersonal relationships are crucial in shaping identities to fit within hegemonic systems.

Knowledge of infrastructure (Wexler & Whitson, 1982) is the way to counter hegemonic theory and practice as well as to understand the mechanisms that support hegemony, especially when social methods are patterned and amenable to change. Counter-hegemony means reorganization of the different elements and the belief of the possibility of change to a new vision of social order. There are different means of achieving this goal, and education is one of them.

### **A Vision of Reform in the Globalization Era**

Educational reform in the case of Saudi Arabia to resist the negative effects of globalization and hegemony could be achieved through some strategies. Abo-Arrad (2004) suggested three strategies. The first is by quantitative expansion. This entails increasing the number of teacher preparation institutions at all levels, especially at the college level and in graduate programs. Furthermore, Abo-Arrad believed that increasing the acceptance capacity in higher education is crucial, especially when half of the Saudi population was under the age of 24 (Clary & Karlin, 2011). Second, this quantitative expansion should be *balanced* by regions where students across the country have equal chances in access as opposed to only the elites. I believe this would start a debate between equality and equity.

The third strategy is a qualitative expansion that entails first, improving teaching pedagogies to include discovery, critical thinking, dialogue, knowledge induction, and problem solving as opposed to rote methods. Second improving curriculum to concentrate on both *national* and international issues. Third: improving students' evaluations and testing. Fourth: a material improvement in school conditions to provide students with the needed technologies and structure that help them achieve their goals. Fifth: raising the awareness of the nature of capitalism that advocates for unnecessary consumerism. Sixth: investing in scientific research. Abo-Arrad (2004) highlighted the shocking status of research where the entire Arab world invested about only 1% of its GDP in research and development.

Furthermore, the statistics came from an American research entity (Abo-Arrad, 2004), which draws my attention, first, to the interest of American entities to assess the research centers in the Arab world, and second, to the lack of monitoring agencies in Arab nations to such an important issue. However, the Saudi education system focuses on hard sciences that gear students to enroll in such fields, which in return has marginalized the importance of *sociocultural* research that would address inequalities in Saudi society (Clary & Karlin, 2011). Clary and Karlin (2011) believed that the focus on hard science is understandable because of the challenges that accompany the design of a social-science curriculum.

Abo-Arrad (2004) introduced a new educational structure that suggested moving from the traditional *Educational Ladder* model to the *Educational Tree* model, which advocates for *organic* relationships between different fields in education and programs. The connection is rooted in a common culture and national identity so that the challenges

of globalization and Western hegemony can be faced. Hence, Abo-Arrad (2004) challenged the current hierarchical structure because it prevented reform efforts.

### **Possible Future Reform**

First and foremost, I believe that a socioeconomic analysis is needed in Saudi society to examine the different generations that comprise the nation. According to Yamani (2000), Saudi society consisted of three generations: those born in the 1930s in the time when the country was united; those born in the 1950s who experienced the wealth of the oil boom; and those born in the 1970s and 1980s, who faced economic and political instability and were exposed to unprecedented Western influence and values through media (cultural hegemony). Yamani's (2000) focus was on the clash between the third generation and the other generation: It has been documented that there was a huge gap between them, especially in the areas of social and political values and in the modern economic infrastructure. The major concern is on how to create a balance between the openness of the Saudi youth reformers to Western modern values—hybridization—and the local cultural values (Pieterse, 1994). The problem is that this issue has not been addressed, and therefore, the dependency on Western solutions, whether in educational, economic, or political issues, remains intact. This view, especially with members of the new generation, would result in idealizing Western societies, which in return colonizes the minds of the coming generations (conformity).

Most of the research I have examined was written by Western researchers, which is a clear showcase of the bad situation and made me question the Saudi scholars and their research efforts to provide insights for policymakers about reform. What did those educators, politicians, and other researchers who were funded by the Saudi government to

study in the West since the 1950s and 1960s do to reform their nation's education system? I ask this because reform can be interpreted differently according to the background of the researcher. For example, Rugh (2002a) saw a sign of education reform when there was "*increasing use of English as medium of instruction in the [Saudi] classroom*" [emphasis added] (p. 44). I believe it is ironic to impose another language on all students to acquire a minimum of technological development while they suffer an enormous loss in their culture, identity, and native language. In the same vein, I am not opposing everything Western. I would rather choose the necessary approach in transmitting knowledge from any possible source to make the necessary reform—and then transition to independence. We do not need to impose the English language, for example, on *all* but only on those who need to make contact with other educational systems to facilitate the reform movement. Interestingly, Rugh (2002b) was content with the new trends in Saudi society and education because there was an increase of Western-style learning, as if critical thinking and problem solving approaches are Western trademarks as opposed to human traits, and also because schools increased the dose of English language and focused more on scientific subjects. It is implied that Arabic language and culture are antithetical to success and reform. In other words, Saudis need to give up their language and culture and become more *civilized* and successful—and this happens when they imitate anything Western.

A lengthy study by (Maroun, Samman, Moujaes, & Abouchakra, 2008) addressed the status quo of the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) educational systems and socioeconomic status in those countries, of which Saudi Arabia is one. Expenditures on public education, when viewed as a share of the Saudi GDP, from the 1980s to 2005,

were almost 7% greater than many developed countries (or compared with). But ironically, these expenditures did not contribute to a desired outcome on many levels. First, the Saudi illiteracy rate remained high at 24 percent, compared with Singapore, which had an illiteracy rate of 7%, and Argentina, 3%. Second, the average enrollment rate in the GCC countries for tertiary education was 24% compared with Canada, 57%, and the Republic of Korea, 89%. Third, the official Saudi unemployment rate was 15% (conservative figure) in 2005. However, Bremmer (2004) claimed that the actual unemployment rate was greater than 20%.

Allam (2011) affirmed that the Saudi government spent \$38 billion of its 2011 budget on education, but again, the outcome was disappointing because of a radical resistance that has an extreme view of education. Because Saudi students ranked almost at the bottom on international assessments in science and math, a partnership has been established between the Ministry of Education and international companies to create a new curriculum to develop an education industry that will create smart schools.

One may question the future of the Saudi reform in education and in general when looking at the large number of students studying abroad and whether those students would be functioning as agents (conscious or unconscious) to implement the agenda of globalization or would they work to tackle the issues in a critical way by using what they have learned to improve the nation in all areas without absolute dependency on foreign models. In other words, there has to be a breaking point in social institutions that generates solutions from within the country, and Saudi Arabia must reduce its imports and its consumption.



I consider some recommendations from different studies that address reforming the Saudi education system. Allam (2011) addressed different areas in reform to include improving curriculum that focuses on math and science and less on religious studies. Decentralization of the education system represented by the Ministry of Education, even in the private schools, is essential for future reform. Decentralization does not necessarily mean privatization.

Maroun, Samman, Moujaes, and Abouchakra (2008) believed that a holistic view of education reform is the right course of action for Saudi Arabia. First, the capacity of educational institutions to provide access to many students who do not have access to university level education must be expanded. Second, education that concentrates on the market demand for highly skilled employees must be provided. The authors believed that the effect of globalization cannot be neglected but rather should be integrated into the system, with an emphasis on local values and culture. But how can this be done, especially when the Ministry of Education hires an international company to develop a national curriculum?

Third, technological development and its applications must be a focus of any educational reform. Most importantly, Maroun, Samman, Moujaes, and Abouchakra, (2008) argued that the Saudi government has crafted a great strategic plan, but there was a problem with its implementation. Most importantly, the authors recommend involving all possible stakeholders in the educational reform process.

### **Critical Vision for the Future**

First, we need to acknowledge that Saudi society and the reform process are complicated because of internal and external factors. There are global and international

pressures because of the Saudi status in the world in producing oil (one third of worldwide oil production). As for the educational pressure, there is an increasing demand for expanding English programs that entails cultural aspects, but with limited resources have been made available to achieve the goal (Donn & Al Mathri, 2010).

Second, there is a gender inequality in the Gulf States. That is to say, 48% of students in high schools are females, and only 20% of the labor market is female. Those figures call attention to the need to conduct socioeconomic studies that address the issues of gender, regional, and political inequalities.

Donn and Al Mathri (2010) introduced the idea of *soft governance*, which uses none-coercive language and discursive mechanisms as tools of globalization to achieve compliance from developing countries to the dominance of the developed countries (magistracy). Soft governance has two key features. One is in the language use, which includes “targets, outcomes, relevance of education, and education as a driver of economic prosperity” (p. 151). The second is in the labor market and includes “teacher training, public-private partnership” (p. 151).

Soft governance relies on soft tools of networking, conferences, seminars, consultations, advisory groups, and publications. The language of policy documents and publications is an important indicator of the manner in which soft governance operates in the Arab Gulf States (Donn & Al Mathri, 2010, p. 152). In other words, the dominant development discourse comes from the lens of *world vision* or rather Western, which is not necessarily compatible with all regions in the world and may trigger resistance (heterogenization). In other words, this kind of resistance may help achieve the initial

goal of globalization set up by the core nations to maintain the periphery regions in a lower status.

Philip Altbach (2006) states: “In a world divided into center and peripheries, the centers grow stronger and more dominant the peripheries become increasingly marginalized” (p. 24). In essence, this makes the Gulf States race to meet the globalization requirements in higher education, and that generates problems. Donn and Al Mathri (2010) argued that privatization of higher education in the region should not diminish the creation of indigenous knowledge. The authors noted that the Gulf States have become nations of consumption, not of production.

It has been proven that Gulf States are influenced by magistracy, which could result in disastrous higher education outcomes because of current attempts to transfer Western models to the region. Ritzer (2006) calls it McDonalization of higher education because we find the same courses and qualification wherever we go. This analogy compares the quality control of fast-food to the quality control of curriculum and courses, which are the same in private or public universities. This raises a question about the benefits of imported knowledge and its long-term benefits to the Gulf States socially, academically, and economically. In other words, educational institutions become degree-delivery machines because there is no exchange of knowledge or ideas between the center and the peripheries.

Therefore, some nations recognize the need for the creation of indigenous programs based on relevant knowledge. It is imperative to ask: “Where, in the countries of the Arab Gulf States, lie capacity building, knowledge creation, and the culture of imaginative ideas that rest at the root of any civilization (Clary & Karlin, 2011, p. 159).

Finally, opportunities in the periphery nations do not match those in the center. The periphery nations become consumers of the created knowledge. However, the nature of knowledge is dynamic because today's knowledge becomes dated tomorrow, and further knowledge is created. There is a need for a strategic plan for education reform, but the nature of such a plan is a key issue for development. Most of the research suggests imported plans from Western nations, but Donn and Al Mathri (2010) fundamentally disagreed with this premise because the authors aspire for a reform that comes from within. Their critical view envisions creating a nation that generates knowledge, not only consumes it. Donn and Al Mathri (2010) stated:

It may be that this is indeed a challenge to center-periphery conceptions of knowledge-generated societies; however, as 'international expertise' and 'innovation consultants' appear to be the backbone of the establishment of such societies, we may find once again, the reins of the progress are tied to chariots built elsewhere. (p. 162)

In the same vein, the global structure stemmed from the neoliberal ideology that racialized the world to whites and non-whites tends to blame *Third World* nation-states (people of color) for their failures, which are seen, for example, in the policies of the IMF and World Bank. Allen (2001) stated in this regard:

These prominent institutions do the bidding of the global white polity through blaming the educational conditions of these countries [financially dependent] on the lack of competition rather than the globalization of white supremacy. (p. 483)

Allen (2001) suggested alternatives to counter the effects of globalization and its instruments, first by inverting the nature of class and race relationship in the Marxist

interpretation of globalization by making race at the heart of discussion and second, by creating alliances between the powerful and privileged (whites) with the marginalized (people of color) around the world. I believe it is a great alliance to have. However, I would like to problematize the issue further: Isn't that also a form of dependency on the white savior who would help us solve our problems? Isn't that a psychological and emotional defeat for people of color because we cannot succeed without this help? I do not claim to have the answer.

Finally, if we examine the state-nations' relations between Arab countries, for example, we realize how deep the divergence is between most of these countries for political, economic, and religious sectarian reasons. That saddles us, however, with the dreadful notion of nationalism that drives people apart as opposed to creating a collective entity. It makes me question the dysfunctional groupings in the region, such as Pan-Arabism movement, the Arab League, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Questions emerge: Does the current global structure fight these groups or support some to continue their hegemonic endeavor? Do the ruling class and the bourgeoisies in the periphery nations favor the current arrangements with the superstructure of the world? If yes, how can the masses break this ugly partnership of exploitation?

## **The Language Status in Saudi Arabia: Arabic, English, or Both?**

### **Views on Language**

It is important to explore different views and considerations on language. Language is tied with identity, nationalism, and culture, but there are two dominant views. First, language is seen as idealism, and second, as instrumentation (Volosinov, 1973; Williams, 1977). Idealism depicts language as a spirit that unifies a community that shares the same language. It is also seen as an artistic phenomenon. The second view depicts language as an instrument. Therefore, it can be analyzed in a systematic and scientific manner. In other words, language is separate from human motives and emotions. It is its own entity. To clarify the two positions of language, idealism places language in the creativity and psyche of individuals, and that entails linguistic changes. Language as an instrument is a rigid system, and any variation from the norm is considered distortion.

Arabic is the national and *official language* of Saudi Arabia and most of the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) countries. But, English exists in other important capacities, which I will delve in later in the chapter. Here, I discuss the meaning of having a national language. Herder (1772/2002) demonstrated the position of European intellectuals in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, which signifies the role of a national language as a crucial entity in unifying nations. Herder claimed that language was the “*characteristic word of the race, bond of the family, tool of instruction, hero song of the fathers’ deeds, and the voice of these fathers from their graves*” (p. 153). That is to say, language is not one thing or entity but consists of many important matters. Furthermore, “language is a natural product of the human spirit” (Herder, 1772/2002, p.

150). In the same vein, Humboldt (1836/1988) saw language as “the outer appearance of the spirit of a people; the language is their spirit and the spirit their language” (p. 46). In essence, language represents the national character and identity. If we apply the view of idealism in this understanding of language, it means that a specific language in a nation is an expression of national distinctiveness, which distinguishes it from other nations. On the other hand, Mill (1861/2001) argued that a nation does not fundamentally have only one language, but language here is used as an instrument to create a “fellow feeling” to unite people around their nation. But again, the idealism’s view of language does not detach language from its cultural and social roots, and it cannot be seen as only an instrument to unify a nation.

### **The Global Spread of the English Language**

The current form of globalization goes hand-in-hand with the English language. The beginning of the English language invasion around the world started with the colonization of many areas of the world by the British Empire. In a later stage, the heavy role of the United States, politically, culturally, and economically, intensified the spread of English as the language of the world and of capitalism (Mauranen, 2003). As a result, English became the language of business, technology, *civilized* cultures, and, I may add, the perception of being educated is tied to one’s ability to speak English. Some scholars label English as a global language (Crystal, 2002), international language (Smith, 1983), world language (Conrad, 1996), and also the world lingua franca (Jameson, 1998; Mauranen, 2003). However, Kachru and Nelson (2001) stated that other languages also have been global languages, such as Arabic, Spanish, and French, but the scale of the spread of the English language has far exceeded all predecessors. To show the magnitude

of its global spread, Crystal (2002) claimed that 25 percent of the world's population is able to communicate in English. It is important to signify the shift in the tactics regarding the language policy, as Canagarajah (2005) stated, "While non-Western communities were busy working on one project (decolonization), the carpet has been pulled from under their feet by another project (globalization)" (p. 196) where the first (decolonization) attempts to reject English, and the other (globalization) demands it.

Moreover, transnational corporations have a major role in the use of English around the world (Gray, 2002), which in essence shows the links between money, power, and the political entity that almost solely benefit from the current arrangement. This is not to say English is used only for economic purposes: It also has an important cultural dimension. This takes me to the "English language conspiracy" mentioned in the work of Fishman (2006) that looked at language policy through a critical lens. The claim was that the British council and TESOL (American based) have successfully implemented a plan to teach the language around the world—overtly for educational goals but surreptitiously to empower British council and TESOL's policy and reap more economic benefits. These two agencies support the use of their textbooks and materials that subtly foster the expansion of Western culture, which in turn affect negatively local cultures and native languages. It is worth addressing an important point made by Fishman (2006) that some nations that demonstrate resistance against Western agendas—the author mentioned two countries in particular, Cuba and Saudi Arabia—concentrate on teaching English heavily in their educational apparatus to resist "conspiratorial imperialists" and also to support their own agendas through the use of the English language. In other words, some nations claim to use the English language as an instrument to resist the Western hegemonies.



A question emerges: Does that work? I claim that the English language becomes a marker of distinction and a cultural capital that only few can master, which results in socioeconomic benefits. In other words, English has two negative effects: First, it functions as a gatekeeper because students in a certain socioeconomic class can afford good schools with good English language teaching, and second, it negatively impacts a national language, culture, and identity. Al-Hazmi (2006) stated that the number of Saudi students enrolling in Anglicized scientific institutions has dropped from 32.4 percent in 1985 to 15.2 percent in 1992 and that the number of students enrolling in institutions that use Arabic as a medium of instruction has risen from 59.2 percent to 77.3 percent. In essence, these statistics show that students chose Arabized education, even though it was limited to social science and humanities, not necessarily out of desire, but rather they escaped Anglicized education (scientific and technological) because the English language is blocking their aspirations due to their lack of English proficiency. This does not necessarily help them move upward socioeconomically.

### **Economic Factor**

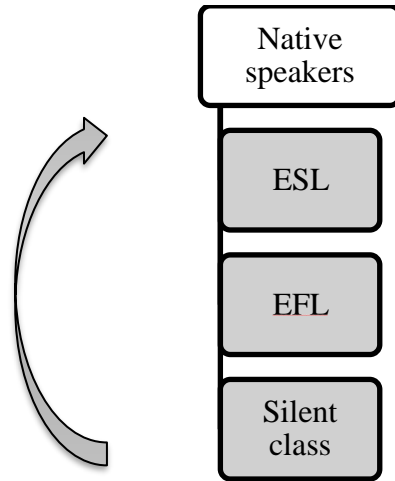
English language teaching and usage as a medium of instruction is a huge benefit for Western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada (Kaplan, 2001). International students come to those countries to learn English and to acquire academic degrees because those degrees have more weight and value in their home states and increase their chances in securing higher paying jobs. To give a sense of a scale to the contribution of international students to the U.S. economy, the net economic contribution in the year 2011-2012 was \$21.81 billion (NAFSA, 2012). Saudi Arabia has sent approximately 130,000 students (Clary & Karlin, 2011) abroad since

2005, which adds approximately \$6 billion to the Saudi annual national budget (MOHE, 2013). The number of Saudi students in the United States alone is approximately 71,000 (NAFSA, 2013) since the scholarship program began in 2006. This makes the industry of higher education in the United States the fifth largest service (Economist Global Agenda, 2002) and also a great financial exploitation for many nations. It is also important to note the importance and value of the industry of English teaching, which entails writing and publishing textbooks, private language institutions, standardized exams, and many other endeavors. This clearly produces great financial profits, mainly for nations in the West (Gray, 2002).

### **Three Positions on English Language**

Tsuda (2008) addressed English language hegemony and defined it as language domination through education, communication, economy, among others. However, this domination also causes an *English divide*. The English divide concept refers to a division created between English language speakers and non-English language speakers in terms of power and resources. In essence, Tsuda (2008) argued that this causes discrimination and inequalities. Furthermore, the English divide also stratifies English language speakers hierarchically because it creates an English-based Class System (Tsuda, 2008, p. 51). That is to say, native speakers of English would be at the top of the pyramid, followed by ESL speakers (English as a second language, people in India for example), then EFL speakers (English as a foreign language, people in Saudi Arabia), and finally at the bottom are the silent speakers (people who cannot speak English). A great analogy made by Tsuda compared the language class system to the race class system where native speakers of English are the elite or the bourgeoisie, ESL speakers are the middle class,

and EFL speakers are the working class where learning English becomes *a lifetime labor*. Finally, the silent class resides the bottom of the status ladder, but it is important to mention that the classes below the native speakers strive to move up in ladder (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* English-based Class System

The first position regarding the spread of the English language is pro-hegemonic and is supported by many authors, such as David Crystal (British linguist), who shows the inevitable force and domination of English around the world and claims that no other language has reached its *success* and outreach and no one can stop its spread (Tsuda, 2008). This movement has no shame in advocating for English to be the language of world in economy, politics, education, and in other venues and arenas.

The second position is called ‘Functional/Ideological’ (Tsuda, 2008). It looks at English as “neutral function and functional diversity,” simply to equalize the status of Standard English and nonstandard varieties of English (Indian English, Singaporean English, etc.). As a result, the *World Englishes* term emerged and has been adopted by sociolinguists such as Braj Kachru. Moreover, Tsuda (2008) stressed the word ideological in this functionalist approach because it affirms the domination of English and does not look at the power structure associated with the global spread of English.

