ARTICULATIONS OF IDENTITY WITHIN KUWAITI HIGH SCHOOL CLIQUES: LANGUAGE

CHOICES IN BOYATAND EMO FILIPINO YOUTH GROUPS

by

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation adds to work exploring where language stands in the shaping of adolescent speakers' social identities, since identities emerge through discursive and social practices, and social selves are produced through interaction (Bucholtz 1999), but much of the literature studying the role of language in defining the adolescent's identity is insufficient (Fortman 2003). This study is based on data from five months of fieldwork in 2008-2009 with two distinct and stigmatized high school cliques in Kuwait. The first clique is well known for its Arabish name *boyat* 'lesbian tomboys'. The second clique is a combination of Emo subculture and Filipino ethnicity. The study adopts a "mixed methods approach", which employed qualitative and quantitative measures. Qualitatively, the study is situated within an ethnographic framework that used observation, interviews, and student journal writing to emphasize the impact of language in shaping identity. Quantitatively, the work included data collected from surveys of 672 high school students, Arabic newspaper reports on the cliques, and a concordance analysis of the lexical items used by teens in their blogs. Attitudes towards members of the boyat group reflected either disgust or admiration. Attitudes expressed toward the Emo group stimulated only prejudice. The

experience with ethnographic fieldwork suggested that in the lives of the student cliques, the language behaviors of others (e.g., members from three social institutions: family, friends, and school) can be more powerful than the behaviors of the young speakers concerned. These behaviors are not merely signaling factors of youth group membership, but leading factors towards social identity construction.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the past twenty years, there has been an increasingly noticeable linguistic trend in the discourse of Kuwaiti youth. The lure of the English language and culture has become especially obvious and powerful in regard to the youth of the country, encompassing more and more of the younger generation. The English language exercises a powerful influence in the world because of its prominence as the language of business, political discourse, broadcasting, popular media, publishing, and education. Nevertheless, research is lacking when it comes to the role that English plays in that part of the globe where rapid educational, political, and social transformations that have been taking place from recent tumultuous geopolitical events. Kuwait has been going through many transformations as a consequence of the 1990 Gulf War. These changes have spread to all aspects of society including the political, economic, social, and educational. At the same time these internal developments have increased in magnitude, Kuwait has been gaining increasing recognition in the eyes of outsiders, due to the 1990 Iraqi invasion, which not only transformed the nation and its relations with other countries, but also impacted the attitudes and behaviors of Kuwait's citizenry.

English has been gaining popularity in Kuwait, especially among youth, and it is worth exploring whether this increasing popularity is correlated to the formation of these speakers' personal and social collective identities. The current study, therefore, suggests that language shift from the native language Arabic to English is a language choice that can be indicative of identity or an identification with the English speaking world. This spread of English use in the country is the leading inspiration for the current work; at the same time, the researcher came across language attitudes and behaviors in Arabic that are equally vital in constructing both personal and group identity among Kuwaiti youth. It is

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important not to neglect other youth groups where language practices other than English are creatively active in establishing identities and membership in different social networks. Therefore, the goal of this research is to explore the role of language attitudes and behaviors in shaping identity and in forming social cliques among Kuwaiti youth, rather than limiting the discussion to the role of only English, since the latter is likely to be applicable in some groups but not all. In order to examine this, I explored two school systems in Kuwait one public and one private.

High school students are the targeted youth groups for analysis because the period between puberty and adulthood is a critical time for identity formation. As Sandra Calvert, chair and professor of Psychology at Georgetown University, (2002) indicates, identity plays a big part in adolescents' development where they come to define themselves in ways that were not accessible during childhood specifically through self- reflection (In Huffaker & Calvert 2005: 1). In this study, identity is not limited in definition but may touch on the various layers of the self such as the social, religious, sexual, or national, depending on the facets of identity the speakers as individuals or members of a group choose to play out.

My goal was to study how linguistic attitudes and behaviors of Kuwaiti speakers, especially found among high school students, act as articulations of identity and expressions of group membership. In order to investigate social cliques in the two high school systems available in Kuwait, it was necessary to conduct a pilot survey study. The plan was to observe the linguistic behaviors of Kuwaiti youth in public versus private high schools, which will lead to different questions and findings, but I decided to focus on one school only as the main venue of participant-observation. For instance, the magnitude of English prevalence in youth discourse is hypothesized to produce different types of social cliques among private high school students versus public schools. On the other hand, linguistic choices and attitudes are likely to differ in public schools where Arabic is the main medium of instruction. Then, the next step is to determine potential reasons for the existing linguistic situation in the different social cliques found. Finally and ultimately, the

last step complementing the first two steps is to draw connections and realizations of identity in relation to the linguistics choices, behaviors, and attitudes of these young speakers.