The third position is ‘Critical/Transformative’ (Tsuda, 2008). In essence, it looks at the inequality, discrimination, domination, and injustice caused by having English as the world’s dominant language. It also exposes the ideological work and power structure that English encompasses throughout the world. Tsuda (2008) is worth quoting at length on this matter:

Phillipson and Pennycook are right in pointing out that we live in the world where English dominates and threatens other languages, functions as a domestic and international gatekeeper to create and reproduce the structure of inequalities between the English-speaking people and the non-English-speaking people. English hegemony causes English divide, affecting almost all the domains of our life including economy, politics, social classes, education, science, media and so on. The problems of English hegemony and English divide do not remain within the domain of language and communication, but it goes beyond that and affect all aspects of our life all around the world. (p. 49)

### **The Effects of English Language Hegemony**

The English language is considered a foreign language to 86 percent of the world’s population (Tsuda, 2008), and suggesting it is a language of free choice is a fallacy. That is because if nations have the free choice to use English as a medium of communication, we should ask: Do they have a free choice not to adopt English? I believe the answer is no for many reasons.

The English language poses a threat not only to the Arabic language and other native languages around the world, but it also imposes a Western communication style. Cameron (2002) states the English language via globalization is “promoting particular

interactional norms, genres, and speech-styles across languages, on the grounds that they are maximally 'effective' for purposes of communication" (p. 69).

This threat to native languages is described as linguistic imperialism by Phillipson (1992). It is perplexing that people in different nations are willing to learn the English language to have a better education, as Al-Jarf (2004a) revealed that 70 percent of her participants in the Saudi context prefer that English language teaching begins at the kindergarten level. Furthermore, 50 percent of her research participants speak to their children in English at home to improve their language skills and eventually to have a better education.

There is a dilemma in this situation because globalization via its *agents* demands more English language teaching, but its spread threatens native languages, cultures, and nationalism, not only in the former colonies of the West but also in Europe. According to Eurostat (2001), 90% of all European students prefer to learn English at the high school level. It becomes clear through these examples that Gramsci's (2000) understanding of hegemony is evident, because his concept refers to the *willingness* of people in different countries and backgrounds to learn English. In other words, there is no overt coercion to adopt such educational policies, but policymakers and people come to these conclusions through consensus. In essence, English gives people a sense of symbolic power and actual economic power. It provides them with cultural capital and projects a notion of higher status or what Bourdieu (1977) called *habitus*. Kachru (1984) depicted the power of the English language as "a symbol of modernization [that] offers an extra arm for success and mobility in culturally and linguistically complex and pluralistic societies" (p. 176). Therefore, people want to learn English not just because they are obsessed or

mentally colonized, but also because the English language provides them with financial gains by securing jobs.

Canagarajah's (1999) definition of pedagogical imperialism contains two characteristics. The first refers to the use of the center's textbooks and teaching materials, such as those from the United States and United Kingdom. The second characteristic is the use of the same teaching approach that is used in the center: for example, adapting the teaching method to a process-oriented versus product-oriented approach that periphery communities such as the Tamil community in Sri Lanka. The situation in Saudi Arabia is different. Prior to 9/11, textbooks and teaching materials were prepared by the Saudi Ministry of Education, but later textbooks began to include certain aspects of Western culture. In this case, we see a clear linguistic imperialism but for different reasons. It is not just in the teaching of the language but also in how to teach it, what to include, and what to exclude.

In the same vein, Tsuda (2008) reminded us of two possible devastating outcomes of the dominance of the English language. The first is "Linguicide," which means the killing of languages; this phenomenon initially was attributed to the spread of Western modernization that began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Tsuda believed that humanity has lost 6,000 languages in the past 500 years, along with their values, cultures, philosophies, and souls. The second outcome of the English language hegemony is "linguicism," referred to by Phillipson (1992) as "ideologies and structures where language is the means for effecting or maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources" (p. 55). Macedo (2003) demonstrated an example of this outcome when some students at MIT petitioned the administration to not hire professors with foreign accents because it was difficult for

them to understand their English. Here, Macedo (2003) stated, “These students could have kept Albert Einstein from teaching in U.S. universities” (p. 12). This scenario demonstrates the English divide in action.

### **English in Saudi Arabia**

Historically, and according to Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996), English appeared in Saudi Arabia in 1924 in elementary schools, and English teaching constituted 12 percent of teaching in general. The status of English language remained the same until 1943 when a decision was made to stop teaching English at the elementary level and instead to introduce it at the intermediate and secondary school levels. The number of classes was six per week but later was reduced to four. The debate remains the same about when to start teaching English (Al-Hazmi, 2003). English was the only foreign language taught in both regular and evening Saudi schools. In 1936, the government established the first evening school that was devoted solely to teaching English. In higher education, the first English department was established in 1957 at King Saud University for male students and in 1972 for female students. Private centers recognized the importance of English and, therefore, established the first center in 1960 for both male and female students.

Saudi Arabia falls in the third circle (expanding circle), according to the description of Kachru and Nelson (2001). This means English is used for pragmatic purposes such as trading, communication, and for technical use. However, this status most likely will not be permanent, especially after 9/11 and its consequences on Saudi Arabia and the entire region.

The recognition of the importance of the English language was not only for educational purposes but also for Saudi ministries and public establishments, such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals. I believe the latter considers English a very important asset due to the vital role of oil production in both the Saudi and global economies. The private sector was also aware of the role of English in the world and, therefore, established centers for teaching English as well as private schools that teach English as a main subject beginning in kindergarten (Al-Abed Al Haq & Smadi, 1996).

The reason for introducing English in these schools was because families of high socioeconomic status wanted their children to be better educated in English than their counterparts who graduated from public schools. In addition, parents wanted their children to be exposed to Western-style education, which would help them pursue their education at Western universities (cultural and language capital). This approach would also help them to gain native-like competence in English.

The aims of teaching English are slightly different depending on the level in question, but at the secondary level, the aims are stated by the Ministry of Education as follows as cited in the work of Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996):

- To afford the secondary schools pupil a window on the world.
- To give secondary school pupils an experience of delight through reading samples of English that have universal appeal, in both arts and sciences.
- To cultivate the pupil's critical thinking, a useful adjunct to intelligent reading of English texts.



- To give play to the pupil's imagination by means of imagery in poetry and visualization of character.
- To provide the pupil who intends to join the university with an adequate knowledge of English to help him in his future studies.
- To provide the pupil who finishes his formal education with sufficient knowledge of the language to help him in his vocation.
- To enable the pupil to gain a reasonable command of English in order to be in a better position to defend Islam against adverse criticism and to participate in dissemination of Islamic culture. (p. 461)

Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) surveyed 54 religiously committed individuals with the minimum qualifications of a first university degree. The main findings of the authors were that, religiously committed people in this study strongly desired the use of the Arabic language as a medium of instruction at schools and universities for both science and humanities. However, at the same time, teaching English was seen as both a religious and nonreligious instrument. For religious purposes, English can be used in teaching non-Arab Muslims and also for preaching Islam in non-Arabic speaking communities outside of Saudi Arabia. The desire to learn English is constituted by a need for modern technological assimilation, better job opportunities, and economic development. However, I disagree with the words *technological assimilation*, because English prevents Saudi Arabia in the long run from being technologically independent.

The participants did not believe that teaching English would negatively influence their identities or the status of the Arabic language because the languages are used in different domains. In other words, exposure to English does not translate to linguistic or

cultural inferiority. That is because of the strong ideological and sentimental attachment to the language of one's religion. However, they believe that Arabic is more expressive, more logical, and more sacred, and thus, the religion will be sustained (Al-Abed Al Haq & Smadi, 1996). The participants differentiate between the language and its native speakers and culture, and, therefore, they do not correlate learning English with imperialistic purposes. That seems to be justified because of the low percentage of people in Saudi Arabia who watch or listen to foreign media at the time of the study.

### **New Look at the English Language in Saudi Arabia**

In the wake of 9/11, Saudi Arabia was put under huge pressure from the West, especially by the United States, to enact reforms in its educational system (Elyas, 2008). The White House attributed this notion of extremism to the curriculum (religious teaching) in the system. For the purpose of this paper, I will focus on the demand for changes from the United States regarding English teaching in Saudi Arabia. The United States required Saudi Arabia to begin introducing English alongside Western cultural studies in elementary schools in an attempt to create some sort of tolerance among the Saudis toward the West and to establish understanding of the *other*. This raises a question: which American culture are we talking about? This initiative faced great opposition through the media from 61 Saudi sheikhs (religious leaders), including university presidents, professors, and educators, because they thought this would lead to Westernization of students and threaten local and Islamic values. Under tremendous pressure from the American government, the program was implemented, and Saudi Arabia recruited 935 English teachers from abroad. However, due to inadequate financial resources to support the program, especially after Saudi Arabia came out of the second

Gulf War, the result of implementing such a program has been to reduce the daily number of religion classes from four to one. Teaching had become more about English and less about Islam and Arabic (Elyas, 2008). This raises a question: What kind of relationship does Saudi Arabia have with the West/United States? Regardless of the reasons behind this new policy, it says something about a hierarchical and hegemonic relationship. Elyas (2008) stated:

English is served in the Middle East, and especially in the Gulf States, as a container of ideologies which may result in reshaping the ideas impeded in it, and therefore, [it sends] the wrong messages to the society in general. . . . English language was (and still is) one of the major weapons with which the West launched its massive intellectual and cultural onslaught against Muslims. (p. 36)

Therefore, the role of the English language at present has been to de-Islamize Saudi Arabia as opposed to the situation under the British Empire. Then, the English language served as a tool for linguistic imperialism and cultural alienation. This situation in Saudi Arabia has created debate among Arab English teachers on the TESOL Islamia discussion forum. The reason is that most EFL materials in the Arab world are Euro-American inspired and do not relate to local values or issues. This role of hegemonic English could create more conflict and clash between “Us and Others” (Elyas, 2008).

Interestingly, by looking at the results of the study conducted on a group of freshmen students at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia, Al-Abed Al Haq and Smadi (1996) found different attitudes among the students, Arab linguists, and English teachers. The students agreed (for the most part) that teaching the English language along with Western culture is necessary to improve Saudi Students’ English comprehension.

After the changes were made in the Saudi educational system, the students did not believe that teaching English was for imperialistic purposes or that it negatively affected their Arab identity. Half of the surveyed students believed a greater emphasis on teaching English would not negatively affect their values to the extent that their Saudi Arabian culture and Islamic identity would be diminished (Elyas, 2008). I question this notion because the nation probably has internalized/normalized the situation. It became abnormal, and when one proposes revitalization of the Arabic language, especially in today's globalized world.

Elyas (2008) suggested that due to increasing globalization, English is needed now more than ever in the Arab world and in Saudi Arabia, the heart of the Islamic world. After 9/11, Arabs needed to know English because a lot has been said and written about them and their faith. They, more than any other peoples, need to know how to interact with the West.

### **The Status of Arabic and Possible Ways to Save It**

Al-Jarf (2004b) advocated the importance of focusing on Arabic as a first language because of national identity, linguistic, and psychological reasons that would affect children. She believed that having a strong foundation in one's first language would help students learn a second. The author recommended correcting misconceptions that parents had regarding second-language acquisition by paying more attention to how schools teach English rather than when to teach it. Interestingly, she also recommended improving the teaching of the Arabic language to make it more appealing, and she also emphasized the importance of improvements in teacher training. She suggested including attractive short stories in Arabic, which would make students interested in improving

their learning and help them become more attached to their language and culture. Finally, the use of new technology, such as the Internet, is important to enhance students' learning of their first language. The author's main concern was the possibility of the abandonment of Arabic language in science, math, and other fields caused by the domination of the English language.

Al-Jarf (2004a) conducted another study that explored the attitudes of youth about the usage of Arabic and English as mediums of instruction. She found that 45 percent of the participants, from both The Jordanian University (Jordan) and King Saud University (Saudi Arabia) preferred to educate their children in international schools where English was the only language of instruction. On the one hand, 96 percent of the participants in the study believed that the Arabic language should be used only in the fields of Arabic literature, history, and education studies. On the other hand, the same group believed that English should be used in the fields of medicine, engineering, and computer science. Most importantly, students showed a great respect and appreciation for the English language while they did not show the same to the Arabic language and believed that because of the big gap between the two languages pertaining to terminology and research, it is a crippled language.

Interestingly enough, the participants did not see Arabization efforts in the fields of medicine, engineering, pharmacy, and computers as something useful because such a process would occur only over a long period of time and would result in transliteration instead of having genuine Arabic terms. The participants saw doing so as confusing because those terminologies are attached to English more than to Arabic, and the use of the English language helps one to communicate with the rest of the world better than

does Arabic. Supporting their claims, students did not consider the Arabic language a good medium of instruction at the university level because of the lack of scientific research and resources.

Al-Jarf (2004a) stressed the important roles that should be taken by the Arab governments to promote the use of Arabic in hospitals and companies in an attempt to limit the harm of English invasion. She also advised the Arab governments to learn from the experiences of other countries—Indonesia, Malaysia, and France—in preserving their local languages. For example, France established a French academy to protect its language by making a law that forbids the use of English words instead of French words, even if the English word is more common and widespread. On the other hand, Arabic organizations such as TESOL Arabia, unfortunately and ironically, promoted the use of English as the medium of instruction in Arabic schools and universities. Al-Jarf concluded her study by warning Arabic educational institutions not to surrender to the new pressures facing their countries, especially after 9/11. She condemned the retreating status of publishing in Arabic juxtaposed with the increasing publications in English. Misconceptions among students today who favor using English exclusively in local schooling systems need to be looked at from an ideological and a critical lens.

As an effort to promote the use of the Arabic language and to enhance its status among its speakers, Al-Zoman (2003) studied the possibilities of using Arabic letters and numbers in Internet domain names instead of Roman letters and numbers. Usage of the Internet is an indication of a country's development, both economically and technologically. The percentage of the population in the Arab world who use the Internet is 1.6 percent, according to a 2003 report of the United Nations Development Program—

and that is exceptionally low. The author believed that this could be attributed to the use of English in the network and that not all Arabs were capable of dealing with English. Al-Zoman (2003) saw a necessity of using Arabic language instead of English on the Internet to create more opportunities for a wider range of people in Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab world. However, this is no easy task because of the complexity of the Arabic language. For instance, the Arabic language uses diacritical marks to distinguish between words and also uses a discursive writing system.

Consequently, Al-Zoman (2003) considered Arabizing Internet domain names as a vital action for future plans of electronic government and trading. Therefore, the Internet should be available to all, not just to those who know English. Nevertheless, Al-Zoman strongly believed that technology should serve the language—Arabic—and not the opposite. In other words, he thought the Arabic language should be protected from harming its core rules, such as unifying the letters instead of using each letter separately. Therefore, technology should be adjusted to serve that purpose. The solutions should be derived from the language itself and should not use solutions from other languages or incorporate characters from other languages, such as English.

Al-Jarf (2005) shed light on the historical influence of Arabic on many languages in the world. The Arabic language holds the fifth place, according to the number of speakers, which is more than 200 million speakers. On the other hand, most influential languages have borrowed heavily from Arabic. For example, English has borrowed almost 3,000 words, and Spanish more than 5,000. Al-Jarf's exploratory study showed that the situation is the reverse now. Her subjects were 350 female students at the colleges of medicine, science, pharmacy, and computer engineering at King Saud

University. Her survey revealed that the English language is the medium of instruction in those colleges and that students do not study the Arabic equivalents of English technical terminologies because most of the textbooks are in English. The study showed that the students have misconceptions about the Arabization process. They thought the process was limited to transliteration or borrowing words from other languages. As a matter of fact, students do not know about the “Saudi Arabic Terminology Databank hosted by KACST” (Al-Jarf, 2005, p. 2), an organization that deals with Arabization.

Therefore, Al-Jarf (2005) recommended the inclusion of courses in the Arabization process as part of Arabic language requirements in those colleges. On the other hand, students at those colleges should study Arabic equivalents of English terms, and that should be part of their grades. To promote Arabization, Al-Jarf suggested that faculty members participate in this process by publishing books and articles in Arabic with Arabized terminology. In addition, Al-Jarf suggested using Arabic should become a requirement for faculty promotions. As for the students’ promoting Arabization, they should be encouraged to write their theses or dissertations in Arabic, and that should be made a requirement. Finally, Al-Jarf stressed the need to familiarize students and faculty with the terminology databank and to make it accessible to them. Moreover, it is important to update the “terminology databank and [it] must be used in writing specialized books in Arabic” (Al-Jarf, 2005, p. 2).

### **The Status of Teaching English in Saudi Arabia**

Al-Jarf (2004a) believed that English teachers’ preparation in Saudi Arabia is problematic; therefore, on-the-job training is the way to improve their teaching through more exposure to new teaching methods. Al-Hazmi (2003) described EFL (English as a



foreign language) preparation as “nonsystematic and inadequate” (p. 341). When looking at the outcomes of teaching English at Saudi public schools, the results are not encouraging. Stimson (1980) stated:

Sadly, at the other end of the scale, six years of English teaching in the [public] schools has almost no effect at all, and many pupils can hardly utter or write a correct sentence, apart from one that has been learned by heart. (p. 1)

After studying English for 11 years in the Saudi public school system, my English learning experience is equivalent to the findings described by Stimson (1980). This speaks to the poor teaching methods in Saudi Arabia and accounts for the time wasted on learning material not beneficial to students for future use. Therefore, I believe that the entire protocol of teaching English in Saudi Arabia should be examined and evaluated seriously. Why do officials continue to teach the language without useful teacher training, and why does the government waste resources in developing materials? I believe efforts should be directed to help promote Arabization and to retrieve the Arabic language status in the hearts of its speakers, thus enhancing research and publications in our beloved language. It disturbs me when some participants showed disrespect to the Arabic language because they think Arabic is not the language of science. Sincere efforts from the government are needed to rescue the language and to reduce independence on a foreign language or educational models, standards, and communication styles. Saudi Arabia has a wide range of problems—primarily literacy—along with other educational and social issues. I believe that the right action is to focus critically on these challenges: Arabization, illiteracy, native language status, local culture—and not so much on teaching English. It is clear that not all Saudi people will learn it nor desire to learn it.

Therefore, why do policymakers focus on English? Are they interested in stratifying the society based on the possession of a language capital? Who can afford to possess it? It is apparent to me that the English language has become a marker of distinction to those on the top of the hierarchy. The claim that schools offer equal opportunities to learn English is a proven fallacy, because it takes more than six years (600 hours) to learn a second language and also better equipped schools.

### **Reasons behind Anglicized Higher Education in Saudi Arabia**

I previously mentioned the official status of the English language set by the Ministry of Education, which is supposedly limited and used when necessary to keep up with advancements in science and technology. However, in reality, it became the official language of science and technology, and the pedagogic rationale behind using English as an instrument is described as fallacious (Troudi, 2002). Troudi delved further in his argument to pinpoint the damages inflicted on the Arabic language:

Arabic will be seen as the language of literature, theology, social and emotional communication. Educationalists put forward many reasons as to why Arabic cannot be used to teach the sciences namely, lack of resources and textbooks in Arabic, the huge translation effort and long term projects needed for such an endeavor, and the time needed to train lecturers to switch to another language. The other argument in this competitive world, developing countries need to race against the clock to catch up with technological and industrial innovations and information technology. One needs to think of the scientists in Japan, China and Taiwan to see the weakness and fallacy of this argument. (p. 6)

Hence, this is why Al-Jarf's (2004a) participants preferred English instruction in the realm of science and preferred Arabic in other areas. That is not to say that the situation in Japan, for example, is near perfection because English poses threats to the national language, culture, and identity (Kawai, 2004). However, I speculate that Troudi meant that the Japanese language is used in a greater extent in science compared with a much worse situation of Arabic. In essence, there is a cultural and ideological division in the Saudi context and in Arab nations at large that coincides with the language division of the use of Arabic in one domain and English in another, which was described by Al-Shammary as "the most malicious conspiracies of post-colonialism" (as cited in Al-Hazmi, 2006, p. 3).

Students in higher education become victims of this language policy, in addition to further abandonment of Arabization and translation, and finally of over-dependence on Anglophone universities. Al-Hazmi (2006) argued that Saudi policymakers should diversify their political and educational relationships by establishing new ones with other nations, such as Japan, China, and Russia.

### **Future Vision for English and Arabic**

An Arabization effort is one way to alleviate the status of the Arabic language among the Saudi population (Al-Hazmi, 2006; Al-Jarf, 2004a). However, Al-Abed Al-Haq (as cited in Al-Hazmi, 2003) added that the Arabization process does not start with lexical focus but rather with psychological and ideological assessment. Al-Hazmi (2006) said in this regard: "Arabizing lexical items is of no use so long as foreign influence dominates the Arabic mentality" (p. 5).

One may ask why Arabize because the process involves a great deal of financial and human resources? First, Al-Hazmi (2006) argued that human beings are capable of understanding thoroughly, expressing themselves clearly, and thinking creatively in their native tongues. Second, Saudi studies showed positive attitudes toward using Arabic as a medium of instruction in the field of engineering where 75% of faculty and 73% of the students in a Saudi university favor Arabic (Al-Hazmi, 2006). Furthermore, 80% of the surveyed medical students reported that they saved a third of their time when they read their materials in Arabic compared with English. Likewise, 72% of the students saved a third of their time when writing in Arabic compared with English, and 75% reported that their ability in answering discussion questions was better when they used Arabic. Third, many Saudi students have a linguistic problem in the Arabic language, and it has shown a clear deterioration in recent years. Al-Saad stated (as cited in Al-Hazmi, 2006):

The Ministry of Education has completely sidestepped public opinion and embarked on an extensive campaign to promote the English language at the expense of Arabic. We wished if such concern was directed at promoting Arabic at a time when the mother language is experiencing a dangerous slide at many levels. The ministry is well aware of this deterioration and possesses documents that substantiate it. The deterioration is especially evident among our college students where writing, speaking and expressing oneself in Arabic is a real problem for many. (p. 9)

Additionally, a report prepared by the United Nations (United Nations Development Program , 2003) stated that the condition of the Arabic language was severe and faced a real crisis involving vocabulary, grammar, usage, documentation, creativity, and also in terms of theory. To show the scope of translation and Arabization efforts in Saudi Arabia from 1931 to 1992, only 502 books were translated from foreign languages into Arabic and all were in social sciences (Al-Hazmi, 2006). The UNDP report found that only 4.4 books were translated from foreign languages into Arabic in the Arab world between 1980 and 1985, which means less than one book per million juxtaposed with 519 books per million and 920 books per million in Hungary and Spain respectively.

Arabization is not an easy task, but for it to succeed, Arab nations must move from the state of consuming knowledge to the state of producing knowledge, as stated by Donn and Al Mathri (2010) and also by Barakzai (2002), when he said:

It is the education system of Japan, Taiwan, and Korea that are the sources of research, innovation, and production. The body of knowledge that is constantly produced and accumulated in indigenous languages, like Japanese, is then transmitted through the Japanese language in the education system. The crucial question is what knowledge, information, and technology are being produced using the Arabic language, in the Arabian Gulf countries, or in the Arab world, for that matter? (p. 43)

Al-Jarf's (2004b) work interests me because it helps me, first, in understanding the nature of the teaching system in Saudi Arabia, especially during its early stages. Students need

to be better motivated and have stronger engagement in their education in order to attain greater achievements. In short, her critique about the preaching tone in the Arabic language classes should be reconsidered, especially when students already have many classes that teach religion. In other words, the suggestion is that Saudi Arabia should offer reading classes using Arabic for science, technology, and critical thinking.

On the other hand, according to studies of Al-Jarf (2005) and of Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi, (1996), students' attitudes, especially in higher education, show that there is a consensus about the sole use of English as a medium of instruction. I am not in a position to make a judgment on those participants, but I inquire about the status of Arabic in the future, either in the hearts of the population or as a language of science, research, and education. I believe the way to rectify the current situation and prevent more damage to our beloved language is through Arabization efforts. Arabization efforts should be enhanced to convey knowledge from the English language and then build on a solid foundation. Arabization may appear to be a laborious task, but without empowering the language used in academia, the status of the language will continue to deteriorate.

### **What Can be Done Regarding this Dilemma?**

Al-Hazmi (2006) advocated for a twofold solution facing the deteriorating status of the Arabic language. First, he looked at the language policy in Saudi Arabia from a critical lens to include the Arabization process that deals with mental colonization (ideological aspect) and technical aspect (lexical aspect). Al-Hazmi (2006) and Al-Jarf (2005) acknowledged the importance of the English language and its influence and the benefits it brings locally. However, there is a great need to improve teaching pedagogies. Al-Hazmi (2006) proposed that the "600 hours of English that students receive over a six-

year period be lumped together and offered as obligatory intensive courses for science sections and optional for literary ones during the last two years of secondary school” (p. 8).

What can be done about language in education policy? Al-Hazmi (2003) and Canagarajah (2005) seemed to agree on the principle that this issue should be taken to the larger local communities to determine policy. Al-Hazmi envisioned the process as a bottom-up process, not top-down.

The reliance on the English language and on Western models is a symptom of a bigger problem. I think Saudi Arabia is mentally colonized, and making the matter worse is that many people consciously or unconsciously are oblivious to the issue. They chose an easier way by being functionalists to gain some benefits instead of being morally cognizant of the role of education in a society. My hope is not to end mental colonization because it would take decades, but I want to start a movement or organize resistance and change, and I believe Palmer (2007) said it best:

I began to see that there is a “movement mentality,” in which resistance is received as a place everything begins, not ends. In this mentality, not only does change happen in spite of institutional resistance, but resistance helps change happen. The resistance itself points to the need for something new. It encourages us to imagine alternatives. And it energizes those who are called to work toward those ends. (p. 171)

Tsuda (2008) provided a counter narrative for the global spread of the English language. He outlined three possible alternatives to tackle the invasion of the English language. First, Tsuda (2008) suggested a monolingual approach. It refers to choosing a politically

neutral language in global communication, which may well be a language with the smallest number of speakers. The other option in this approach is using an artificial language, such as Esperanto (created by a Polish doctor in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). The rationale behind this approach was to debunk the English language because it was politically and culturally biased because it became the *de facto* language of communication without any discussion, and it served only certain nations more than others.

The second approach offered by Tsuda (2008) is a multilingual. That is to say, there is no need to impose one language in communication for the sake of equality between people and languages. This approach considers a language “as an important component of one’s identity, pride, dignity, not just as an instrument” (p. 53).

Furthermore, linguistic issues are considered as a human rights issue. Therefore, Tsuda (2008) proposed the Ecology of Language Paradigm model, which perceives the linguistic issue not only as human right issue but also as environmental issue because the global ecology of language has been disturbed as we have seen in the case of Linguicide.

The third approach is Global Scheme, which demands a creation of international law to protect languages. According to a report from UNESCO that was adopted in 2001, improvements have been made in the promotion of cultural diversity. In 2005, UNESCO adopted, by an overwhelming majority of its delegates, the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression; only the United States and Israel opposed the agreement (Tsuda, 2008). In the same vein, the approach also advocated for global ways of redistribution of power and resources through global taxes such as an Internet tax—on Internet users—to remedy the digital divide; a Tobin tax, for international speculative financial transaction; and finally, an English tax. The English



tax would be levied on communication that uses the English language as the language of international communication. This fund would be allocated to the nations with less power as an effort to support affected communities. It is another way of the same principle of reparations for the racial oppression and slavery mentioned in the work of Thompson-Miller and Feagin (2008) faced by African nations by colonization and also by African Americans in the United States by laws such as the Jim Crow laws.

### **Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods**

I used critical discourse analysis (CDA) as my methodology. It was not an easy decision because initially I wanted to capture every aspect and angle of the issue, but a decision had to be made. However, I must distinguish between discourse analysis (DA) and CDA. The purpose of DA is to examine the language patterns in use, depending on the researcher's approach and the understanding of language and discourse. DA has two major views related to language: The first considers language as a structure and the second as functional. To illustrate, the structural view considers language as referential in which meanings are transmitted through the language. In other words, language is above the sentence and clause level. In the functionalist perspective, language is seen as a foundation for social reality as meanings are not transmitted but rather are created by communicators, which in part creates social reality (Shiffrin, 1994). In other words, discourse in the functional view is a system where social functions are realized via taking a social constructionist view, not a referential view.

It is also important to understand the researcher's point of view and approach to DA. That is to say, DA can be categorized into four approaches (Taylor, 2001): first, the language itself, not the language in use, which parallels the structural view of discourse (language as referential). The remaining three approaches examine the language in use, but they are not identical because they define context differently. The second approach defines context in interpersonal situations, such as lying or arguing. The third depicts it as social and cultural, and it analyzes the language in use in situations when a difference in power relations exists, such as professor-student, doctor-patient, or superior-subordinate.

And the fourth approach focuses on context in the larger society and on historical structures, such as imperialism, colonialism, inequalities, or capitalism, etc.

CDA adopts the fourth approach as its methodology because it looks at discourse at the macro level and from a historical perspective. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) recognized the following eight principles as the characteristics of CDA, which correspond with the fourth approach of discourse analysis:

1. CDA addresses social problems.
2. It considers power relations as discursive.
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture.
4. Discourse does ideological work.
5. Discourse is historical.
6. There is a mediated link between text and society.
7. CDA is interpretive and explanatory.
8. CDA is a social action.

It is imperative to analyze these principles, because they make CDA unique. The second, third, fourth, and eighth principles clearly suggest that language cannot be considered referential in CDA, but rather should be considered as functional because language in this understanding generates power, does ideological work, and causes social actions while the referential view reflects only what is out there. Principle No. 5 is a key difference because it connects the past and the present in the understanding of discourse. To illustrate, CDA takes into account different contexts, such as historical, political, economic, cultural, and social. Finally, the first principle deals with the idea of reproduction when it looks at social problems that stem from unequal power relations. In

this sense, CDA focuses on power relations, domination, unequal power structures, and discrimination, among others. In other words, it attempts to interpret the reproduction of social problems that emanate from the eight issues cited above. Here are some examples of what CDA has been used to analyze: Hoey (1996) analyzed the definitions of men and women in an English dictionary; newspaper articles on illegal immigration in the United Kingdom (van Dijk, 1996); the political discourse in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and France in their parliament or congress, (van Dijk, 1997); how magazines represent women transitionally; the phenomenon of education discourse about the marketization of university education (Fairclough, 1995); and educational and scholarly discourse (Aronowitz, 1988; Apple, 1979; Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu et al., 1994; Giroux, 1981).

CDA adopts theoretical and methodological perspective to discourse. That is to say, it is not a method or a theory that can be applied to social problems (van Dijk, 2001a). For this reason, researchers must conduct a thorough theoretical analysis of the social problem in question in order to choose which discourse and social structures are to be analyzed. Once that has been done, the researcher must come up with a suitable research method that is dependent on the characteristics of the data, on research question(s), and on the researcher's philosophical or theoretical positions. Because CDA does not offer specific procedures or pathways in analyzing discourse but rather offers a perspective or framework, the researcher must generate appropriate methods for analysis that correspond with their theoretical conceptualization of their study. Therefore, CDA differs from positivistic research (Taylor, 2001) because the latter separates theories from methods in the sense that well-established methods would produce *objective* or *bias-free*

knowledge. In other words, CDA integrates theories and methods (Wodak, 2001b), which make theories inform methods, and those methods should not conflict with the theories.

What is the difference between DA and CDA? The latter analyzes discourse critically or what van Dijk (2001a) called “discourse analysis with attitude” (p. 96). CDA follows epistemological and ontological assumptions that stem from Western Marxism and focuses on cultural issues under capitalism. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) argued that CDA is grounded by Marxist theories of the Frankfurt School, Gramsci, Althusser, Volosinov, and Foucault’s discourse perspectives. The meaning of critical or critique, according to Fairclough (1995), was to uncover or demystify the relationships of interconnected things. It is due to concepts such as hegemony, ideology, and power that CDA and critical studies focus on as they are not visible or obvious. Critical studies aim to investigate the status quo or what is called *common-sense* because ideology represents itself as such and because hegemony is maintained by social consent. It is what has been naturalized in a society that might be problematic. CDA as a qualitative research aims to critique how meanings are made. Furthermore, CDA aims to understand and explain social norms and inequality, and it also questions how power, through language, is realized in a society.

CDA attempts to connect the micro (discourse) with the macro (society and its structure and stratification/power), which seems not to be obvious (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993, 2001a, 2001b; Wodak, 2001a). The question then becomes: What mediates discourse and society? It appears that the definition of the CDA approach determines this aspect. For instance, on one hand, for Halliday (1994), the critical linguist, Hodge and Kress (1993) considered the ideological function of grammar and via linguistic aspects,

such as vocabulary, grammatical structures, or word choice, to be the mediator between discourse and society. On the other hand, for van Dijk (1993), it was a shared social cognition that mediated text and power structure—and that is the position I take in this analysis.

### **Discourse Research and Social Structures**

In this research, I focused on educational discourse, even though it was a difficult task to precisely isolate from other discourses, such as political and economic, because they are intertwined and closely connected. The second part of van Dijk's question when using CDA as a methodology was: What is the social structure that interested me as the researcher? The social structures that interested me were those of the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) countries and the social consequences resulting from the partnership with the Group of 8 (G8) countries. BMENA region included Arab and Arabic-speaking countries in North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia), Gulf States (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates), in addition to Afghanistan, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen. The G8 countries were Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States.

The G8-BMENA Partnership was formed in 2004, and the official rationale behind its establishment was defined at length by the U.S. Department of State as the following:

From an idea of partnership to a growing reality, the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) Initiative represents genuine co-operation between the G8 and European nations and the governments, business and civil society of the

region, in order to strengthen freedom, democracy and prosperity for all. The leaders of the G8 industrialized nations and countries of the BMENA launched the Partnership for Progress and a Common Future - a blueprint for how G8 and Middle Eastern countries could best work together to support indigenous calls for reform - at the G8 Sea Island, Georgia, summit in June 2004. Since then, a number of supportive nations and international financial institutions have offered to support and lead various initiatives elaborated at Sea Island, and the role of civil society has become increasingly significant.

Governments and people of the region have expressed their wish to see democracy and freedoms expanded. The inaugural Forum for the Future in Rabat in December 2004 established a process of dialogue among G8 and regional governments in pursuit of these aims and underwrote seven ambitious initiatives formulated at the Sea Island summit. Since the first Forum, civil society groups and lead partner countries have made significant advances in this agenda and focused on transparency of governance, women in the workplace, legal reform and human rights.

The yearly Forum for the Future is a centerpiece of the BMENA partnership by providing an international venue to support the reform voices in the region. The Forum permits the partners and other supportive countries and organizations to engage on political, economic and social reform on a regular basis. (U.S.

Department of State Archives, 2001-2009, para. 1)

In looking at this partnership, my approach was to understand the underlying agenda of this initiative, which included anything related to education and educational policies and

reforms produced by the governments of these countries and their representatives. The time frame I chose for my analysis began at the establishment of this partnership in 2004 through its final meeting in 2013. I included official documents produced by the G8, by BMENA countries, and by the civil societies in their annual meetings that I was able to access online and by contacting several international organizations. These include any documents pertaining to education and educational policy published by G8 and BMENA countries from 2004 to 2013 from their annual meetings. My research questions guided and limited my study.

### **Research Questions**

1. How has the G8 and the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) Partnership affected and shaped educational and social reforms in the region since its establishment in 2004?
2. What type of discourse was deployed to perpetuate hegemonic and hierarchical relationships that sustain unequal status between the G8 and BMENA countries?
3. How do the G8 representatives control the BMENA public discourse?
4. How does such discourse control the mind and the action of the BMENA countries, and what are the social consequences of such control?

### **Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

As stated, van Dijk (2001b) proposed that critical discourse analysis (CDA) does not follow a specific research direction nor does it follow a unitary theoretical framework. We can have different types of critical discourse analyses due to the previously cited eight principles that guide CDA, which result in diverse theoretical and analytical approaches. That is to say, the analysis of news conferences or newspapers is



different from the analysis of daily conversations, even though there is an overarching theoretical and conceptual framework. This is because of the type of questions that specifically address discourse structures and how they are deployed in the process of reproduction of dominance, and this can be found in newspapers, reports, and even in conversations. Consequently, scholars of CDA highlight vocabulary that addresses the notions of dominance, power, institutions, reproduction, and social order, among others. With this in mind, I focused on the following four concepts to develop a critical and theoretical framework that related or mediated discourse, cognition, and society.

**Macro vs. Micro.** The reason for choosing the CDA as my research methodology was because I intended to bridge the gap between the micro and macro levels of analysis. It is this relationship between the two that forms one unit of every conversation or experience we have or observe. On one hand, micro analysis addresses language use, word choices, and verbal interaction. And on the other hand, macro analysis focuses on dominance, power, and inequality between social groups or even between nation states. For example, when a group such as the G8 held an annual meeting, it was micro-level discourse and social interaction that occurred between the G8 countries and BMENA representatives. But at the same time, it was macro-level in nature because the outcome might have produced a fundamental piece of policy or educational reform that could contribute to unequal status. The outcome also could contribute to the BMENA countries continuing to function in a consuming end and also could contribute to sustaining dependence on the West and on the existing hegemonic relationship. I used four aspects for my analysis to showcase how I bridged the gap between the micro and macro analyses in my study.

- **Members/groups:** Members of the G8 groups (ministers of education, finance, etc.) used discourse as representatives of group(s), institutions, or countries, and consequently, groups may act through their representatives.
- **Actions/process:** The action, process, or recommendation taken by individuals are an integral part of the social group or institution
- **Context/social structure:** The annual meeting of *Forum for the Future*, led by the G8, represented a discursive interaction between all parties involved and was a foundation for a social structure seen in news conferences and in publications. In this scenario, it was a local and global context that constricted or shaped the discourse.
- **Personal/social cognition:** Representatives of both the G8 and the BMENA nations have personal and social cognitions that might also be shared by the group they created. In essence, it created a group culture and social cognition that influenced the individual discourse and resulted in a joint action by the entire group.

**Power as Control.** The notion of power, especially social power, is an integral feature of CDA (van Dijk, 2001b), especially social power and in my analysis group power, the G8. We can look at power in terms of the ability to control or dominate other groups and their actions. The G8 would have more power or less power, based on the degree of influence on the acts or the minds of the BMENA countries. The G8's ability to control was generated from a superior position (privilege) in scarce resources, such as fame, status, money, and for my specific purpose, knowledge, experience, and access in the educational setting.

Different types of power are worth mentioning, but the type of power I am interested in is not coercive but rather is the power that is seen as *natural* or as *common-sense* by the dominated groups. Power, in my understanding, is not absolute because the dominated group may have the option to resist domination and also might see power as legitimate or in extreme cases, as necessary for success because of the deeply rooted submission to the hierarchical nature in our world. I also examined the idea of *soft governance* that appears in many international group meetings.

Dominance is crystalized in the types of laws, policies, norms, and even expectations that at the end of the day become natural for dominated groups or countries. This is what Gramsci (1971) called hegemony, which is not an obvious abuse of power but rather occurs when the dominated group adheres to the *wishes* of the powerful by consent. In other words, dominated countries surrender to power as if there are no other solutions to educational and social problems other than those imported from the West.

For the purpose of my analysis of power and discourse, first, van Dijk (2001b) suggested that the access to a specific discourse, such as those ministers of the G8 countries because they relied on their nation's advancement in the realm of education and science, was a powerful resource in itself that gave *perceived* legitimacy to control and to dictate the best way to make improvements in the education field in the BMENA region. In other words, it was not coercion but rather was agreed upon by the BMENA countries because the G8 countries were a clear example of success and advancement in the realm of education. Second, our actions are controlled by our minds, and if the G8 could influence the minds of BMENA ministers, then the G8 could also control their actions

directly or indirectly. In short, those who can control discourse eventually can control the minds and actions of the less powerful group(s).

**Public Discourse.** Controlling public discourse is a prevailing symbolic power source that is represented in access to knowledge and information. van Dijk (1996) categorized the types of control as the following: first is active control, which is seen in everyday talk, such as conversations with friends, family members, or colleagues; and second is passive control, in which we do not have control over matters such as media discourse or the type of interaction between ordinary people and police officers, tax inspectors, or bosses, and that is because people are told what to believe in and what to do.

More relevant to my research interest was the social power represented in the G8 because it had more access and control over the public discourse. Social power is the type of control we see in different fields: teachers controlling educational discourse, professors' scholarly discourse, attorney's legal discourse, etc. In other words, the more access, control, proprieties, and influence a group has over the discourse, the more power it has. It is a discursive definition of the most important aspect of social (group) power. Therefore, it is one important aspect of CDA to examine the power dynamic in any given context.

I was able to understand the context of discourse when I considered van Dijk's (2001b) definition of context as "the mentally represented structure of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production or comprehension of discourse" (p. 356). This included the definition of the situation at hand; actions; general settings, such location and time, individuals involved and their cognitions, or realization to include their

ideologies; knowledge; goals; and opinions. In order for the powerful group (G8) to control the context, it must control one or more of these aspects. For example, it must control the place and time for meetings, the participants (countries) who should or should not attend, and the expected outcome from the interaction.

Another pivotal feature of group power is to control the structure of talk and text in addition to the content. A dialectical relationship exists between text and context, and we can see that in the powerful group when it chooses a discourse genre such as when a teacher requires an answer from a student or when a judge requires an answer from a defendant.

To put it in perspective, powerful groups (speakers) have more control or less control over context of discourse at the expense of other groups with less power, and the powerful may abuse their power. Such a scenario could be worse when that abuse is considered legitimate or natural. van Dijk (2001b) cautioned that one must not consider the text or talk as the primary embodiment of power relations between groups, but rather the context is the primary embodiment of power relations because it can shape or reinforce the type of relationship.

**Mind Control.** I appreciate this aspect of van Dijk's (2001b) and Gramsci's (1971) understanding of mind control. van Dijk (2001b) claimed that the first major form of power is the control over the public discourse and that mind control (hegemony) is the second, which reproduces dominance. Thus, people and less powerful groups acquire their beliefs, opinions, and knowledge from different sources: first, discourse that has been considered legitimate, trustworthy, and credible, such as experts, professors, media, scholars, or for my study, the G8 and BMENA ministers. Second, in some instances,

participants or less powerful groups are required to attend certain events (for different reasons), such as on-the-job training programs, job instructions, and for my study, the G8's annual meetings. Third, some discourses are conducted in a closed fashion that may exclude the public or media, which prevents any alternative narrative. Fourth, participants in dominant discourses may not have a counter discourse that could challenge the dominant discourse or information. With this in mind, CDA tools helped me analyze domination, production, and reproduction of hierarchical relationships between the G8 countries and the BMENA region.