This study is intricate in incorporating different variables, constructs, and concepts both social and linguistic. It also integrates a combination of methodologies all fitting together within a more comprehensive research design. Moreover, it is multifaceted in terms of the background reviewed, pulling from areas such as Psychology, Anthropology, Literature, Sociology, Education, and Linguistics. Therefore, the diversity of the background literature, the research methodologies, and the wide targeted audience makes introducing the study a complex task. It is a study that explores the type of relationship connecting language and identity within the setting of social cliques in Kuwaiti high schools in an attempt to determine if this relation is a mere correlation or causation.

Generally, I am dealing with three major factors: language, identity, and adolescents' social cliques. Originally, upon pondering the question of whether language affects identity construction or visa versa, I held the idea that it is mainly one's identity that shapes one's linguistic behaviors and practices, where the linguistic mirrors the social. Here, language becomes a vehicle carrying out a social function of specifically articulating identity. However, during and after conducting the fieldwork study, I have discovered that language does not act solely as a mirror for a social reality. Language creates social realities, not only expresses them. At first, language creates the social reality of an individual or group and once that social reality is born language performs its secondary task of reinforcing that reality.

Therefore, the initial understanding I had before going to the field is that there are social cliques in Kuwaiti high schools both in the public and private systems and that each clique has its own speech style and its own set of linguistic behaviors and attitudes. I wanted to explore the types of cliques there are then focus on the role of language in performing a social collective identity of group membership. However, being a participant

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observer at the school community opened my eyes to the realization that the language of others surrounding young speakers is just as important as the language within the adolescents' social cliques in forming their identities. Others' statements and judgments of youth especially family, friends, and school community members are powerful and influential in shaping youth social and personal identities. So, there are the personal choices that young speakers make in terms of life style and group membership decisions. At the same time, there are social forces that could exercise some pressure on the youth influencing the way they view themselves whether positively or negatively. Speakers make the decision of accepting others' judgments, since it is not imposed on them, but many of the participants in the present study chose to be framed by others, as we will see in the later chapters when discussing the results.

One of the reasons for choosing to investigate particular adolescents social cliques over others is due to the amount of attention they are given in public opinion. Certain youth cliques are displayed, discussed, and criticized on a semi-daily basis in local Kuwaiti newspapers, which makes public opinion and media images a primary source of data and inspiration for this study. Besides public opinion, I have surveyed blogs and websites of Kuwaiti female adults and youths specifically to explore the range of social identities and subcultures to which Kuwaitis subscribe. New communication technologies such as the Internet have offered a new venue for youth to develop new expressions of youth identity (Eric Chamberlin 2007: 187). Online communication still relies on written language and it is hard to ignore the influence of the many languages and dialects available online in the youth cyber world (Bucholtz 2000: 281). Since the researcher in this study is going to be using the term 'subculture', it is worth clarifying what it means in this case and to mention what other terms other researchers have used. The concept subculture has been replaced by other "theoretically-informed" concepts, as Nilan and Feixa (2006: 6) put it, such as clubcultures (Thornton 1995), neotribes (Bennett 1999), lifestyles (Miles 2000), post-cultures

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(Muggleton & Weinzierl 2003), scenes (Hesmondhalgh), networking (Juris 2005), and cybercultures.

I will be focusing on Kuwaiti female adolescents due to the lack of their representations in academia. In her book Just Girls: Hidden Literacies and Life in Junior High, Margaret J. Finders, professor of Education, brought attention to the problem that female adolescent participants are not so present as their counterpart male participants in studies of adolescents' experiences, for example (1997: 11). There is a neglect of the adolescent female in the literature, such that researchers write that "Girls….were silencing themselves, drowning in a girl-hating culture, and generally being forgotten in schools" (Collins 2008: 94).

Professor of Linguistics Laurel A. Sutton (1999: 163) implies that a woman's identity is a mosaic of pieces of selves taken from media. Media is powerful in dictating what is supposed to be a feminine identity or even a masculine identity. Along with media and online blogging, I conducted an exploratory survey. Moreover, I outlined an ethnographic research design that includes fieldwork participation-observation and interviews. During fieldwork, however, an additional source of data came in through which note writing especially in scrapbooks or letters became a useful display of adolescent linguistic practices and choices showing how these reflect a personal or a social group identity. Written data such as online blogging and scrapbooks are just valuable as the spoken language observed during fieldwork. As another example, Sutton (1999: 170) mentions the practice of writing in Zines and how they constitute one public avenue where young women establish an identity making sense of their narratives where writing in zines could work as a therapy session in which identity is constructed line by line. These research data collection methods will be discussed in further detail in the methods chapter.

Most likely there are categories that divide the generation at the age of high school or college. It is expected that the patterns of linguistic behaviors will vary across different subgroups, since language behaviors and attitudes are important expressions of group

loyalty and belonging. The literature is investigated to find insights about social cliques in high schools and the interaction between adolescents, group identity, and language use. A better description of the population and a more thorough understanding of the community require a holistic ethnographic approach. Therefore, I planned a pilot survey of this sociological aspect of this population of the Kuwaiti societal structure in order to compensate for the lack of studies conducted on this particular population especially in regards to language behaviors and attitudes in social cliques in both the public and the private school systems. Nevertheless, this task is complicated due to the gap between the public schools system and private schools where the latter are divided into different ethnic and international backgrounds such as American schools, British schools, and several Asian schools. The case is similar when it comes to colleges, because there are public colleges and private American, Arabic, Dutch, and Australian universities.

1.1 Background: The Community

In The efficiency of the public education system in Kuwait, Nadeem Burney & Othman E. Mohammad (2002) offer a valuable background on the Kuwaiti community and explain the workings of the education system in Kuwait for precollege education, at the same time differentiating between the two systems available, public and private. Kuwait is a small country (approximately 17,818 km2 in area) that relies on a single economic resource: oil. By the end of 1999, the population was 2.21 million of which only 35% were Kuwaitis (Burney & Mohammad 2002: 285). Approximately 55% of Kuwaiti citizens are below twenty years old and 48% are of school age students five to twenty four years old (Burney & Mohammad 2002: 278). Education is provided to citizens free of charge in public educational institutions (Burney & Mohammad 2002: 278). On the other hand, private schools charge high tuition fees and serve many expatriate students whereas students in public schools are mostly Kuwaiti with only about 12% of the students expatriates (Burney & Mohammad 2002: 286).

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It is necessary to provide some more background information on the differences between public and private schools in terms of school fees, medium of instruction, students' population, and the faculty body. Public schools offer free education, while private schools are not free of charge and are regarded as expensive for most families in the country, especially for families who have four to seven children, which is an average family size in Kuwait. Arabic is the medium of instruction to teach all subjects at public schools, but English is a mandatory class that is taught starting from first grade. The situation is different for private schools where the schools have either bilingual teaching of some subjects in Arabic and some other subjects in English or they can be completely conducted in English. In public schools, the student body consists of mostly if not entirely Kuwaiti students depending on the region. It is expected that public schools in both the suburbs and in the towns near the city would consist of Kuwaiti students only, while public schools in the highly populated or business-rich towns will have more international students since many expatriates live in these towns. However, students in private schools usually come from different ethnic and national backgrounds including European, American, Asian, and Arab. The faculty body also varies between public and private schools. Teachers in public schools are mainly Arab speakers and are often citizens of Kuwait; but teachers in private schools are mostly native English speakers including Americans, Canadians, British, or other nationalities who are native speakers of English. Moreover, as stated in the online directory of the private schools in Kuwait (http://www.english-schools.org/kuwait/), many private schools are sponsored by foreign entities and are co-ed. It is highly likely that the different mediums of instruction and the student body besides all the other variations between the two school systems would yield dissimilar school cultures and social cliques among students, so the language attitudes and behaviors are bound to vary between the two systems.

To carry out a focused study on the correlation between language behaviors and attitudes and identity of social cliques, first I approached different high schools to conduct

a survey aiming at comparing some of the social cliques likely to exist in public high schools versus private schools and then carry out an ethnographic investigation of one of these schools. A public school was chosen to conduct the fieldwork study, since that is the more common schooling system for most Kuwaiti children and there it would be possible to come across both Arabic and English language choices in articulating identity. Choosing the schools depended on obtaining access to them by the administrators. For a female scholar, it is easier as well as more acceptable socially to obtain access and acceptability by a girls-high school versus a boys-high school in the sex-segregated public school systems in Kuwait. Also, as for the private school options, I attempted to get access to American private schools. It is assumed that most of the influence of English in Kuwait comes from American English that has been gaining popularity in the nation--especially after the 1999 Gulf War and the liberation of Kuwait through the support of the United State, in addition to the large size of the American army base in the region. Overall, English continues to shape youth cultures in other nations due to the popularity and the wide spread of American popular culture both online and off (Bucholtz 2000: 281).