### **Research in Critical Discourse**

Critical discourse analysis has proven its validity in many fields of study where we see power and domination. For example, van Dijk (2001b) shed light on how CDA can be used in studying gender inequality because it addressed explicitly discursive dominance. CDA also examined media discourse from different angles, such as linguistic tools that are apparent when we see transitivity in syntax, speech acts, lexical structure, and modality. The benefits of such research were to point out that in the media discourse, syntactic variations were used in events to de-emphasize the agency, responsibility, or perspective by passively constructing specific sentence. To illustrate my point, I included an excerpt from the British House of Commons that was cited in van Dijk's work (1997):

We do not have vast numbers of Americans entering this country on a false basis to secure permanent residency. The whole point of this legislative change is to direct it at where the problem lies—people from west Africa, not from America... We are talking about country of origin, culture, and religion. Those factors are important, and they cause great anxiety to our constituents. (p. 49)

We notice the concept of othering in this previous quote, even though it was unwisely very explicit; it is as if the speaker warns about *black* immigration, and it has to be stopped. The political elites sell this rhetoric to the public because black immigrants come to Britain on a false premise while *white* Americans do not, and even if they do, the assumption was that they will be accepted and integrated, which will maintain the whiteness of the United Kingdom. van Dijk shared many examples of more subtle statements that created divisive public sentiments, which controlled the public discourse, and there is evidence of this now in the United States when listening to U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Keeping in mind that CDA aims to investigate the relationships between power and discourse, CDA provides a complex theoretical framework to analyze power and domination and their reproduction by text and talk. However, van Dijk (2001b) claimed that gaps remain ambiguous in the framework, such as the interface between discourse structures and social cognition in the local and global contexts, even though they appear in notions of ideology and power. A second gap exists between the linguistically oriented studies and social studies, because social studies hardly engage in discourse analysis, and linguistic studies ignore the power abuse and inequality that are considered theories of sociology. Therefore, integrating the two approaches helped my study to arrive at a more comprehensive and satisfactory form of CDA.

### **Domination Shift**

After reading many critical studies, whether they are under the banner of CDA or not, I noticed a shift from overt group domination to a covert professional and institutional domination (Danet, 1984; O'Barr et al., 1978; Bradac et al., 1981; Ng &

Bradac, 1993; Wodak, 1984). I am interested in the latter because of its *apparent* legitimacy and neutrality, or the portrayal of such by the dominant public, media, and political discourses that work together to reproduce and perpetuate the status quo of hierarchical structures between nations. When we look at power and dominance, we find that both are associated with different social and public domains, such as law, science, education, media, and politics, among others. These domains are controlled by elites in those *neutral* professional institutions through their discursive and active engagements in power reproduction in these domains. One may ask: Who loses in this scenario because it is common sense that the more advanced group in any domain would have an advantage in creating the rules, agendas, and outcomes? The problem I see with this premise is that there is a continued dependency on the dominant group from the target population, whether they are students, clients, or citizens of a certain nation or an entire region such as BMENA, neglecting the fact that lasting solutions cannot be borrowed from such foreign institutions. I believe they need to be generated from within.

### **Overview of Methods**

“A route that leads to the goal” is the original Greek meaning of the word method (Kvale, 1996, p. 4). Therefore, I planned to achieve my goal of describing, analyzing, critiquing the status quo of the G8-BMENA Partnership, and the ramification of such a collaboration on educational policy and on BMENA societies. I investigated how ideologies and hierarchical structure, through discourse, were created and maintained in this social group. I believe that adopting CDA as my methodology enabled me to achieve the goal. I chose this partnership because it was mainly created after the tragic trauma of 9/11 that befell not only the United States but affected the entire world. The inception of



G8-BMENA Partnership was in 2004 led by the United States and other European countries, along with some Islamic countries, under the banner of the war on terrorism (Rizvi, 2004). While every decent human being would agree on the premise and purpose of this cooperation, I strongly believed that the manner was not suitable for a sustainable positive outcome and, I may add, was not beneficial for the BMENA region, people, and eventually the world.

From the many critical discourse analysis approaches that I learned about (Fairclough, 1989; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 1995; Fowler, 1985; Wodak, 1996; Lee, 2000; van Dijk, 2005; van Dijk, 2009; Reisigl & Wodak, 2009), I adopted van Dijk's (2009) socio-cognitive CDA as my analysis approach. My reason for using his approach was because of the nature of interactions as it investigates the dynamics between cognition, discourse, and society. van Dijk (2001b) mainly focused on stereotypes, domination, elite power abuse, reproduction or prejudice, and resistance from dominated groups. Most importantly for my study, I examined discourse control and its dimensions because once a group controls the discourse, it gains access to power. van Dijk (2005) accounted for the production and comprehension of discourse when he called it (K-device), which is short for personal, interpersonal, institutional, group, national, and cultural knowledge. van Dijk (2009) suggested that we achieve social cognition via collective mental representations resulting from consensus through interaction between groups and discourse structures.

According to van Dijk (2009), individual cognition is learned by dynamic constructs (social representation), which include values, concepts, images, and norms that are shared in social groups. These social representations are activated and maintained by

discourse. It is, therefore, pivotal for my study to analyze global and local structures relevant to education in the G8 and BMENA meetings and in subsequent local meetings available to the public. The aspects I focused on in my analysis were coherence, lexical and topic selection, implication, and policy borrowing or generation. I relied primarily on van Dijk's (1997) approach to investigate the opaque relations between power, context, ideology, and discourse by analyzing opinions, attitudes, and the socially constructed knowledge by the G8 and BMENA representatives. This approach was useful for my study because it examined the constructed knowledge in different social groups with different status levels and cultural perspectives. Therefore, it is important to highlight what constitutes a group; it is a group when there are shared knowledge, problems, concerns, objectives, social representations, and social identity—keeping in mind that ideological power in van Dijk's opinion can take many forms, occurs in different situations, and is not limited to the dominant group.

### **Data Collection Process**

I collected publicly available texts generated from the G8 and BMENA meetings starting from the inaugural meeting in 2004. This included official reports, declarations, recommendations, civil society recommendations, statements, summaries, and any document I found for the *Forum for the Future*. The annual meetings were hosted and led by a different country each year, either from the G8 or BMENA countries. I am aware that these documents discussed numerous issues, but I concentrated on education, educational policies, and social ramifications. It was important for me to analyze these documents from a critical perspective by looking at the type of relationship between the members of this coalition, focusing on power, dominance, hegemony, production and

reproduction of power, and overall influence in shaping BMENA societies and educational policies.

My research questions helped me to be more focused when I analyzed the documents: (1) How has the G8 and the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) Partnership affected and shaped educational and social reforms in the region since its establishment in 2004? (2) What type of discourse was deployed to perpetuate hegemonic and hierarchical relationships that sustain unequal status between the G8 and BMENA countries? (3) How do the G8 representatives control the BMENA public discourse? (4) How does such discourse control the mind and the action of the BMENA countries, and what are the social consequences of such control? In addition to these questions, I explored the role of globalization and the English language, either in communication or as a needed tool for a more successful and stable Middle East and North African region.

## **Chapter 4 Background**

The purpose of this study was to understand the type of relationship between the Group of Eight (G8) and the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) by critically analyzing an initiative created in 2004 by the United States called G8-BMENA Partnership. The purpose of establishing the partnership was to reform the region educationally, economically, and socially. The following research questions informed and guided my study: (1) How has the G8 and the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) Partnership affected and shaped educational and social reforms in the region since its establishment in 2004? (2) What type of discourse was deployed to perpetuate hegemonic and hierarchical relationships that sustain unequal status between the G8 and BMENA countries? (3) How do the G8 representatives control the BMENA public discourse? (4) How does such discourse control the mind and the action of the BMENA countries, and what are the social consequences of such control?

I used critical discourse analysis (CDA) as my methodology to analyze the publicly gathered documents that were published online in different governmental websites. This chapter will include description of these documents. It will include my coding system and analysis criteria. Answers for the research questions will be addressed in this chapter, and they will be concisely stated in my closing remarks in Chapter 5 to bring clarity to the reader regarding my overall findings and understanding.

### **Documents**

I found 41 documents from two major sources: first, official documents, reports, declarations, and statements, and they are categorized under official discourse. These official documents were produced by either the G8 governments or their representatives

and also by BMENA governments or representatives. The second set of documents was produced by civil society organizations from the BMENA region. Both sets of documents were generated in their official annual or preparatory meetings between 2004 and 2013 after the establishment of the G8-BMENA Partnership. Those documents were publicly available online.

By collecting data from these sources, the intent was to achieve a greater understanding of the partnership as well as the scope of interests that each entity had regarding the promised educational, economic, and social reforms for the BMENA region.

### **Coding System**

I developed a coding system that emanated from my background in critical research and CDA, focusing on domination, power relations, and reproduction. I read the documents in chronological order, starting with no previous code system because I did not want to impose a coding system that might not be present in the data in the first place. Saldana (2013) showed a process of coding as the following: the first cycle of coding can be a range from one word, phrase, or an entire paragraph or page that captures the attention of the researcher. The second cycle of coding can be the same phrases, passages, or units coded previously or even a larger portion up to that point of the analysis. In essence, these codes provided me with a critical link between the text and the meaning, whether obvious or hidden. With this in mind, I think it is a subjective process that cannot be evaded, but in order for me to gauge my subjectivity, I decided to recruit two doctoral students and ask them to read one document (Al Hayat Arabic Newspaper, 2004) and code it using my coding system; but the difference was in their understanding

of the codes and obviously their different social, economic, and educational backgrounds. I came up with nine major codes and three sub-codes under the umbrella of hegemony/hierarchical (See Table 1) for more information about the codes and their meanings to me. I met with the two participants once and explained my rationale behind the coding system, and they were given Table 1 as explanation in case they needed it while coding the document. I coded 18 instances in the given document, and after checking the document, the two participants returned a week later. I found that we had an overall agreement in coding the same passages of about 80% of the time. It was not intended to be an inter-rater reliability test but rather an effort to check my subjectivity level in the coding process.

Table 1

*Codes and Their Meaning*

Code	Meaning
Hegemony/hierarchical	<p>The imposition of dominant culture on subordinate groups. It is not an obvious abuse of power, but rather the dominated groups are consenting to this domination, and some consider it as the only option for advancement (ideological work, macro level, mental colonization). I adopted Gramsci's definition of hegemony.</p>
Subcodes:	
Control	<p>Control is defined by concrete actions, i.e., providing financial assistance, which in essence would control the agenda, outcomes,</p>

etc. It also means controlling time, location, and membership in the G8-BMENA Partnership.

**Power** Power shows political, economic, and educational might through advancement in such fields. For example, industrialized democracies would have the perceived legitimacy through their power to impose their views of reform on the less advanced nations in different fields, such as education.

**Subgroup** Subgroup (Othering): It appears when there is a conflict between groups internationally or locally. For example, when a government interacts with a civil society organization, one sees the subtle language use that shows hierarchical relationship.

**Manipulation** This is when an advanced country, for example, pushes for an economic project supposedly for the benefit of a less advanced country. It is obvious that there will be some economic benefits to that country, but the major beneficiary will be the advanced country.

**Ambiguous** It shows unclear statements that may contradict with the overall purpose of the partnership in this research (G8-BMENA).

Low expectations	Suggesting basic education, or vocational training, is what the region needs now, as opposed to taking the lead to reach maximum potential.
Self-interest	When there is a real indication from a statement that the major beneficiary is the advanced nation (G8).
Exclusion	Excluding a country(s) or an organization because it is likely they may block an initiative and the overall agenda of the advanced nations. It is a representation of group power.
Discrepancy	It contradicts previous statements, or if followed, it will not result in the goal of liberation from outside control.
Lexical	Words or phrases that indicate superiority or a hierarchical relationship in the analyzed text.
Positive	Real investment in a local community (knowledge economy, knowledge creation, as opposed to knowledge consumption, investing in local infrastructure and research).  The opposite would be continuous dependence on Western nations and continuing to be on the receiving end.

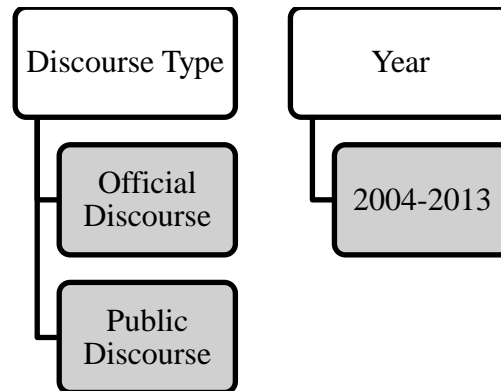
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*Note.* This coding system was created specifically for the purpose of analyzing the G8-BMENA documents



## Data Organization Method

I used Dedoose, a web-based research tool that can be used in qualitative and mixed-method research. It has the option of uploading my documents and organizing them according to my two descriptors, which were discourse type (official and public) and second, year of publication (Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Descriptors used to categorize the data.

Dedoose also gives the option of adding codes to text and of exporting excerpts from the data. It was a useful tool in providing quantitative angles to my analysis by showing the frequency and percentage of occurrences observed for each code.

## Partnership Background

The purpose of this analysis is to uncover the power relation that existed between organizations and countries and to be more specific, to uncover the power relations in the G8-BMENA Partnership and their proposed economic, educational, and social reform for the BMENA region. I looked at the social problems that were addressed by the official entities and civil societies, and there was an agreement between the two that the region has major educational, economic, and social problems, such as:

- High illiteracy rate, 40% among adult Arab population.

- A combined GDP of 22 Arab countries, which was less than that of Spain.
- More than 50 million people will enter the job market by 2010.
- If the current unemployment rate does not improve, it will be 25% by 2010.
- Only 1.6% of the population has access to the Internet.
- Some 51% of adult Arabs demonstrated a desire to emigrate (United Nations Development Program, 2002)

These indicators, among others, put the region and the world on high alert, especially for security reasons. Thus, the G8-BMENA Partnership was born under the auspices of the United States and some European countries. My reason for choosing this partnership was because of the power relations between the West and East and the continuous hegemonic nature of this relationship, whether previously in the overt colonization or now because of globalization. On February 13, 2004, a draft of the partnership was leaked by an Arabic newspaper, Al Hayat (Al Hayat Arabic Newspaper, 2004). The surprise leak exposed again the U.S. hegemony in the region, and it was scandalous because none of the Arab nations were involved in the drafting process of this partnership and its agenda even though it was about their own region. Sharp (2005) stated:

Arab governments, such as Egypt and Jordan, expressed frustration over *not having been part of the drafting process* [emphasis added] and expressed their dismay over having to find out about the proposal through the media rather than through consultations with the U.S. government. (p. 2)

Nevertheless, we all understand the political leverage the United States has to create the initiative and describe the status of the region and prescribe a remedy. This showed

clearly the type of hegemonic and hierarchical relationship at hand, but there is more to be said regarding the partnership and its orchestration. One may ask: If the partnership is for the good of the region, its population, and the world, then what is the problem if the United States created it?

One of the other problems in the creation was naming the partnership, as it was called the Greater Middle East (GME), which stirred unwanted reactions, because it is such a large region that contains Arab, non-Arab, Muslim, and non-Muslim populations, and a one-size-fits-all approach would not work. Thereafter, some local governments such as Jordan and Egypt offered their concerns regarding the proposed reform. However, the name was changed to attract more appeal in the region without touching the essence of the previous draft to become the G8-BMENA, even though the region was even more diverse with major differences in education, religion, economic status, and political environment. But again, the manner in which the partnership was created shows the power, control, and the interests of the United States in the region and the required changes. Is it for the best for the region? Is it for the benefit of the West? Is it for both? Questions remained to be answered.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis showed that in eight out of the nine categories that were coded in this project, the official discourse (dominant discourse) has the edge in the frequency of coding (see Figure 3), except for the positive code. To give some perspective to what were the sources of the texts that were analyzed, it included statements from both the G8 and BMENA countries through their official representatives, such as ministers of finance, education, and foreign affairs. The public discourse was produced by civil society's

organizations that were *chosen* across the BMENA region; they were comprised of academics, lawyers, and other professionals in different fields. However, they do not necessarily claim to represent the population or their individual regions because only elections do that.

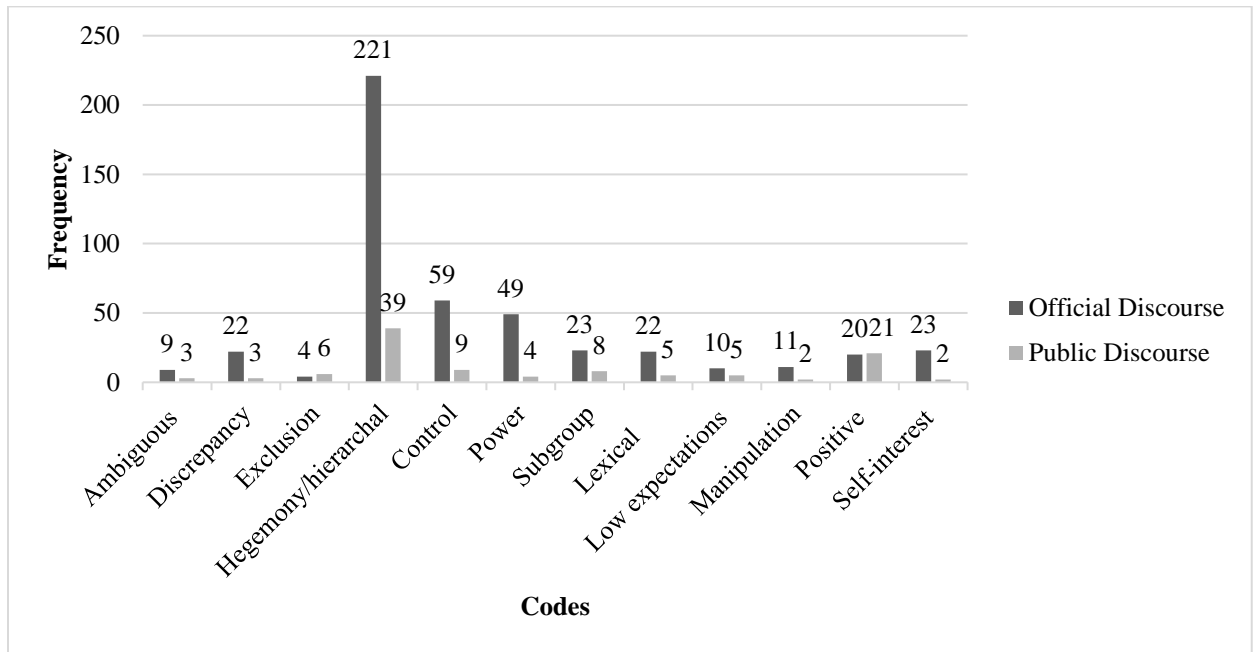


Figure 3. Frequency of codes in both discourses.

It is important to highlight the difference in the number of documents produced by the partnership because the total number of documents analyzed was 41, only nine of which were produced by civil societies (21.9%). If anything, that proportion gives us an indication of *discourse control* by the G8-BMENA governments. With this in mind, it seems to be a great irony that with this limited access to discourse by the civil society representatives, they evidently were higher in the positive category. The positive category indicates investment in an indigenous knowledge economy, knowledge generation, research, and development. It seems that the officials (G8-BMENA) leaned toward maintaining the status quo of keeping the BMENA region in the consuming end, not in

the producing end. Figure 3 showed the overall coding results, but each category will be analyzed separately later in the chapter.

As observed, the greatest number of occurrences was in the concept of hegemony and hierarchical, from both official discourse (G8-BMENA) and public discourse (civil societies). In other words, this showed interest in maintaining the existing hegemonic relationship, which speaks to the effects of discourse control via mind control. The following excerpt serves as an example of my interpretation of hegemony and the hierarchical nature of the document:

With these goals in mind, *we [G8] tried to reinvigorate the BMENA process by giving civil society and private sector equal seats at the table with their government counterparts at all BMENA events [emphasis added]*, including the Forum, and focused the citizen-government dialogue on specific, country-based collective problem-solving. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2012, p. 5)

The statement here is by a G8 representative, which showcases the hegemonic interaction because the G8 is functioning from a superior position in solving conflicts between governments and their civil societies. The G8 controlled the scope, defined the issue, and prescribed the remedy to move forward, and this is astonishing to me because it is a local issue in the first place that needs to be dealt with by the local governments and its people and organizations. The following comment represents the same hegemonic relation but from a different source, civil society.

We CSOs [civil society organizations] from the region are accused of being too much Western oriented. *Let us be Eastern oriented and bring positive experiences*

[emphasis added] from East towards the region. (National Human Rights Committee, 2011, para. 12)

In this excerpt, we notice the representative of civil society that I hoped would offer a solution from within but instead offered another version of reliance on other nations to solve the local problems. I do not call for cutting collaborations with other advanced nations, but it is an issue when it is either heading West or East as suggested by the civil society representatives and not within or at least the neighboring countries, which in my estimation would help the region to collaborate in local problem solving.

The following two excerpts show first the serious weakness of the partnership and the BMENA region.

. . . during the opening session of the 7th Forum for the Future, [BMENA representatives] *held Canada accountable for hindering the progress on the final declaration* [emphasis added]. (National Human Rights Committee, 2011, para. 7)

G8 and Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) countries *failed to come up with a joint declaration with Canada being held responsible for the failure* [emphasis added]. (National Human Rights Committee, 2011, para. 1)

And second, the statement unwisely illustrated clearly the hierarchical type of relationship the G8 has with the region because one single country, Canada, which does not have dominating presence in the BMENA, has the power to cause the failure to the meeting of that year. But again, group power is crystalized in this scenario because Canada alone cannot deviate from the G8 agenda. Another disappointing fact that spoke to the low expectations of the partnership was to produce a joint statement to probably score a political point or to improve public relations. Furthermore, 27 BMENA

*independent* countries that seek reform cannot produce their own statements, regardless of the disagreement with Canada, but again this shows the superficial kind of partnership at hand. I introduced the negative impact of globalization in Chapter 2 that the BMENA region suffers from, and again with the following statement, as we see the invasion of Western values as if they are a prerequisite factor in reform.

In addition to the educational value of these kinds of interventions, participants are exposed to *American values, culture, and democratic institutions* [emphasis added]. (U.S. Department of State, 2008, para. 20)

Also troubling is the wording of *American values, culture*—which makes me wonder which values and culture are referenced. The statement also implied that the local values and culture may prevent the needed progress, which invariably is fallacious, in my judgment, because it not only is untrue, but it causes mental colonization and more self-flagellation. That is because a culture cannot be antithetical to reform and progress, but rather, political and economic circumstances contribute to stagnation.

Power and control were second in the total number of codes, which indicates the gloomy condition of the partnership during the time period of the analyzed documents, 2004-2013. Take, for example, the following statement to illustrate my rationale in coding them as such.

Furthermore, there are, at present, approximately 90,000 computers in schools, distributed all over the country—a figure, which, according to the Ministry of Education, is expected to increase in the near future. Partners in the Jordanian initiative include: *Cisco Systems, Dell, Hewlett-Packard and France Telecom,*

*amongst others* [emphasis added]. (Office of Her Majesty, Press Department, Dead Sea, 2005, para. 8)

I coded the previous statement as power, control, and self-interest because the G8 has the financial and technological power to provide Jordan with the technology, and I speculate there might be benefits from the effort to Jordan, but I am certainly not interested in receiving the computers but would liked to have seen the computers made in Jordan or any other place in the region. In other words, the partnership did not advocate for building Jordan's infrastructure to be able to invest in local companies to manufacture its own products. The statement shows self-interest because the companies are American and French, which would improve their sales and improve their technologies, not Jordan's.

### **Research Findings**

My research findings revealed that the analyzed documents of the G8-BMENA Partnership for the years 2004-2013 have nine major themes (codes) and three subthemes (subcodes), which I introduced in Table 1. These codes are relevant to my research methodology: critical research analysis as they unpack domination and power relations embedded in the documents. The total number of documents analyzed was 41. Thirty-two documents were produced by official entities, either by the G8 or BMENA officials, while the remainder were produced by civil society organizations. The purpose of analyzing documents from both sources is to investigate where these two sources connect and disconnect in the proposed reform.



In the following section, I introduce the meaning of each code, the total number of occurrences in both official and public discourse, and provide excerpts from the documents that represent each code and my reasoning for coding as such.

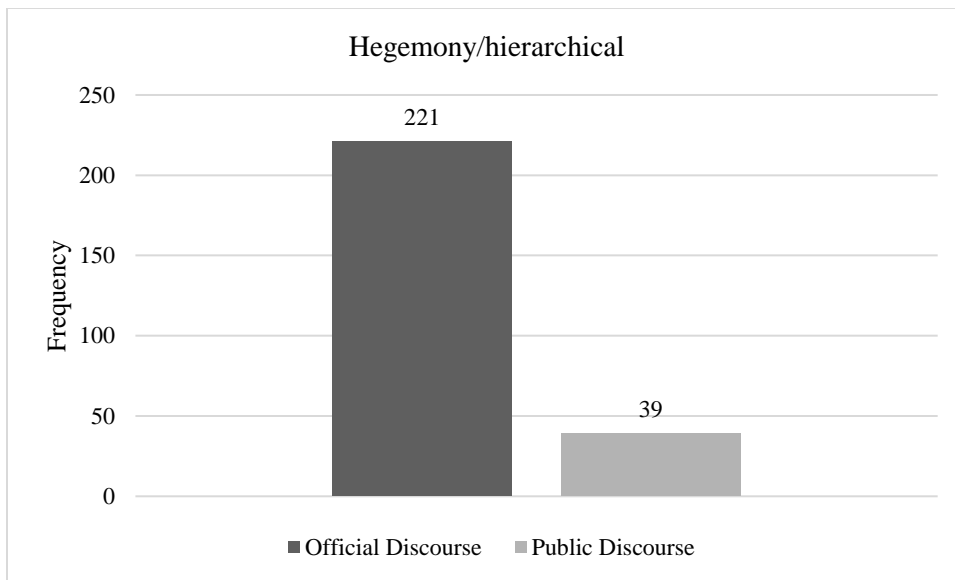
### **Hegemony/hierarchical**

Hegemony/hierarchical is the major theme found in the data, which focused on macro-level domination with the consent of the dominated groups (BMENA countries and civil societies). However, in many instances I found evidence of micro-actionable statements that contributed to the macro-level domination, such as financial or political power, which in essence controls the agenda and discussion regarding the proposed reform that the G8-BMENA sought.

The analysis produced 260 instances of hegemonic relationship from both the official discourse and public discourse. Showing the percentages and frequencies of each code serves to highlight the dominance of concepts in the analyzed documents. For example, the concept of hegemony was observed significantly higher in the official discourse with 85% (221 occurrences), while hegemony was less apparent in the public discourse with 15% (39 occurrences). In other words, having the percentages helped me recognize the entity that has control over the discourse and in what respect as well. The following excerpt published by the G8 research group, shows macro-level domination:

The Greater Middle East Initiative, *unveiled by the United States* [emphasis added] at the 2004 Sea Island Summit in June, was *motivated by the U.S. led desire to stem the threats of political instability* [emphasis added], economic stagnation and terrorism in the Greater Middle East. (Broader Middle East & North Africa Initiative, 2005, p. 11)

This excerpt showed the unilateral action taken by the United States to unveil the partnership, which is a clear indication of a hierarchical relationship between the United States and the entire region. It also highlighted the U.S. desire behind the partnership as the most important factor—not what the region actually needs for reform. It is considered hegemonic because the action is taken by the United States because it has the power to unveil the partnership with no indication that the region has any control over the action or the process. van Dijk (2001b) considered action or process control as a macro-level domination, which is represented in the discourse control. The following figure shows the frequency of macro hegemonic instances found in official discourse and in public discourse.



*Figure 4.* Number of coded statements as hegemonic/hierarchical relationship observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

### **Subcodes**

The following three subcodes represented a second level (micro) of hegemonic relationship between the G8 and BMENA countries that appeared in both types of

discourses, and they are characterized by actionable statements that meant more benefits for the G8 or simply when statements dictated the outcomes in an obvious manner. This is why they are coded under the umbrella of hegemony and hierarchical theme.

**Control.** It is defined by concrete actions, such as providing financial assistance, which in essence controlled the agenda of meetings and the expected outcomes from the partnership. It also meant controlling time, location, and membership of countries in the G8-BMENA Partnership, such as the number of BMENA countries was 23 (Federal Ministry of Education and Research Oman, 2005), and by 2012, there were 27 (Chatham House, 2013). The total instances of control were 68, a figure that appeared in all documents from 2004-2013. Some 86% of control indications were from the official discourse (59 occurrences), while control was 13% in the public discourse (nine occurrences). As observed in these percentages, the official discourse once again produced the highest number of controlling statements, which is an indication of the governments' attitudes in dominating discourse relying on their economic and political power. Here is an example of control in one of the official documents:

Establish together with our partners a Forum for the Future to:

Provide a *ministerial framework* [emphasis added] for our on-going dialogue and engagement on political, economic, and social reform in a spirit of mutual respect; Bring together in one forum foreign, economic and other ministers of the G-8 and the region *on a regular basis* . . . [emphasis added]. (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2004, para. 2)

In that comment, we observe the official discourse (G8) controlling not only the level of representation (ministers) but also controlling the scope and frequency of discussions

instead of a having a free choice by the concerned entity (BMENA) because the reform affects its region, not the G8. It a representation of what van Dijk (2001b) highlighted regarding controlling discourse context, which not only is limited to controlling time, space, and membership, but it went further to control ideologies, knowledge, goals, and opinions.

**Power.** It showed political, economic, and educational power represented by G8 advancement in those fields, which essentially portrayed the G8 countries as legitimate entities entitled to impose their views of reform and to decide what the reform should involve. The alternative would be a scope of reform generated from within the region.

The analysis showed that power was tagged in the documents 53 times in total. Official discourse produced 49 instances, or 92.5%, while the public discourse showed power-related statements of only four occurrences or 7.5%. The percentages here accurately depicted the power relations that existed between governments and civil societies and this is why governments produced 92.5 % of the power statements.

Consider, for example, the following statement:

The United States is *sponsoring* [emphasis added] "partnership schools" to enhance the quality of primary and secondary education, and conducting teacher training and *providing classroom materials* [emphasis added] for early childhood education in Morocco, Tunisia, Oman, and Qatar. (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2004, para. 97)

This statement shows the financial power of the United States, which gave the U.S. the authority or legitimacy to sponsor a school for a specific purpose (teacher training) and to provide class materials for students. Power here represents hegemonic influence on less

powerful countries in the region, which in essence keeps the region on the receiving end by accepting the financial *assistance* and in return influencing ideology and opinions in the reform. In other words, the financial power determined the kind of reform, which may not necessarily offer a substantive reform that meets the region's needs.

**Subgroup.** Subgrouping was recorded when there was a conflict between groups internationally (between the G8 and the BMENA countries) or locally (between BMENA countries and civil society organizations). For example, when a government interacts with a civil society organization, I observed a subtle language structure that showed a hierarchical relationship. It also can be considered as othering. The total number of subgrouping (othering) instances was 31. Again, the official discourse produced the majority of subgroupings with 74.2% (23 occurrences), and with 25.8% for the public discourse (eight occurrences). The percentage here is higher for the official discourse because governments have more economic and political power, and therefore, they were able to exclude civil societies or limit their involvement in the partnership. Looking at the following two excerpts will showcase this type of interaction:

With these goals in mind, we tried to reinvigorate the BMENA process by *giving* civil society and private sector *equal seats at the table with their government counterparts at all BMENA events* [emphasis added], including the Forum, and focused the citizen-government dialogue on specific, country-based collective problem-solving. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2012, p. 5)

The G-8 could: *Encourage the region's governments to allow* [emphasis added] civil society organizations, including human rights and media NGOs, to operate

freely without harassment or restrictions. (Al Hayat Arabic Newspaper, 2004, para. 12)

These two statements show hierarchical and hegemonic relationships in an obvious manner, not only between the BMENA and civil societies but also by having the G8 work as a mediator between them because it has leverage over the two. The comments also show the unequal representation of the civil societies from the inception of this partnership as they have been othered and the G8 *attempts* to reconcile the two from a superior position. Figure 5 shows the three subcode frequencies and source of discourse from the analyzed documents.

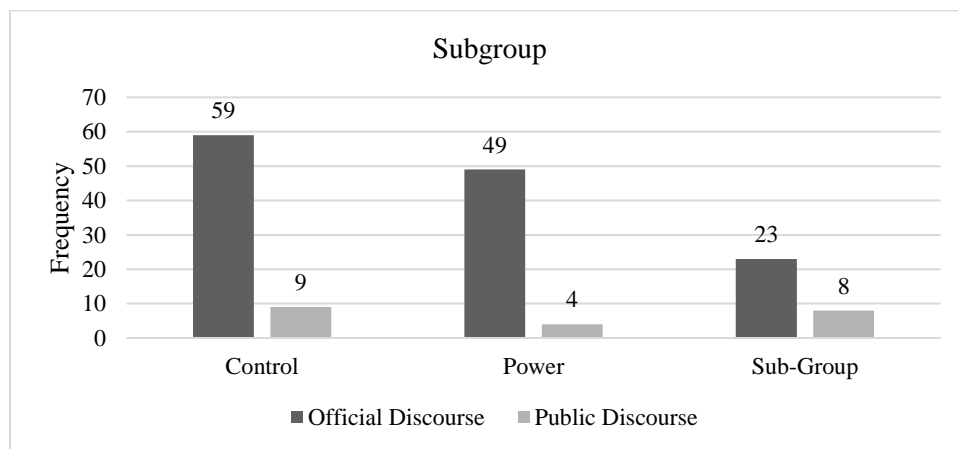


Figure 5. Number of coded statements as control, power, and subgroup (othering) observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

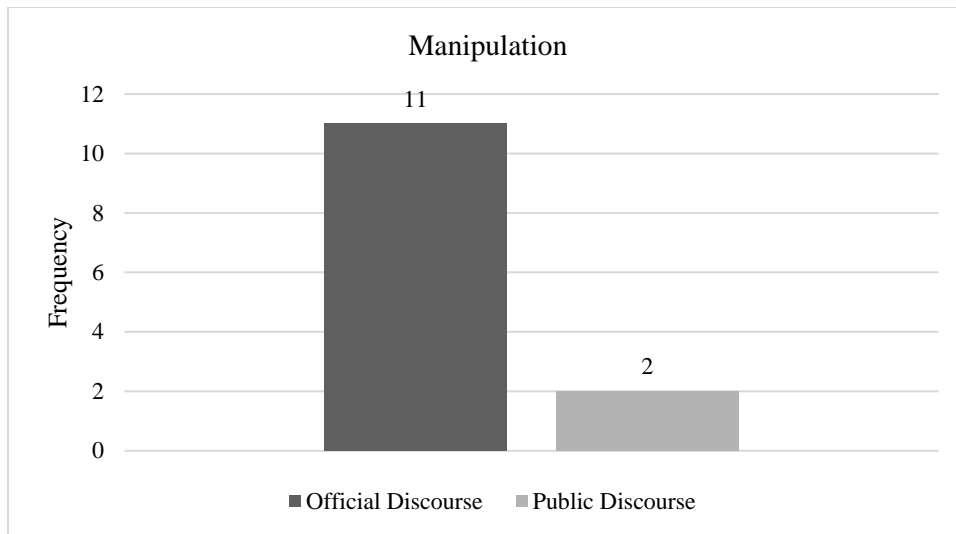
### Manipulation

Manipulation was recorded in these situations when we have statements by G8 or BMENA countries to numb countries, organizations, and peoples' emotions regarding the partnership, because they appeared to offer solutions and hope for reform. Manipulation was tagged 13 times. Official discourse produced 11 occurrences (84.6%), while public discourse produced only two counts (15.4%). This shows that the governments were

involved in manipulating discourse more often than civil societies to maintain legitimacy in controlling the discourse. Statements were coded under this category after I found historical background about this partnership and realized that the real intentions behind it were to further exploit the region economically and politically. The following statement shows a misleading promise:

We [G8] declare our support for democratic, social and economic reform *emanating from that region* [emphasis added]. (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2004, para. 1)

This is just one of many examples that gives the reader the impression of the region's free will in adopting reforms in governance and socioeconomic spheres and covertly holds the region responsible for the outcomes (either success or failure). In other words, if the reform efforts that emanated from the region were not successful, it was due to the efforts put in the reform by the region. However, I have established that the partnership was fully created and designed by the United States with European support without any consultation with the region (Sharp, 2005), which essentially neglected the fundamental needs for progress. I believe manipulative statements were embedded in the discourse to brighten the public image of the partnership, and it may also cause a rift between local populations and their governments. Figure 6 shows the frequency of the recorded manipulation instances from both discourses.



*Figure 6.* Number of coded statements as manipulation observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

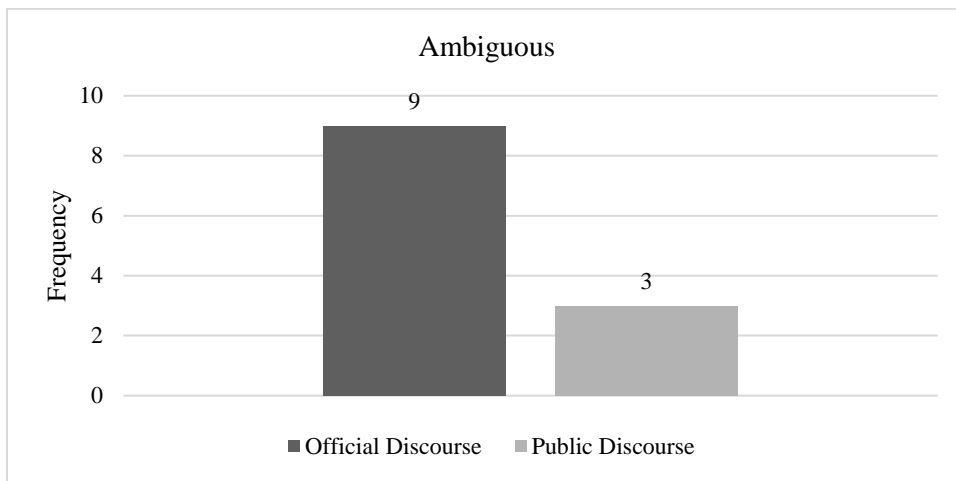
### **Ambiguous**

Ambiguous statements were coded in some of the analyzed documents when statements could be interpreted in multiple ways. It is also possible that the statements were intentionally made ambiguous to avoid any commitments from the partnership. Ambiguous statements were found 12 times. Again, the official discourse dominated the majority of such statements with nine occurrences (75%), while ambiguous statements occurred three times (25%) in the public discourse. The frequency of codes as observed was higher in the official discourse because governments appeared to exert efforts to maintain relations with the civil societies' representatives to sustain public appeal even if it meant superficial reform outcomes. Consider, for example, the following official statement:

Ministers affirmed the importance of the continuation of *informal dialogue* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2012, p. 9)



I take issue with the *informal dialogue* because at the end of the day, such statements were not binding and I considered them to be toothless statements because they do not obligate the parties involved to commit to any reform. What made matters worse was that the informal dialogue was mainly among the representatives of civil societies and in rare cases with BMENA government officials. It was ambiguous, because how do we expect an already othered low-status groups such as the civil societies to produce serious reform efforts in an *informal dialogue*. The following figure shows the frequency of the ambiguous statements along with their source.



*Figure 7.* Number of coded statements as ambiguous observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

### **Low Expectations**

Some statements were coded as such when I had higher expectations than what the partnership had considered to be an *accomplishment*, such as producing a joint declaration or advocating for basic education. The total number of instances was 15, and the official discourse, yet again, produced 10 occurrences (66.7%). The public discourse had five occurrences (33.3%). These numbers indicate that the official discourse both dominated the expectation discourse as well as produced a greater number of low

expectations than the public discourse. The following statement clearly shows the low expectation or lack of seriousness in reform effort:

At the Forum, *we achieved a historic outcome: a consensus declaration*

[emphasis added] (for only the second time in BMENA's nine-year history).

(2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2012, p. 5)

The phrasing of the sentence is embarrassing, to say the least, especially from a governmental entity. This is because this was during the ninth annual meeting, which was preceded by several meetings, workshops, travel between countries that cost massive amounts of money, and the historic outcome was a *joint declaration*, —not resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict or developing technological capacity in the region. It shows us the low expectations set for the partnership. It seems to me and to some of the civil societies that this partnership is a public relations gathering only to serve hidden governmental goals under the false hope of helping the region and its people. To put it in perspective, we have 35 countries from both the G8 and BMENA regions, and they considered a consensus declaration as a historic outcome, because it happened only twice in the life of this partnership. Figure 8 shows the number of statements of low expectation that appeared in both discourses.