Originally, I proposed that it would be better to get access to a private school that is girls-only instead of mixed for more consistency between public and private schools' overall make-up. Later, however, after contacting the schools on the list of the online directory of private schools in Kuwait mentioned earlier, I ended up with three private schools besides the public school. One of the private schools was an American girls-only school. Additionally, there were two co-ed schools, one American school and the other bilingual American and Arabic school. The reason for ending up with four schools in which to conduct the survey was to collect feedback from four different school settings in the country: girls-only public school, girls-only private American school, co-ed private American school, and co-ed private American bilingual school.

At this point, it is important to clarify the linguistic situation in Kuwait as the larger community of the unit of the study before going into more details. A study conducted by

applied linguist Seham Malallah in 2000 reports that the Kuwaiti population is close to two million, of which 45% are Kuwaiti citizens. Arabic is reported as the official language of the country that of government, administration, and education. Moreover, English had been considered of high status in Kuwait before and specifically after the first Gulf War (Malallah 2000: 19). Kuwait experiences diglossia similar to other Arab countries. The German linguist Karl Krumbacher in his book *Das Problem der Modernen Griechen Schriftsprache* was the first to coin the term *diglossia* referring to the mastery and use of two forms of a language or even two languages by a speaker or a whole speaking community (1902). Charles Ferguson (1959) narrows down the definition of diglossia referring to a situation where two varieties of a language exist simultaneously within a given speech community in which each has a particular role to play; a native or regional variety referred to as the low variety (L) and a *superposed* high variety (H) that is learned in addition to the native one. In his 1967 article "Bilingualism with and without diglossia; Diglossia with and without bilingualism", sociologist Joshua Fishman expands on the definition clearly differentiating between bilingualism and diglossia. He refers to bilingual speech communities as ones whose linguistic diversity is realized through the existence of separate languages. To the contrary, diglossia takes place when a speech community is characterized by the use of diversified linguistic repertoires or varieties as a result of modernization and increasing social complexity, but these linguistic varieties do not in fact constitute separate "languages" (Fishman 1967: 32).

In Kuwait as well as in any other Arab nation, there are two varieties of Arabic--or three to be more accurate: namely Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, and Arabic vernaculars. Classical Arabic is the language of the religious text, the *Koran*. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the language of education, publications, broadcasting, and science, while dialects constitute the colloquial variety reserved for everyday interactions and popular media. Similarly, diglossia is apparent in public schools where teachers are expected to use MSA as the appropriate medium of instruction and education, but many

teachers use their colloquial varieties in teaching. The students, however, use the Kuwaiti vernacular for speaking among each other and sometimes for class interactions depending on each student and their level of comfort with MSA. Teachers use their respective dialects in their meetings or for socialization. The situation is different in private schools where the majority of faculty consists of native English speakers, so English is the medium of communication in meetings and for socialization as well as the medium of instruction for all subjects except Arabic and Islamic studies classes. As for the students, it will depend on each social clique or group of friends, since the student body is diverse, consisting of a variety of ethnicities and nationalities. English is expected to be apparent in groups consisting of non-Arab students who do not speak Arabic. Code switching is likely to take place among students switching between English and other languages.

<u>1.2 The Research Topic</u>

Originally, the idea of this research design came about upon observing the spread of English in the discourse of particular Kuwaiti youth in Kuwait, which is likely due to the burgeoning influence of English as the lingua franca of the world and as the de facto representative of globalization. According to applied linguist John Joseph (2004), the internationalization of English is connected to the phenomenon of globalization but it is also leading to a more homogenous language as well as cultural leveling. English is strongly associated with modernity, technology, and economic power (Joseph 2004: 182). Joseph (2004: 190) further notes that many third generation immigrants to English speaking countries have a more positive attitude toward English than they do toward their native languages. The result of such attitudes is inevitable; immigrants, especially of later generations, will shift from their native tongue and that of their parents to that of the host country for numerous reasons, external and internal. However, it is an intriguing phenomenon to find people who favor English over their native languages in their homelands where English does not even enjoy official status, as in the case of the increasing switch to English among Kuwaiti speakers, especially the youth.