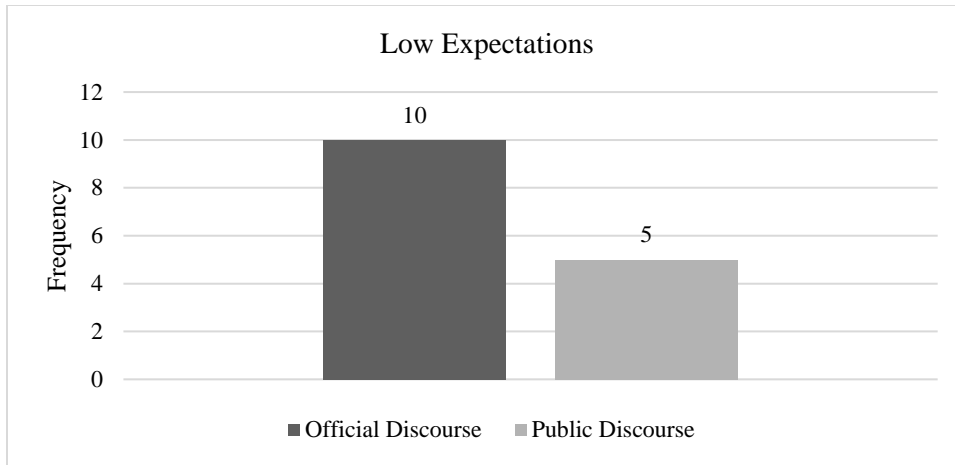


Figure 8. Number of coded statements with low expectations observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

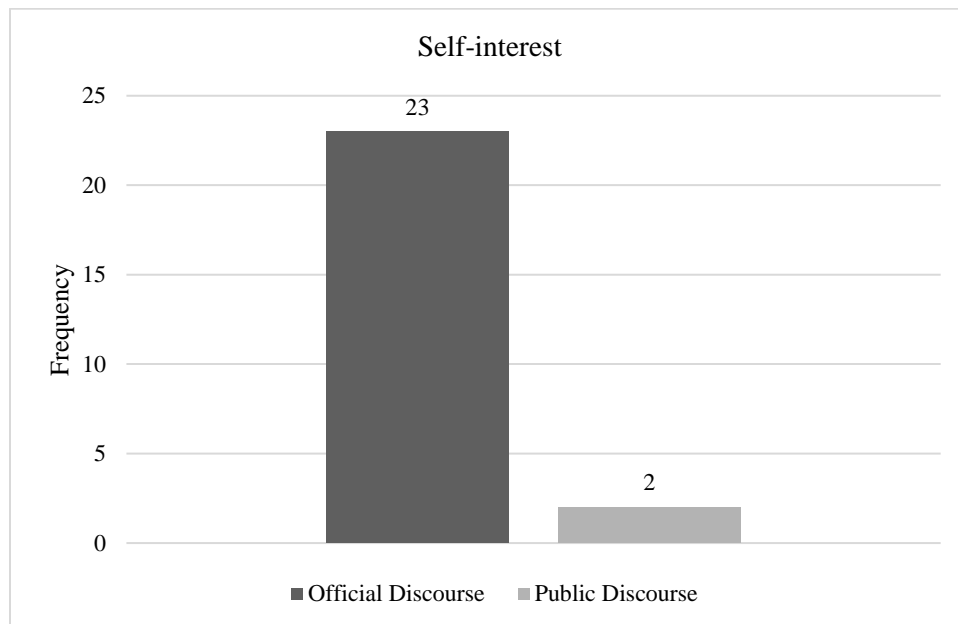
### Self-interest

The meaning of self-interest in this coding system is when I believed the majority of benefits, such as political and economic advantages, are for the G8 countries, not for the BMENA region. However, this does not deprive the BMENA region from *all* benefits, because it may gain some. That is to say, if the partnership is for the region, then the formula needs to be flipped where BMENA gains the maximum economic, political, and educational benefits, not the contrary. Self-interest statements were observed 25 times in total, 23 of which were observed in the official discourse, which equates to 92%, while it was produced only two times (8%) in the public discourse. This shows that government officials were able to dominate the discourse and therefore produced more statements that benefited the G8 countries more than the BMENA region. Take, for example, the following statement:

Promoting financial excellence and supporting efforts in the region to *integrate its financial sector into the global financial system* [emphasis added], including by: providing technical assistance to modernize financial services, and to introduce

and expand market-oriented financial instruments. (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2004, para. 95)

The global logic in economics is prevalent in the statement and the partnership in general, which is a response to the global demand to have BMENA countries' sign free trade agreements (Noi, 2011) mainly for the purpose of opening those countries' markets for the United States and Europe to sell their products. Secondly, the BMENA countries will gain minimal benefits compared with the G8. It is important to observe the phrasing of the statement (to modernize financial services), which implies that the G8 is tirelessly working for the benefit of the region and dangerously nothing is mentioned about the reciprocal nature of trade agreements. In other words, the region will be obligated to consume more Western products, which prevents it from establishing its own industries. The following figure shows the number of tagged statements that represented more benefits to the G8 countries.



*Figure 9.* Number of coded statements with greater interests for the G8 countries observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

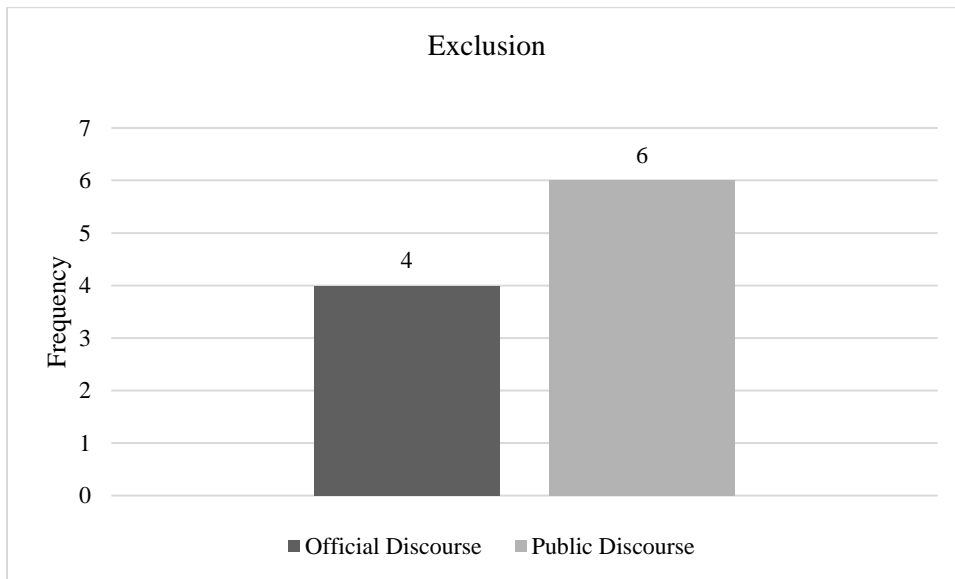
## Exclusion

Exclusion was coded when there was a group with more power to exclude another group, and this happened either between the G8 and BMENA countries or between civil societies and BMENA countries. Exclusion was found occasionally (10 times) throughout the data. Official discourse produced four occurrences (40%), while it was observed six times in the public discourse (60%). It seems that in the public discourse, civil societies' representatives were able to document the behavior of either the BMENA or G8 countries as they often refer to them in a way that shows leverage and lower status. Here is an example of such interaction:

The representatives of the civil society presented a number of recommendations to the preliminary meeting of the Forum for the Future last September in New York. What became of such recommendations? Were they discussed? What was the stance on them? Did the governments respond to such recommendations? Were some of them adopted? *Or were they “archived”?* *Up to the moment the civil society did not receive any response!* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2004, p. 2)

This statement by the civil society shows the othering concept and frustration because they were not real partners on an equal footing in the reform efforts. Civil societies conducted their parallel meetings and then submitted their recommendations to the official entity, which has the liberty to address the concerns of the civil societies or not because they control the final publications and media outlets. This scenario is a crystal representation of discourse control by the dominant group, as van Dijk (2001b) described

in his view of critical discourse analysis. Figure 10 shows the number of coded statements representing exclusion.



*Figure 10.* Number of coded statements as exclusion observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

### **Discrepancy**

Discrepancy was coded when a mismatch or a conflict was found in statements, in either the official discourse or public discourse, with the overall purpose of the G8-BMENA Partnership, which are educational, political, and socioeconomic reforms. The total number of discrepancies observed was 25. The official discourse produced the majority of that number, with 22 occurrences (88%), while the remaining three occurrences were from the public discourse (12%). According to the frequency observed, the official discourse was able to infuse the discourse with more discrepant statements than the public discourse, which essentially contradicted the overall purpose of the partnership. An example of discrepancy is seen in the following text:

However, due to *tensions between the United States and Egypt* [emphasis added] over the arrest of Egyptian opposition party leaders, this *meeting has been postponed* [emphasis added]. (Broader Middle East & North Africa Initiative, 2005, p. 13)

That comment shows how fragile the partnership is. This is because of a disagreement on a political issue, the United States has the power to cancel what is supposed to be an important meeting that addresses extremism and socioeconomic concerns in the region due to the arrest of some opposition leaders, even though the United States has been backing the Egyptian government and for decades has been providing financial support. In other words, the statement shows discrepancy with the overall purpose of reform because the meeting includes political reform among other issues and it was canceled, which in essence does not serve the region in general or the opposition leaders in particular. Figure 11 shows the number of statements that contained discrepancies with the overarching purpose of the partnership.

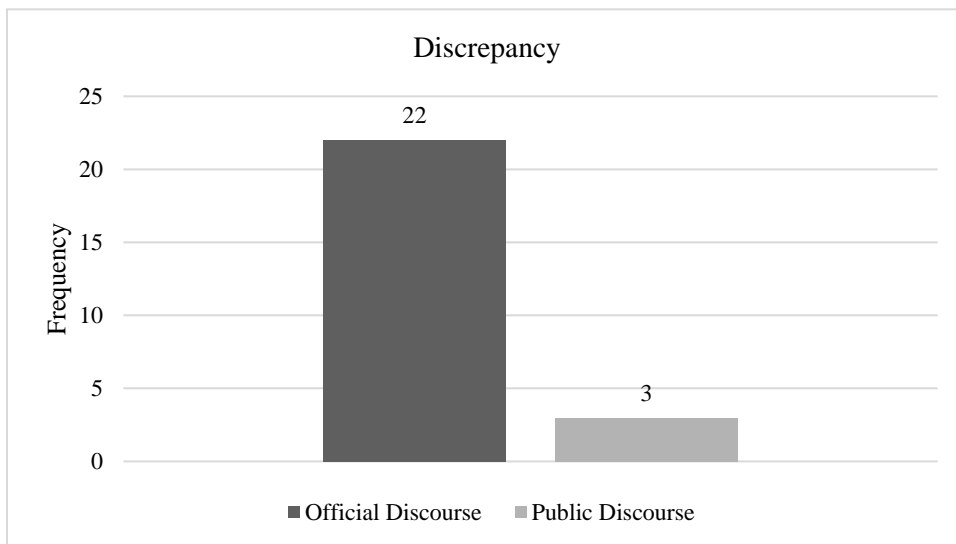


Figure 11. Number of coded statements as discrepant observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

## Lexical

Lexical issues were coded when I noticed overt or covert indications of superiority or higher power reflected in word choices, which organized groups in a hierarchical fashion. Analyzing lexical structure is an important feature of critical discourse analysis approach (van Dijk, 1997). The total number of coded lexical issues was 27. Official discourse produced the majority of those instances with 22 occurrences (81.5%), while the public discourse produced only five instances (18.5%). This showed that the official discourse had the liberty to use whatever language it saw fitting in interactions without considering the important effect of language use in reform buy-in. Here is an Arabic text that was produced by the United States government that shows the issue:

في ما يلي بيان الحقائق الذي أصدرته وزارة الخارجية الأميركية يوم 20 أيلول/سبتمبر ويتضمن الخطوط العريضة للمعلومات الأساسية وجدول أعمال الاجتماع [emphasis added] الذي سيعقد في نيويورك.

(U.S. Department of State, 2004, para. 3)

Here is the translated quotation that appeared in the document:

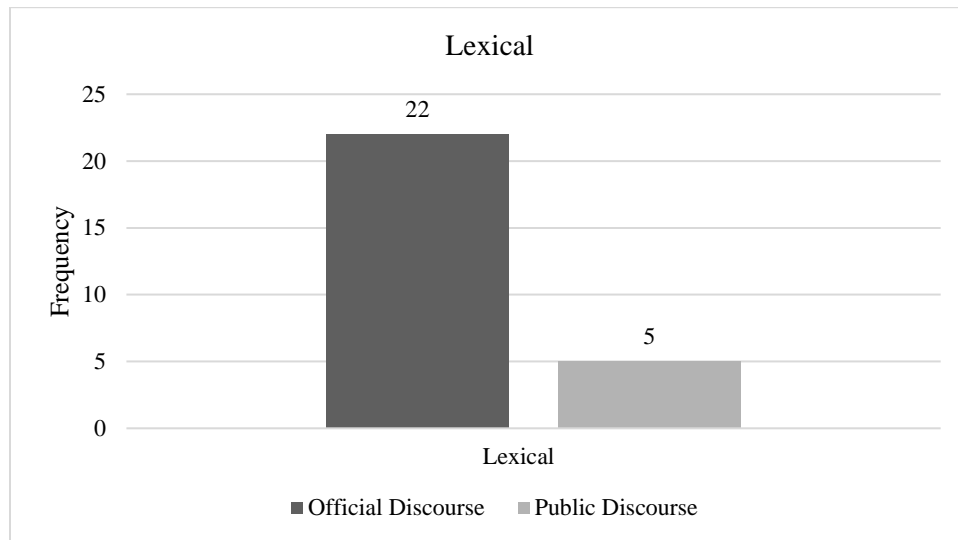
Below is a fact sheet issued by the U.S. State Department on September 20 and *it outlines the guidelines and the agenda of the meeting* [emphasis added] to be held in New York.

(U.S. Department of State, 2004, para. 3)

In this excerpt, we see the lexical problem where the partnership did not even try to convey the message covertly, which shows that the United States was taking an undisputable charge in deciding, not only when and where the meeting would be held but also outlined the *guidelines* and the agenda for the meeting for 27 *independent* countries.



Figure 12 shows the number of lexical issues found in the documents, along with their source.



*Figure 12.* Number of coded statements with lexical issues observed in the analyzed documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies

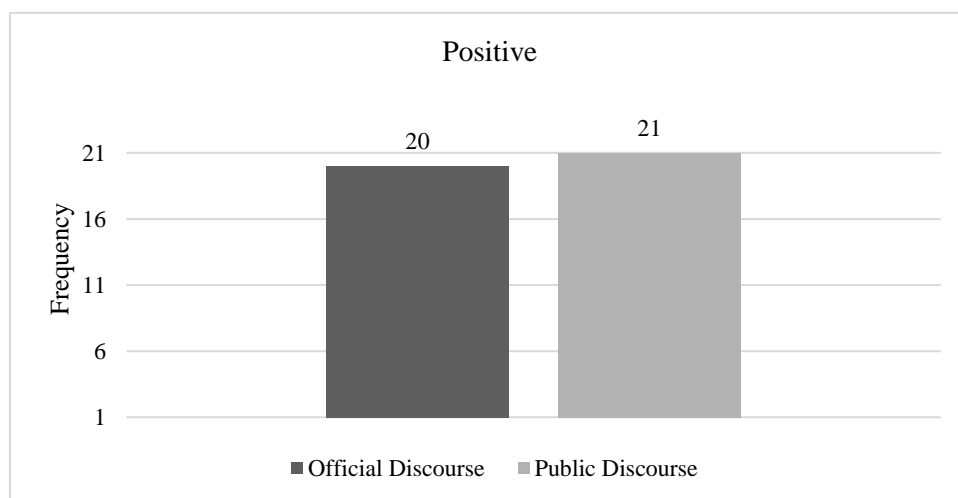
### **Positive**

It is not my intention to minimize the positive recommendations or statements produced by all parties involved in the G8-BMENA Partnership; but the consideration of a positive or real reform is subjective, because in my understanding, real reform occurs when there is, for example, an agreement on a scientific partnership or when there is an investment in research and development. On the other hand, the G8-BMENA Partnership considered producing a joint declaration or providing classroom materials as a reform or an achievement. Therefore, positive code was added *only* to statements with real reform efforts that matched my definition, such as an investment in an indigenous knowledge economy, knowledge creation (not consumption), and capacity building. With this in mind, positive statements were tagged 41 times in total. Official discourse produced 20 occurrences (48.8%), while 21 instances were from the public discourse (51.2%). This is

the only code where the public discourse had a slight edge in the frequency with about 2% difference. This outcome gave me some hope that both the government and civil societies representatives were seeking real reforms even though it was not as high in priority as I would have hoped. The following comment serves as an example of what I consider to be a positive or real reform:

*Developing a scientific and practical index for measuring the progress of the Arab states [emphasis added] in the process of reform and issuing an annual report thereon. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2004, p. 13)*

That comment represents one example of a positive outcome in my analysis, because it is not advocating for reliance on international agencies (United Nations) to provide annual reports about the progress status of the region. On the contrary, it seeks developing a local agency that analyzes the status of the Arab countries in the scientific field. It is a natural progression, starting with a needs assessment (deficiency) and then moving forward to create locally inspired and developed solutions for those deficiencies. The following figure shows the number of coded positive statements and their sources.



*Figure 13.* Number of coded statements positive (real reforms) observed in the partnership documents produced by G8-BMENA and civil societies.

## **Educational Discourse**

It is of paramount importance for this research to demystify the underlying agenda for the G8-BMENA Partnership and its annual meetings. I achieved that end through analyzing official documents generated by the governments from both G8 and BMENA regions with some input from civil societies. The scope of reform in the partnership included three major areas: educational, economic, and social. It is important to highlight the main reason for this partnership because it was launched to counter extremism that emanated from the BMENA region, which threatens peace and stability, not only in the region but in the world and in particular, the United States.

In the wake of 9/11, many nations collaborated to face the evil threat not only to the West but also to the region, and what makes matters worse is that those extremists hijacked our faith for their own twisted agenda and found global media that gave them an avenue to spread fear. Under the banner of war on terrorism with political and economic alliances that have been created, education has to be addressed. I do not disagree with that premise, but I do disagree with the agenda and the manner that created this partnership.

Two types of discourses emerged: (a) education for the labor market (material), and (b) security or political discourse (rhetorical), which in essence created a new hegemonic relation between the G8 (the United States in particular) and the BMENA countries, which were represented in a covert institutional and professional domination. This speaks to the domination shift from overt coercive group domination to a more subtle one (Danet, 1984; O'Barr et al., 1978; Bradac et al., 1981; Ng & Bradac, 1993; Wodak, 1984), and it appears legitimate because of the global threats we all face. So,

how does the double-sword hegemony appear in the G8-BMENA? We already know who had control and power in creating the entire partnership. Not only that, the analysis showed the G8 control over the agenda, scope, region, countries, agreements, declarations, along with the ability to deem the outcomes to be a success or failure. And finally, we know about the G8 benefits of selling educational materials and curriculum to the BMENA region. These arrangements usually are carried out by international organizations and NGOs that publicize information to influences international agendas for reform. Lingard (2000) stated in this regard:

The effects of globalization on the state, education policy, and schools are mediated yet again by local cultures, histories, and politics. Globalization maps onto local practice in contingent, contested, inflected, and thus unpredictable ways. (p. 102)

Globalization comes with contestation as a main characteristic because when looking at the 41 documents, the majority of them address the labor market and its connection to education (material), which now has created a global logic to incorporate the private-sector as major partner in educational reform. The influence of this connection between education and the private-sector is seen in the developed policies by the BMENA. Therefore, there is a conflict between the global and the local logics, but the weight of the global logic has more influence due to the funding resources allocated to it and the political power that supports it.

It is observed time and again that the reform includes teacher training and Basic Education Curriculum (BEC), which includes teaching English language as a life skill. The issue here is that these elements are closely tied to the labor market to create more

jobs, while the real focus should be on education as liberation from local and Western domination. In other words, it advocates for a narrow educational philosophy, which may provide a short-term objective as opposed to an educational view that addresses larger issues such as political exploitation, social stratification, and a dominant economic model. The partnership did not advocate to reform fundamental issues that contribute to the region's stagnation, such as like social justice or equity, but rather it advocated for capitalism and a neoliberal educational agenda, which in essence keeps the region dependent on the G8 for its political and economic stability. I must point out that this could not have happened without local conscious or unconscious support.

### **Language use in G8-BMENA Meetings**

Globalization and hegemony use a certain rhetoric *soft governance* as Dale (1999) believed that they use noncoercive and discursive techniques to gain confidence and buy-in from governments. It appeared to be the case in the G8-BMENA Partnership through their collaboration in two major areas:

- I. Labor market and its relation to education:
  - Creating partnerships with the private sector
  - Teacher training
  - Entrepreneurship
- II. Perceptions and language use:
  - Best practices
  - Relevance of education
  - Education relations to prosperity
  - Targets

These premises are representative of a dominant global understanding, which defines education and its purpose in a society, and it also defines development and what it looks like. However, the G8-BMENA recommendations were not created in the BMENA region, and they may conflict with the local vision or understanding of reform. Lawn (2006) indicated that a soft governance approach would use soft tools such as conferences, seminars, and advisory groups to rally the target audience, which was the case in the partnership at hand.