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Investigating the role of English in the lives of Kuwaiti youth and what it represents to them on the personal level and the social level within their peer networks is likely to be only a part of a larger project. As a Kuwaiti citizen, reflecting upon high school years during the mid nineties and observing high school students in more recent times I find that the construction of social cliques still takes place. In fact, I observed my own sister, who is a freshmen at the same high school I attended, comment many times on the social cliques that are part of the school life; it appears that the numbers of cliques are increasing rather than decreasing, creating more divisions and borders not to be crossed among students, which in turn results in more innovative social group identities and personal ones as well. The hypothesis is that language choice has to play a major part in defining social cliques creating, sustaining, and emphasizing group affiliation, belonging, and identity.

Speakers are expected to customize language in order to serve social and personal functions and to foster solidarity and maintain group and personal identity. In addition, language can be utilized as an instrument to exclude outsiders who are different. Therefore, language behaviors and attitudes play a crucial part in the dynamics of youth groups that are worth investigating, which has large implications and applications where language practices can actually be indicators of students' group affiliation and social as well as personal identity. An understanding of these social cliques and their language choices will help in understanding the speakers as individuals rather than as mere students in need of discipline when demonstrating anti-social or mischievous behaviors. Consequently, this study aims at larger goals beyond simply arriving at valuable research findings. It attempts to investigate a phenomenon that is linguistic, personal, social, and academic in order to have practical implementations in academia and the Kuwaiti community at large.

In recent years, local cultural affairs' sections in Kuwaiti newspapers (Al-Enzi 2008, Al-Yatem 2008, Alwatan 2008, KUNA 2008; and Salim 2008a) have been debating and discussing one of the hottest topics at present times in the country. These are particularly

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discussing teen social cliques of Satan worshippers and boyat 'girls who are boy-like' including characterizations such as tomboys and butches. These social cliques are gaining enormous public attention and recognition because of their new sudden strong public appearance in a community that is assumed to be a conservative Middle Eastern culture, where Islam is the official and most prevalent religion of the nation, hence one which is anti-homosexual. Here, it is worth mentioning that the convenience of having the separate terms "sex", "gender", and "sexuality/sexual orientation" in English does not exist in the Arabic language, since there is only the physiological term "sex" where "gender" is referred to in Sociology studies, in Kuwait for example, vaguely as "type". Also, a Kuwaiti sociologist Ali AlZuoby adopts the exact term "gender" in his article *Empowering the Arab Woman*, but does not offer an Arabic terminology for it.

Cameron and Kulick (2003: 5) clearly differentiate between *sex* as the physiological makeup of a person, *gender* as choosing to live as one kind of a social being (male/female), and sexuality as the person's sexual desires. They claim that these concepts are not understood or experienced as distinct by most people, which means that even in Western cultures the lines between these different physiological versus social categories are not clearly drawn. It is noteworthy to mention that Ann Oakley (1972) is the first to introduce the term "gender" referring to the unequal social division of femininity and masculinity where "sex" is merely the biological division into female and male. The definition of gender has extended to include not only to identity and personality but also to cultural stereotypes of femininity and masculinity (In Scott and Marshall 2005: 240).

I have a particular interest in such so called extreme groups in this particular context with the intention of unlocking the mysteries of language use in the creation and maintenance of such social cliques; an uneasy task for an outsider. At the same time, sharing the same cultural background and a close age range to the community under study helped in gaining some access to some of the cliques. Schutz (1976) suggests that a stranger and a member are not entirely dualistic entities as both can be strangers in their

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own cultures (In MacRae 2007: 56). Investigating the linguistic dimension of these groups will lead to an understanding of the social dynamics of speakers in these cliques that will in turn help in the realization of the power of language in inventing and sustaining social and personal identities. I should say that some researchers differentiate between *clique, gang*, and *friends group* and certainly other terms have been used, but for practical reasons in the context of this study I will be using the term *clique* to refer to a group of adolescents who 'hang out' together in school sharing a history: a set of mutual expectations, hobbies, stories, beliefs, and linguistic practices. Each clique has a leader sometimes an unstated one, but one who is clearly visible especially to outsiders. There does not have to be rigid lines around the clique; yet there are certain criteria that must be met to join one.