When the partnership discusses educational, social, and economic reform, we have to understand that the political context in the G8 that generated the agenda for the BMENA region is immensely disconnected from the region it supposedly wants to help. Therefore, when reading the documents and discussions between G8 ministers and their BMENA counterparts, we notice that they almost speak two different languages because priorities are different. An example was when Canada blocked a joint declaration in an annual meeting because there was a disagreement on the major obstacle in the face of any kind of reform and I may add, world peace: the conflict between Palestine and Israel. In other words, the G8 is focusing on the symptoms of the issue but not on the issue itself. Take, for example, the following statement by the minister of foreign affairs of the United Arab Emirates:

لا يمكنكم أن تأتوا إلى المنتدى وتكلموا مع المنطقة وتقولوا نحن نتناول فقط الأمور التي نريد أن نتناولها ولا نريد تناول الأمور التي تريدون انتم تناولها، أي شيء اقل مما جاء في البيان الرئاسي للمنتدى في

المغرب عام 2009 لن نقبل به. (Farhat, 2011, para. 21)

Translated quotation that appeared in the document:

You cannot come to the forum and engage in a dialogue with the region and say we are dealing only with the issues that we want to deal with, and refuse to discuss the issues that we want to be addressed, anything less than what came in the presidential statement of the Forum in Morocco in 2009, will not be accepted. (Farhat, 2011, para. 21)

As far as educational reform, a great analogy that I can draw from what Kaldor (1981) addressed regarding the baroque arsenal, which talked about the weapon industry in the time of peace where manufacturers of weapons gain many benefits, such as money, jobs, infrastructure, success, expansion, and development, and those weapons will be used elsewhere. By the same token, this scenario can apply to educational reform suggested in the partnership because when the G8 (center) transfer *best practices*, education models, curriculum, institutions, accreditations to the BMENA region (periphery), it will take years to be received and implemented. With this in mind, the region will receive outdated products *baroque educational arsenal* that not only was designed in a different environment and culture, but also was delivered years later, which in essence may hinder any possibility of building local infrastructure. This scenario makes the region continue to slip further on a global level and continue to strain the national resources and also benefit the G8 countries on many levels. This shows the relationship between the center and the periphery where the “centers grow stronger and more dominant and the peripheries become increasingly marginalized” (Altbach, 2006, p. 24).

I am not suggesting that establishing best practices, monitoring, accreditation, and quality assurance agencies is a bad idea, but I think it falls under secondary issues for the BMENA region. I believe the real concern is the mental control (colonization) that causes

the region either to fail to be productive in developing indigenous knowledge economy, or it has been actively and intentionally blocked from *real* development because this has transpired in the apparent dependence on the G8 in all areas of reform. One would ask: When would the cycle end? Especially when we observe the unbelievable status of the BMENA where these countries mainly consume outdated knowledge, among other products, and the partnership ironically suggested increasing the number of students scholarships to the West and suggest that students do community service in the West, not in their homeland where the help needed most, as stated in this statement “. . . [students] perform community service while in the United States, and have the opportunity to take part in a number of enhancement activities designed to heighten their awareness of civic responsibility and leadership” (U.S. Department of State , 2008, para. 23). It also worsens the brain drain situation the region suffers from as the (United Nations Development Program, 2002) report indicated that 51 percent of adult Arabs showed interest in emigrating to the West.

The analysis showed the role of the hegemons in the BMENA region consisting of key players not only from the G8 but also from within who have the ability to lobby for support and to participate in creating plans, agendas, defining problems, and recommending solutions that may or may not achieve the wanted outcome for the entire BMENA region or individual states. Ritzer (1996) talked about the idea of McDonaldization of higher education by offering similar courses, qualifications, training courses, and even in establishments such as quality control. Some may argue that the burger may travel well, but it is not the same as in educational or social reforms. Altbach (2006) highlighted the role of universities in modern societies regardless of locations, as



the place where locals debate controversial issues that affect their region. Altbach (2006) advocated for keeping them independent from local or international hegemonic entities to result in successful outcomes. Therefore, when looking at the role of the G8-BMENA Partnership and the real role of a university, we see conflict because the G8 focuses on the labor market (material) issues while universities should function as an avenue for a cultural discourse that stems from critical engagement in local issues.

The analysis showed some agreements on transactions for curricula delivery from the G8 to the BMENA region, which showcases an exchange of material and money but that does not mean an exchange of ideas. That is to say, without real commitment to long-term scientific partnership or collaboration, without capacity building in research and development, reform will not occur in the region. In addition, the region will not be able to contribute to the world knowledge economy, and the region might remain in a relationship characterized by being a recipient of programs and degrees created elsewhere. The alternative scenario would allow the region to be creative in helping the rest of the world to tackle common problems facing humanity.

It is important to clarify my position on the economic development and labor market needs in the region, because I believe they are important aspects in societies' stability and advancement, but the issue in this research is about knowledge ownership and production. Robertson et al. (2007) addressed the philosophy of learning as it rests in the ability to develop new capacities that would bridge the *learning divide* between the West and Rest. Development and education reform for that matter rely on the innovation approach that gives the BMENA region the ability to practice with new ideas and technologies in order for the region to begin to develop its own capacity. If we look, for

example, at the four following pillars recognized by the World Bank (2003) as the cornerstones for knowledge society: (a) information and infrastructure, (b) economic incentive and institutional regime, (c) innovation systems, and (d) education and learning, we realize these pillars are lacking in the G8-BMENA Partnership.

In other words, a knowledge society is primarily dependent not on the physical abilities but rather on the use of ideas and on the application of technologies. That is to say, a knowledge society follows a cycle that starts with knowledge creation, acquiring that knowledge, and ends with the transmission of and usage of the knowledge by individuals or organizations. Essentially, “the knowledge economy is transforming the demands of the labor market in economies throughout the world” (World Bank, 2003, p. 1). This position will flip the current arrangement between the labor market and education, where we put knowledge economy at the heart of any reform, making the educational apparatus inform the labor market, not the contrary.

Another important observation that cannot be ignored is the fact that of the data collected for this research, only one of the 41 documents analyzed was published in Arabic, and the rest were published in English. Keep in mind that the majority of BMENA countries have Arabic as their native language. This is ironic because the reform is about the region, and the official language used in the annual meetings was English. That is just one tool of controlling the official and public discourse, as van Dijk (1996) stressed to pay attention to this aspect when we analyze power and domination in talk and text. It also highlights how the G8-BMENA Partnership is actively marginalizing the very population that it supposedly is intending to help by using a foreign language and

ignoring the importance of the native language on so many levels, as was elaborated on in Chapter 2.

### **Political Discourse**

The G8-BMENA Partnership did not emerge from a vacuum, but as mentioned, it was because of the 9/11 tragedy, or at least this was the official reasoning espoused by the United States. We cannot analyze its foundation without looking at preceding events in the region, especially the illegal invasion of Iraq. The invasion had done a great deal of damage to the credibility of the U.S. efforts in the *reform* before it even started, or to say the least, it limited the support from the region and from the major European allies. Furthermore, it weakened international law because of the unilateral action taken by the United States in the war (Girdner, 2004). In other words, the military power diminished or harmed the political power deployed in the G8-BMENA Partnership. Erhan (2005) claimed that there was not real agreement among the G8 countries regarding the planned goals for the BMENA Partnership. Therefore, the initiative remained covertly a U.S.-led project, and this is one of the reasons for its unsuccessful outcome in promoting democracy, human rights, good governance, freedom, and prosperity considering for the sake of argument that those are the real objectives for the partnership. In other words, Europe maintained public relations with the United States by providing superficial political support, which is a representation of group power and domination thorough professional institutions, as illustrated by van Dijk (2001b).

The name of the partnership was Greater Middle East (GME), which was met by great suspicion in the region because it echoed previous efforts to create a New Middle East. An article by a retired American colonel titled *Blood Borders*, published in the

American Armed Forces Journal (2006), included a changed map of the region, which reflected the hidden intention of the United States for the region. That intent was not aligned with the declared promise of the G8-BMENA Partnership. Figure 14 shows the before and after of the New Middle East map.

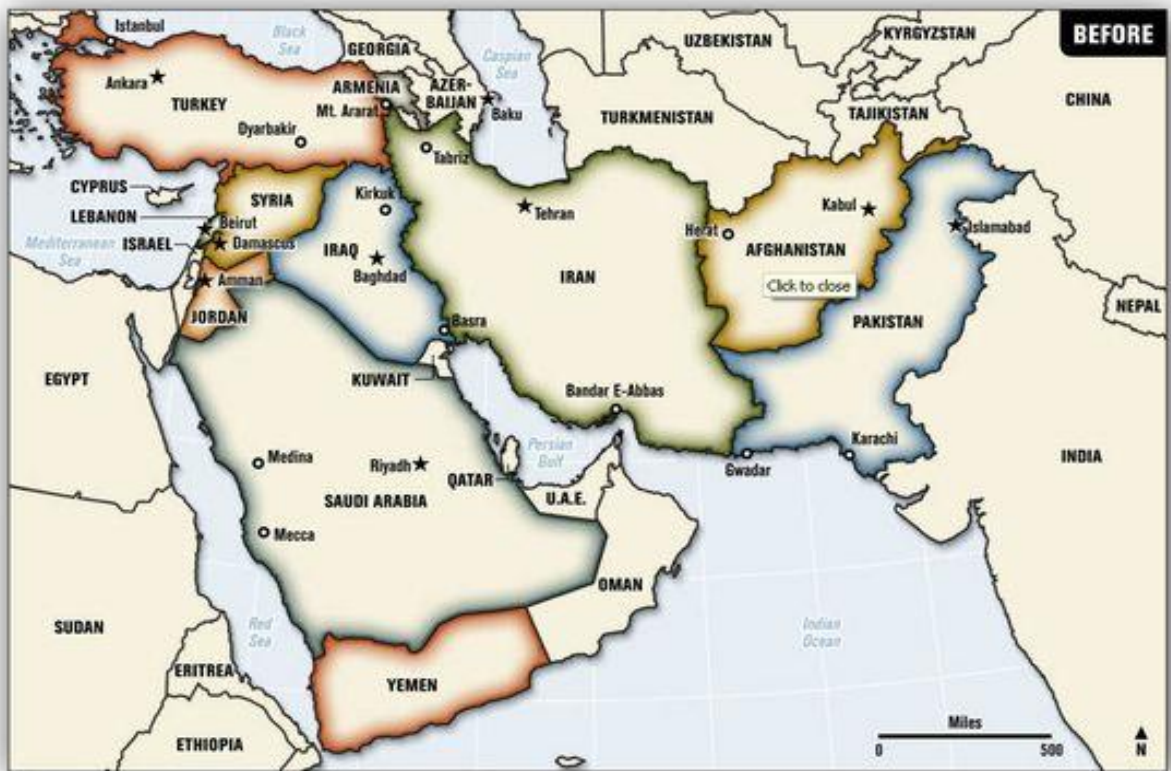


Figure 14. Middle East before and after Blood Borders Map.

The countries that win more territories are Afghanistan, Arab Shia State, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Free Baluchistan, Free Kurdistan, Iran, Islamic Scared State, Jordan, Lebanon, and Yemen. The losers are Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and the West Bank. According to Nazemroaya (2006) and Peters (2006), the U. S. claimed the map does not reflect the Pentagon vision for the region, although the map was used for training in the NATO Defense College, the National War Academy, and other military planning circles. Such information could limit any possible success of the partnership, in addition and most importantly the fact that the change is imposed by the United States, neglecting the internal dynamics and the necessity for a needed reform that stems from within.

The analysis showed the following major weaknesses, from a political angle, that characterized the G8-BMENA Partnership:

- A one-size-fits-all approach in a very diverse region in addition to the prescriptive nature of it in a very untrusting political climate.
- Lack of coordination with other programs that *aspire* to achieve similar goals, such as the European Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). This partnership will be discussed briefly in the next section.
- The G8-BMENA Partnership was drafted and created in the United States, without consultation with the region.
- The serious weakness was about the Arab-Israeli conflict, which I believe to be the major obstacle for any reform on all levels because it provides a breeding ground for extremism and delays any developmental and reform efforts.

The analysis showed distrust between the two major powers (the United States and European countries) who have many interests in the region, i.e., political, security, and economic, among others, which ultimately caused the failure of the G8-BMENA Partnership. The United States used a rapid transformation in the region via its military power (Iraq war 2003), and then used BMENA as another vehicle for transformation (political power). Europe, on the other hand, used a more gradual transformation approach when it created EMP.

One may wonder that because the EMP, led by the EU and G8-BMENA, led by the United States agreed on the main principles to reform the region educationally, economically, and socially, would they have more commonality than differences? Are they competing or complementing each other's efforts? It is a sad reality, mainly because the region seems to be an object controlled by different actors for either common or different purposes, and both the EMP and G8-BMENA claim that their project is for the benefit of the region. Has the region lost its agency in reforming itself? Is the region that weak to be objectified by both Europe and the United States?

The BMENA and EMP partnerships may have a lot in common with respect to the future of the region, but there is evident competition between the two. Noi (2011) shed light on the divergent political, security, and economic concerns between the United States and Europe. We see the competition in several instances, as discussed in Noi's (2011) work:

- Madrid Middle East Peace Conference 1991, where the United States kept pushing Europe away from the process to prevent any political role in the conflict.

- Europe and the United States diverged on the U.S. policy of isolation and containment under the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, and Europe was involved in dialogue with Iran, which opposed the U.S. policy at the time.
- Europe initiated the Barcelona Process without inviting the United States.
- The U.S. unilateral war in Iraq, which negatively impacted European States and divided them.
- Launching the G8-BMENA Partnership by the United States without real consultation with Europe or without using the existing EMP, which was founded nine years earlier.
- A superficial involvement of Europe in the BMENA Partnership.

The economic factor intensified the competition between the United States and EU and their partnerships to control the region, and this can be seen in some of the statements found in the BMENA-analyzed documents:

Turkey is providing technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of *free trade agreements, including training on WTO issues* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative , 2012, p. 17)

. . . improved business climates and *open and free trade economies* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2009, p. 3)

. . . EU to launch discussions on Deep and *Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2011, p. 4)

The wording of these statements may show that the G8 is consumed with the economic reform in the region, but frankly, the fallacy of free trade, open markets, and privatization seems only to open the region's market to sell goods produced in the United States and



Europe, and this is the main reason for the competition between the two major powers, which ultimately resulted in the failure of the BMENA Partnership. Noi (2011) showed such evidence in the Free Trade Agreements (FTA) established by the United States with some BMENA countries and with the FTA that Europe established with the Mediterranean and Middle East countries. We may not see with the naked eye the depth and the efforts that took place in planning and establishing such partnerships just by reading final declarations from the BMENA, but now we could because we analyzed other sources that addressed the historical background of the region and the context in which these partnerships emerged. This is why analyzing the discursive and historical context is a hallmark of critical discourse analysis as stressed in the work of Fairclough and Wodak (1997) and van Dijk (2001a).

## Chapter 5 Discussion

In this concluding chapter, I address the research problem, the purpose, significance, major results, research implications, and direction for future research. The research problem at hand is that periphery countries around the world, and especially for this research the BMENA region, do not have free will to embark political, educational, or economic reforms, which results in social conditions and ramifications that impede developments in the region. My literature review and data analysis showed that the main reason for unsuccessful reform efforts was due to multiple levels of hegemony and special interests of the dominant groups, both in the G8 and BMENA. In other words, I discovered two layers of domination: First, the G8 dominated the BMENA representatives and populations, and second, the BMENA representatives dominated the civil societies and the public, resulting in a trickle-down domination effect.

The purpose of the research was to establish a deep understanding of educational, political, and social challenges facing Saudi Arabia in its foundation and then use that understanding as an example for my targeted region of analysis, BMENA. I moved to investigate globalization and its challenges in the realm of education, society, and economy because global Western powers did not only shape the Saudi context, but also shaped the entire BMENA region. Moreover, this analysis showed that the partnership is influencing the region's reform today. It was my interest to include an important tool used by globalization, the English language, which has many damaging effects in the region.

From this analysis, it was evident that critical research was limited in the region because of the small number of regional resources, publications in Arabic, and the local

critical researchers that I was able to have access to. Therefore, the significance of my study relies, first and foremost, on the contribution to the resistance discourse in both the Saudi context and the BMENA region in general. The research also provided a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse stemming from either official or public entities that favored in a larger sense the status quo. I do not believe that the partnership attempted to seriously engage in long-lasting developments but instead offered temporary solutions for permanent problems.

The research questions below have guided me in addressing serious concerns in the BMENA region because they tackled educational, economic, and social problems, which are in desperate need for reform.

1. How has the G8 and the Broader Middle East and North African (BMENA) Partnership affected and shaped educational and social reforms in the region since its establishment in 2004?
2. What type of discourse was deployed to perpetuate hegemonic and hierarchical relationships that sustain unequal status between the G8 and BMENA countries?
3. How do the G8 representatives control the BMENA public discourse?
4. How does such discourse control the mind and the action of the BMENA countries, and what are the social consequences of such control?

These questions also investigated the role of G8-BMENA as an international professional institution that promised to generate a reform that comes from within the targeted region and is not affected by external influence. Furthermore, I attempted to unpack techniques that the G8 used to rally BMENA governments to be part of reform efforts in their region. It is important to note that my analysis did not paint the region

through its representatives as victims but rather as responsible participants in the generated outcomes or lack thereof by both being actively and passively involved in this partnership. Moreover, the study discussed the types of discourses generated in this partnership and examined who and what controlled the discourse, what techniques were used, and the consequences of such control. These questions have been addressed in Chapter 4 and I will address them concisely in this Chapter in the closing remarks section.

### **Levels of Hegemony**

In order for me to understand hegemony in the region, I needed to dissect the concept of hegemony into layers, relying on my understanding of research by Gramsci (2000), Apple (1990), and Bourdieu (1977). The result gave me the knowledge to divide hegemony in the region to three levels, which I believe will help me in my future work in the realms of domination, power relations, and reproduction. I do not claim that these levels are completely isolated, but rather, they are intertwined. The first level of hegemony was observed in the literature review, which I called level one or micro hegemony. I considered it as such because it was internal, within a country, such as Saudi Arabia (Chapter 2). It appeared in my research when the Saudi government, at its foundation, used the most sacred tool—the religion of Islam—for the people in achieving its needed political outcome by establishing the country in 1932. The government represented itself as the true representative of the *pure* version of the faith (Unitarian) and therefore domesticated the people to achieve that purpose with the consent of the masses. It is considered a hegemonic relationship between the government and the people because the unification of the land does not necessarily represent unification of hearts and minds

of all people with diverse backgrounds. It also did not result in equality or equity on a wide range of issues.

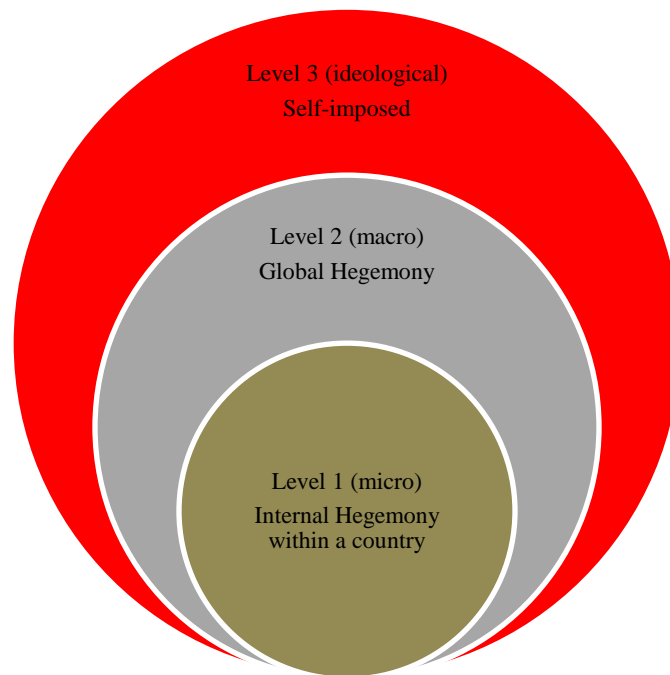
Education was a major domain for competition between the government and the religious establishment in the Saudi example and therefore, a collation was made to impose a political and a social agenda, which created an oligarchy ruling system (Abir, 1988). The two parties created a two-fold educational system (traditional and secular) to establish their legitimacy and to impose their views at the cost of education quality, infrastructure, equity, and upward social mobility. This was present in one dominant view of education and religion, ignoring different cultural backgrounds and understandings under the banner of unifying the country, and people largely accepted the premise. It is not a new phenomenon because we observe the rhetoric now in the war on terrorism because dominant groups usually use scare tactics to rally populations behind special causes. I found that level one of hegemony is not limited to internal forces because local hegemony join forces with foreign powers when they have a common goal or when their interests meet at the expense of the local population advancement. However, hegemony here did not represent itself as such but rather used a discourse that disguised the real intentions, using patriotism as a vehicle. This created a sense of parochial nationalism, which added local conflicts, such as tribalism, and regionalism, saddled with a rentier economy.

The second level of hegemony (macro) was found in this study when there were clear international political, educational, and economic interests in the region. It is a macro-level domination that showed obvious power in different fields, a scenario that forced weak nations to join coalitions or sign treaties. Globalization from above is the

catalyst for this type of hegemony; it affects societies in two major ways, either by a homogenizing them or heterogenizing them. I established that adhering to one or the other is not the right reaction to this power because we need to analyze globalization dialectically; globalization, as was established in Chapter 2, has economic, educational, and cultural dimensions. Furthermore, globalization comes in two forms: First, there is globalization from above and in this sense, it supports domination and exploitation of others; and second, there is globalization from below, where it helps activists to resist globalization by using its tools. This is the dialectic nature of globalization because it can empower and oppress individuals or nations simultaneously.

The third level of hegemony is an ideological one—and I consider it the most dangerous because it is self-imposed. To be more specific, it is a result of mind control by people in power where the dominated people consent to domination and considers it necessary for their success. It was observed in this study in educational choices made in the Saudi example in establishing modern education or in the global level in adopting English as the language of science and the language of the world. It is portrayed in this view as a natural phenomenon, not as a man-made phenomenon, which could be rectified. English dominated both the official discourse and the public discourse in the analyzed documents. In other words, I depict this type of hegemony as if marginalized people's consciousness is functioning as an independent agent for domination and reproduction. It seems that marginalized people in many places and especially in the BMENA region are unconsciously accepting a lower status because this is the only status they know, and therefore, they do not produce an alternative vision. Moreover, it appears that there is a consciousness conflict; one is seeking independence, freedom, and the

ability to decide for oneself, and the other becomes repressed swiftly by unconsciousness or by false consciousness. Figure 15 will demonstrate my understanding of hegemony levels that emerged from this study and it is important to note that they are connected because my research showed that each level is supported by the other. Questions emerged regarding these levels of hegemony are: What level we should tackle first? Shall we start with the most dangerous (ideological) as a top-down approach or bottom-up? These questions remain to be answered in future research.



*Figure 15.* Levels of Hegemony observed in the G8-BMENA Partnership

## **Research Implications**

### **Theoretical Implications**

In both the official discourse (dominant) and the public discourse, the concept of hegemony was prevalent because it produced the highest number of codes in my analysis. I consider this type of hegemony as level three because it is mental and ideological

because officials and representatives of civil societies relied on imported solutions for local problems. That is to say, the G8 government officials wanted to maintain their control over the discourse which essentially controls the outcomes, options, and opinions of both BMENA officials and civil societies representatives. Not only that, both BMENA officials and civil societies representatives became part of this partnership for different reasons, which evidently did not come to fruition in the needed reform nor did it improve the relationship between them. Here, I consider potential good response to this global power represented in the G8 by using the concept of globalization from below because it gives the region the necessary tools (Internet, emails, transportation, etc.) provided by globalization from above to create a regional movement that aligns itself with globalization as hybridization (Pieterse, 1994), which would unify the region against the current dominant model. This dominant model has widened the gap not only between the center and the periphery but also between different classes in the BMENA societies, in the quality of education, and in social mobility.

I believe the BMENA region has an identity crisis caused not only by the effects of globalization because humans have always been global and lived side by side, but also by mental colonization. It is a realization I gained from this research that the region needs to engage in a process of constructing an identity to create a meaning for itself in order for it to generate reform options emanate from within. This process of identification entails a necessary system of difference (self vs. other) because it is an important part of constructing an identity. It is a dialectical process that includes self-other (differences-similarities). On one hand, the region needs to identify what makes it different, and on the other, it needs to identify what it has in common with the others in order to construct its



own identity. This comes with a caveat because we must not overemphasize the differences and neglect the similarities because it is a dialectical system of differences and similarities, and excessive emphasis on one will cause malfunction. It is a balanced approach that recognizes the differences (multiplicity of others), while at the same time finds similarities.

Based on the data analysis, the G8-BMENA was the dominant group in which they controlled the discourse as it was evident by, first, the number of documents produced and, second, by the frequency of codes added in eight of nine categories; that category was the positive category because the public discourse was slightly higher (49% vs. 51%). It was surprising to me that both the official discourse and the public discourse were more connected than disconnected by having more in common in their views regarding educational, economic, and social reforms. I came to the research with an impression that the official discourse (BMENA countries) would be more reliant on the G8 countries in this partnership and thought that the public discourse (civil societies) would be seeking more local solutions to local problems. Unlike what I had expected, both adhered to the G8 agenda without real, active involvement in its creation, and they were passively at the receiving end. To add insult to injury, the G8 was functioning from a superior position as an arbitrator because in many instances, the BMENA representatives met only with the civil societies when the G8 representatives were present. The alternative would have been a meeting between the two local parties where they solved issues together. It is like when the American Congress has a gridlock, we do not expect Europe to intervene, let alone the BMENA region to bridge the gap between Democrats and Republicans, because at the end of the day it is a local American issue

and it has to be solved locally without foreign influence. In addition, Europe also was minimally involved in the partnership for one reason or another, but my analysis showed that the reason for its involvement was to maintain the power and control of the Western group over the region in a superficial collaboration with the United States.

I believe both the official and the public discourses fall under the third level of hegemony described above, which represents mental colonization and false-consciousness that stemmed from decades of colonization and now is under another project known as globalization. This consciousness is considered false when it perpetuates the status quo of domination and inequality and when it makes subordinate groups (or countries, in this study) lose its agency in determining their future. I argue that false consciousness made these countries incapable of taking action against the causes of their subordination. Cunningham (1987) referred to false consciousness as “harbouring of false beliefs that sustain one’s own oppression (p. 255), and that is why this level of hegemony is the most dangerous in my analysis. The BMENA region is involved in the globalization project, whether willing or unwillingly, to maintain the superstructure of the world (hierarchy) where the West remains at the top and the Rest occupies a lower status. The top of the hierarchy seems to exert what is necessary to remain in that position by compromising with the G8 countries (group power) to achieve a common goal of political and economic exploitation. In other words, the game remains the same, but the rules change to serve a similar purpose. For example, game-changing tactics appear when we see domination shift from a hard power (military) to a soft power (political) through establishing professional institutions and partnerships because these institutions project a facade of genuine interests in the well-being of the region. Keep in mind that the

partnership produced only two joint declarations (low expectations), and when the region pushed for addressing the single political issue (Arab-Israeli conflict) that caused all of the deterioration and extremism in the region, Canada was responsible for the failure of the seventh annual meeting. It is important to note that the region pushed for the political reform for this issue adhering to U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (Secretary Powell and Moroccan Foreign Minister Benaissa, 2004), which was again created by the major powers, and nonetheless it was refused. It makes me wonder: Is it intended to maintain the conflict as senseless as it sounds to give the major powers leverage and access to maintain power and control over the region?

### **Social Implications**

I claim that the social ramifications are many, first, maintaining a culture of dependency in almost all aspects of life—educational, economic, political, and social—because as represented in the analysis only a fraction of the reform suggested advocated for local solutions. I have led to believe that the partnership has worsened the Arabs mentality because of its continues reliance on Western models and points of view. These views were reproduced in the partnership by local elites—or what I referred to in Chapter 2 as the transnational class because it has more in common with the elites in New York or London more than with their own people. This created a chain reaction because if people in BMENA want to move up in society, they must adapt to the dominant global logic and its way of thinking. It is an ideological work that seems to gain strength, and some consider it to be unstoppable.

Second, only one of the 41 documents that were gathered and analyzed in this project was published in Arabic, which I considered to be a major issue in my literature

review: the spread of the English language, because most nations in the region use Arabic as their native language. I consider the absence of publications in Arabic as alienation to the very same people and to the region the G8 is trying to *reform*. It is the neoliberal story that portrays English as a neutral tool and as a transparent language (Pennycook, 1994) for international communication to make it less threatening to the 75% of the world population that either does not speak the language or for whom it is a second or foreign language. Here we see an alignment between this view of English and the view of globalization as a natural phenomenon.

It is a perfect representation of Gramsci's (2000) understanding of cultural hegemony observed in the portrayal of the English language as a tool, because if it is a tool, then people rationalize its necessity in international communication, and in return, it does not threaten their linguistic, national, or ethnic identities without engaging in its historical background. In other words, it reinforces the English language powerful position with the consent of the BMENA officials and the civil societies representatives forgetting that it is an imposed language, which limits involvement from the most affected people who undeniably are in need of reform.

However, position of the English language needs to be looked at dialectically, because first, when organizations *choose* English as a medium of communication, doing so could empower activists and researchers in the context of globalization from below. That is because it provides them the opportunity to rally international activists and critical thinkers from around the world to bring an international perspective for a common issue, and it provides access to resources and information. Second, using English could also oppress people because it can alienate the majority of those who do not have the language

capital. Therefore, we need to look at the English language from oppressing and empowering lenses because if we look at it only from an empowering dimension, then we obscure its hegemonic role in a society, and if we look at it from its oppressive dimension and reject it, then we lose its potential in supporting globalization from below. At the end of the day, English is a reality in our lives, but if it has to be taught, it should be taught in a critical way that empowers its users and does not have to be a prerequisite for advancement at all levels.

### **Political Implications**

My analysis unexpectedly revealed a greater political challenge facing the region. As stated previously in the research, educational, economic, and social issues are hard to precisely isolate because those domains influence each other greatly. However, through the critical lens I used in analyzing the documents, I found more troubling political agendas aiming to change the current political map of the region, which would not only drag the region into another wave of serious conflicts, especially sectarianism, but also would expose the region to higher level of dependency on the West through new alliances. It is my assumption that these new alliances would focus on political issues to create superficial stability but would not address educational, economic, or social challenges that now face the region. While the U.S. government denies the allegations of a new Middle East map, we observe today many *serious* indications of recent movement in the region, such as the Arab Spring, Syria's condition, Iraq, the new American-Iranian relationship, and the current American-Russian conflicting agenda in the region. These developments sadly do not promise a brighter future.

If we examine the genesis of the G8-BMENA Partnership, we find that the United States used the Arab Human Development Report of 2003, as discussed in Chapter 4, as its backbone to engage in the reform effort due to high rates of illiteracy (40% of all, or 65 million people), and an unemployment rate of 25%. However, the United Nations Human Development Report of 2015 showed the unemployment rate in the Arab states was the highest in the world, at 29%, which is higher than the 2003 level. Further, it showed Internet usage minimal increase from 1.6% in 2003 to 4% in 2015 compared with 81% in developed countries. Those statistics speak to the dysfunctional types of partnership analyzed in this research.

### **Methodological Implications and Further Research**

This study is limited due to the fact that I used official documents produced by government officials and by representatives of civil societies and regarded them as official discourse and public discourse, respectively. As a matter of fact, this arrangement made sense for my analysis, but analyzing these documents from 35 countries while considering these documents as representative for all countries under the impression that they had equal opportunity in influencing the drafting process of documents may have given me only a general understanding of this type of partnership. And at the same time, it did not reveal the smallest details in the discourse and the level of participation of each country. In other words, we already know that the official entity had control over the discourse of the partnership, but I am not certain if the official discourse was overly controlled by the G8, the BMENA representatives, or by a specific country, and the research did not reveal if the BMENA countries were involved in the partnership only for public appeal and not for real reform. On the other hand, considering civil societies as

true representatives of the public discourse may have swayed my analysis because those representatives—even though they do not work or represent the governments in this partnership—may not necessarily represented the people’s discourse. That is to say, there were no elections to choose the representatives; instead, they were chosen by an official entity. Take, for example, this statement from 2012 annual G8-BMENA meeting:

At the Forum for the Future in Tunisia, we had strong ministerial and other high-level participation from BMENA and G-8 countries, as well as representatives from international organizations and international financial institutions. *Forty-five civil society and private sector leaders were selected from over 125 participants* [emphasis added] to present their platforms and dialogue with ministers. (p. 5)

In other words, I could not ascertain the criteria under which civil societies were chosen from the rest of the 125 participants. This was not clarified in any of the analyzed documents, even though some of the civil societies do not claim that they represent the public. Therefore, it is my claim that they brought a different angle to my research in identifying discourse control and hegemonic relations not only between the G8 and BMENA countries but also between the partnership and civil societies and the public as a whole. This means I was not able in this research to exhaust all public discourse, but the public discourse that I did examine was a representation of another entity other than the dominant. It is also important to consider that unequal political and economic powers exist between countries in the region, and that might have affected their representation in the annual meetings on both the official and public levels and may also blocked a counter discourse. For example, Afghanistan may not have equal representation as Saudi Arabia or Egypt.

Furthermore, I limited my study to critically analyze documents produced by an international entity to examine power relations between the G8 and BMENA countries as an example of power relations between the West and East. Even though my methodology gave me the ability to uncover important information and global structure that reinforces itself in a different fashion, I think it may not have been entirely appropriate considering what is at stake, not only for the region but also for the world. While I argued that hegemonic influence was found in both types of discourses on different levels, that does not prove with certainty or eliminate its existence in the larger official discourse or the *people's* discourse. Put simply, first, adding another layer of macro-level analysis by including higher level of governments representations, and second, including people's discourse (not the public discourse by civil societies) could have resulted in more accurate representation of both official discourse and the people's discourse.

Therefore, it may have been more appropriate to employ a critical ethnographic approach to investigate the concept of hegemony in the region from three angles: the official, the public, and the people, to give me a macro understanding of the situation. It is almost impossible to engage in such a research with all of the 27 BMENA countries that participated in the partnership, but taking one country that may have all or most commonalities with the rest of the region might be a goal of future research. While ethnography contributes to the sum of knowledge, it came under great criticism because it was considered an academic exercise (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994) with little constructive value. This is the reason to suggest that utilizing critical ethnography because it could have been a better approach for this type of research. Madison (2005) depicted critical ethnography as:



Critical ethnography begins with an ethical responsibility to address processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular *lived* domain. By ‘ethical responsibility’ I mean a compelling sense of duty and commitment based on moral principles of human freedom and well-being, and hence a compassion for the suffering of living being. The conditions for existence within a particular context are not as they could be for specific subjects; as a result, the researcher feels a moral obligation to make a contribution towards changing those conditions toward greater freedom and equity . . . the critical ethnographer resists domestication and moves from ‘what is’ to ‘what could be.’ (p. 5)

This means disturbing the status quo by exposing power and control dynamics in marginalized communities. It means identifying my privileges, my skills, and resources as a researcher to counter a dominant discourse and to bring the marginalized voices forward. Furthermore, critical ethnography contributes to the local and global knowledge of emancipation and it supports a discourse of social justice. If we do not do that, then the alternative would be a continuous dialogue stemming from uncritical thinking characterized by conformity, which at the end of day prevents subordinate communities and countries from imagining new possibilities. It is an approach that not only focus on the use and abuse of power but also calls for action and practice. This is why Barbour (2007) called for leadership training for ethnographers not just to critically understand power relations but also to create clubs and partnerships for actions for the concerned people in both marginalized communities as well as critical researchers worldwide.

## **Closing Remarks**

According to my analysis, the G8-BMENA Partnership did not have a good start from the inception, mainly because it was drafted and designed elsewhere and did not generate the support needed to be fruitful, even on a superficial fashion. It was the military power that preceded its foundation by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 that created negative sentiments for some of the BMENA governments, civil societies, and the public, which prevented some reforms from materializing. The U.S.-led partnership used a political power (soft power) to create a superficial collaboration with the G8 countries to work with the United States in its effort to shape educational, economic, and social *reforms* in the region by simply focusing on the labor market demands. This had provided the region with small projects concerned with illiteracy rates, unemployment issues, security, and opened the region's markets further to the United States and Europe. As stated, these issues rank as a second-level concern because real reform should have originated from the region and with a genuine interest by the G8 to march toward successful reforms.

In my assessment, the partnership showed an obvious control over the region's educational, societal, economic, and political spheres, which is not a new phenomenon. That is to say, a hundred years ago, a more coercive agreement was struck between two major powers at the time (Britain and France): the infamous Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, which drew the border map for the entire Middle East region. To make matters worse, at least on self-esteem and psychological levels, Sykes-Picot even designed the flags of many countries (Aljazeera, 2014). The G8-BMNEA may have taken a softer approach in changing the region, but the future does not look promising, especially after

the surface the *Blood Borders* map in the American Armed Forces Journal (2006) by Ralph Peters, as he is considered the American Sykes-Picot for the region. The new Middle East might be an undergoing project led by the United States covertly, and perhaps the Arab Spring facilitated that endeavor, and yet again we see the *Blood Borders* suggesting that the Sykes-Picot agreement was a deformed effort served the European interests in 1916, and the new borders will help correct that deformity (The Huffington Post , 2015). In other words, it is good for the region, and the region is passively waiting for the change.

My analysis showed the G8-BMENA Partnership used soft discourse to numb people's emotions, either civil society organizations or the general public to achieve its hidden purposes. It used international organizations such as the World Bank to highlight the miserable condition in the BMENA educationally, socially, and economically (United Nations Development Program, 2002). It also highlighted the security concerns and the threat of terrorism if no action was taken by the local governments and the possible ramifications, such as overthrowing its leaders. It pinned the local governments into a corner, either to join the partnership and be part of it to publicly save face, and in return there would be some benefits for the region. Keeping in mind that BMENA governments need political, military, and economic support either to keep the status quo as is or at least to prevent it from worsening. Here, we observe the concept of smart power (Girdner, 2004) that combines both *hard power, military action and soft power*, political influence to maintain the hegemonic relationship.

According to van Dijk (2001b), understanding of group power, it was observed in the partnership that the G8-BMENA discourse was controlled by the official group

consisting of the G8 and BMENA countries. First, controlling the discourse is a symbolic power that was reflected in the number of documents produced by the G8-BMENA Partnership, which was 32 (78%) of the 41 of documents. This showcases the clear domination by governments over the discourse.

The nature of the discourse observed in the partnership is what van Dijk (1996) described as a passive discourse, like the type we see in interactions between ordinary people and with police or with judges because it shows that both BMENA representatives and civil societies did not have control in the interaction because they were passively on the receiving end. Furthermore, the G8 had more access to discourse and therefore was able not only to control the discourse but also to control the properties and influence the partnership dynamics. However, van Dijk (2001b) cautioned us from considering only text control as the embodiment of power relations in a group interaction, but rather it is the context control that matters because it reinforces the dynamics of a relationship. Context here means “. . . the mentally represented structure of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production or comprehension of discourse” (van Dijk, 2001b, p. 356).

van Dijk (2001b) explained the concept of discourse control and its relation to mind control so eloquently, stating that the first step of control is to control the dominant discourse, which was the case in this study. The second step is through mind control, which in essence reproduces dominance in a given society. Consequently, the BMENA governments and civil society organizations with their lower status, come to acquire their beliefs, options, and knowledge from powerful organizations, such as the G8, for different reasons. First, G8 discourse was considered legitimate and trustworthy because

it was produced by advanced nations in all areas of the proposed reform, such as education and economy. Second, because the partnership was created by the United States, the BMENA governments then were required to be part of the annual meetings and to come with joint declarations to at least save face and show their populations that they were working to improve people's lives. Third, civil society organizations contributed to the general discourse, but they are at the lowest level of power, and when their discourse deviated dramatically from the general *guidelines* established by the partnership, they were blocked or othered. This was observed in many instances throughout the analysis; nonetheless, the civil societies were able to produce slightly more long-lasting positive recommendations. In other words, the dominant group had the ability to suppress a counter discourse or at least to marginalize it. Fourth, the G8-BMENA dynamic was interesting, to say the least, because the governments met together in a close fashion, and the civil societies conducted parallel meetings, which was a clear observation of exclusion. Here are two comments that speak to the group power in exclusion and othering:

Unfortunately, the Arab world, except for Morocco, did not witness such frameworks and mechanisms *allowing direct interaction between the government and the representatives of the civil society. Most of the Arab states reject dialogue on equal footing with the civil society actors unless in an international or regional non-Arab forums!* [emphasis added]. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2004, p. 2)

Consequently, *serious inquiries arise among the circles of the civil society regarding the added value of the direct participation in the proceedings of the*

*Forum for the Future. Why not then restricting such participation to mailing the recommendations of the civil society [emphasis added] for saving efforts and money and avoiding delusion of the public opinion that the civil society is a real partner in the Forum. (2012 G8-BMENA Initiative, 2004, p. 11)*

As far as the social consequences of domination, I can draw from personal experience and recent interaction (A. Abumilha, personal communication, September 1, 2016) with 12 international students from five countries (Brazil, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Taiwan) to whom I introduced my research. All are in the United States to pursue their educational dream, and it seemed that they have given up on their countries. They see Western education as the best option for professional, social, and economic success. They needed more English language teaching because they want to advance along the professional and socioeconomic ladder. They needed Western degrees and qualifications because the students believed they would provide them with social and cultural capital or what Bourdieu calls habitus. They thought reform comes only through adapting to the Western model beyond education. It was astonishing to me when I told them that I hoped in my lifetime that our countries would limit sending students to the United States or Europe because each country can build its own capacity in medicine, science, engineering, technology, and the next generation can produce knowledge from their homeland using their native languages. The reaction of these 12 international students was hard to describe, but I can claim that they were shocked because they considered my vision not feasible nor realistic. That is the social consequence that I am afraid of when marginalized people lose even the hope to change the status quo. It is the

mental colonization that scares me the most, and that, I believe, is the ultimate barrier to reform in the BMENA region and in all marginalized nations.

### **Limitations**

The major limitation in this research was the unavailability of identical documents for each year of the needed analysis from 2004 to 2013. That is to say, for example, the G8-BMENA Partnership did not produce a joint declaration or a chair's summary for their annual meetings every year. Even though I contacted governmental organizations and civil societies in the United States, Canada, Germany, Oman, Tunisia, and Egypt, but those correspondences were not fruitful in either gaining access to the needed documents or at least to understand the reasoning for their unavailability to the public. I was able to find documents for each year from 2004 to 2013, but they were not identical. Another obstacle I faced was the fact that I was not able to collect any documents for the years 2014, 2015, and 2016 or any reliable information, and therefore, I was not able to establish any general conclusions regarding the fate of the G8-BMENA Partnership. It seems that the partnership dissolved without any announcement to its followers or researchers.

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