At first, it was the researcher's hypothesis that particular cliques are more common in private schools than others in public schools. For example, I surmised that Satan worshippers or Goths would appear more in private schools due to the more Western culture of the schools. The Kuwaiti newspapers, for example, describe this group as *strange*, *inauthentic* or *imitative*, and *hybrid*, hinting at the Western influence in bringing in such behaviors and identities. My survey has uncovered an interesting finding on this aspect showing a total of forty-five participants listing Satan worshippers as a clique at the public school versus no mention of such group in three different private schools. Now before turning into the literature review chapter, it is worth considering how some researchers view the term *hybrid* in relation to globalization and youth.

During times of rapid social transformational changes described by some as globalization, young people negotiate forms of personal and group identity through performative practices of cultural hybridity in which hybridity is the process of cultural interactions between the local and global, hegemonic and subaltern, and the center and the periphery (Nilan & Feixa 2006: 2). According to Nilan and Feixa (2006: 2), hybridity has connotations of border crossing, 'in between-ness', mobility, uncertainty, and multiplicity. Nilan & Feixa (2006: 5) explain that attempting to represent the hybrid cultures and plural

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worlds of contemporary youth is especially challenging for researchers who are no longer young to share the same experiences and practices of youth.

1.3 Research Questions

According to Hammersley & Atkinson (1995: 28), unexpected encounters or personal experiences can provide an opportunity for research. In fact, this is exactly what happened in the case of this project. Originally, a group of Kuwaiti teens, males and females, hanging out regularly at a coffee shop in Kuwait conversing in English on a regular basis motivated the initial research questions: what subgroups of Kuwaiti youth shift to English, either constantly or sporadically in their discourse, and in what contexts? Second, what are the speakers' motivations and reasons for the preference of English over Arabic? Third, are there potential connections to be drawn between young speakers' linguistic behaviors or language choice and attitudes in general towards the English language and Western culture (identity related issues)?

However, another personal experience led to a modification in the research inquiries and focus. One day, my mother was telling me about some teen groups that Kuwaiti newspapers are reporting on constantly in the news describing them as *strange* and *hybrid* that of tomboys and Satan worshippers, which led me to inquire of my sister, who is currently in high school, about the types of social cliques available at her school. She noticed, for example, that boyat 'tomboys' is a growing group in the school environment characterized by physical fights, very short hair, and, interestingly, some type of language code or secretive language. These later personal conversations led to a shift in focus and consequently different research questions. At this point, there are three major research questions to investigate. *First, what types of subgroups/subcultures/social cliques exist in Kuwaiti high schools both public and private? Second, how does language choice symbolize these groups' identity? Third, what potential connections can be drawn between adolescent speakers' linguistic behaviors/attitudes and group identity?*

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After introducing the study by providing a background of the community under study, the research topic, and the research questions guiding the investigation, the analysis, and the discussion, in the next chapter I incorporate what the experts say on the topics I am exploring including but not limited to linguistic phenomena, social and psychological issues, and educational concerns. Therefore, it is a study that focuses on the interaction between linguistic attitudes and behaviors and social group and personal identities within high school cliques. In the third chapter, I outline the methodologies I employed to gather empirical data besides explaining the process of getting approved by the Institutional Review Board, since the study involves human subjects. Chapter four and chapter five carry the heart of the study where all the data are analyzed and discussed thoroughly. Finally, the last chapter is where the conclusions are drawn pointing out the significance of this scholarly investigation and the audience that it is trying to reach, since the goal is to approach a larger audience who finds the study relevant to the lives of educators, academics, counselors, policy makers, parents, and students.

Interestingly, this study parallels Labov's study (1972) *Language in the inner city: Studies in the Black English vernacular* in the sense of focusing as a linguist on a particular linguistic aspect that exists in broader and more complex web of factors or situations where other things have to be considered besides the linguistic. Labov invested how dialect differences could be a cause of reading failure as a specific linguistic research question that required the exploration of other factors besides the language of the participants including their culture, the social organization, and the political circumstances of black youth in the inner cities of the Unites States. He did not ignore the sociolinguistic facets of the speech community even though the focus is more structural concerning dialect differences. Similarly, as a linguist, the focus of my study is a linguistic matter where I am specifically interested in youth speech within high school cliques and how language could be a device by which social affiliation to a network and group identity is established, sustained, and reaffirmed. At the same time, the present study adopted a holistic approach

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paying attention to other factors in the school community being the setting of this research. Besides language structure or language form, I considered other educational, social, and psychological factors including the participants' family background, academic performance, psychological well being, social status within the school community, and group and personal identities' evaluations. The bigger community of the county has been considered as well in terms of its social and cultural expectations and pressures.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before examining the research design and methodology of the current study, it is important to review the literature relevant to the topic. The study is interdisciplinary in focus. Therefore, it is necessary to review a variety of studies in multiple research fields incorporating Linguistics, Psychology, Education, Social Work, Sociology, and Communication. In fact, it is challenging attempting to organize the literature review section due to the rich diversity in the types of readings of relevance to the research design. The literature will be organized into three main areas I find the most effective and relevant to scholarly investigations on the topic. First, it is important to examine linguistic or sociolinguistic studies investigating studies on language behaviors/attitudes, code switching, English spread and globalization, accommodation theory, and language shift. Second, besides examining linguistic practices and behaviors, I will look at 'identity' as a concept and attempt to define and explain its complexity and richness. Third, it will be time to draw the lines connecting identity to language attitudes and behaviors in the particular unit of the study, namely social teens cliques. Therefore, it is necessary to review and examine high school adolescents and social cliques membership.

2.1 Linguistic Choices

Due to the original focus of the study on language shift towards English and the role globalization plays in this increasing linguistic tendency some of the literature reviewed touched on the language status of English versus Arabic since I have conducted the study in that part of the world, the Middle East, where Arabic is an official language. In addition, the data will show the importance of discussing the status of English due to its application in schools including public ones and how some students use it as an instrument to achieving personal and social purposes relevant to identity formation. Linguist Judith

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Rosenhouse and professor of Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences Mira Goral (2004: 835) state that twenty Middle Eastern states speak Arabic, besides the Arabic varieties spoken by immigrants in Europe, America, and Australia. The studies cover code switching between Arabic and other major languages including English and French and how language choices interact with symbolisms, instrumentalities, and identity.

As mentioned earlier, it is common that immigrants' children, especially third generation, tend to shift towards the language of the host country at the expense of their native languages. Particularly, the shift to English is rapid, predictable, and systematic among Spanish-speaking immigrants in America, for example, as Psychology professors Aida Hurtado and Luis Vega indicate (2004: 139). Language shift could lead to language loss, but it is not the case among Mexican-Americans where Spanish has often maintained viability through bilingualism (Hurtado and Vega 2004: 150). Immigrant communities constitute a common setting for language shift; yet it is remarkable to witness language shift in communities where speakers are shifting towards a language that does not enjoy an official standing, nor is even considered a second language in a given speech community.

In the literature, there are two common linguistic situations where language shift takes place besides among immigrant speakers; namely post-colonial speech communities and other places that are being influenced by globalization and the heavy impact of English spread as the lingua franca (Joseph 2000: 182, Suleiman 2004: 10-11). First, in post-colonial countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, or Algeria, French still enjoys a status in such bilingual communities. Arabic and French coexist in Morocco (Gill 1999). The two languages symbolize two different concepts, where Arabic represents the Arab-Islamic identity and French stands for modernity, so French is used instrumentally for seeking socioeconomic development while Arabic is personal and integrative for promoting an authentic Arab-Muslim identity (Gill 1999: 122-123). These linguistic attitudes and behaviors hint at a confused socio-cultural image of the individual speaker concerning the use of French portraying "feelings of split loyalties, self-questioning, and self-censorship"

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(Gill 1999: 128). The instrumental and integrative motivations for learning a language were first introduced by the Canadian psychologist R.C. Gardner (1982) where instrumental underlies the goal of obtaining social or economic status while integrative hints at the speaker's positive attitudes towards the speech community of a given language (In Norris-Holt 2001).

In addition to looking at Moroccan speakers in their homelands, linguist Wernberg-Moller (1999: 251) reports on Moroccans in Edinburgh discussing what code switching between English and Arabic came to represent in this community. To these speakers, English is instrumental in representing education, work, and socioeconomic power, while Arabic is associated with 'in-group solidarity' and identity (Wernberg-Moller 1999: 251). Likely, this situation is reversed for young Kuwaiti speakers who I observe sometimes in public places like malls or coffee shops code switching between English and Kuwaiti Arabic dialect. I am hypothesizing that these Kuwaiti teens may identify with English, which is neither their mother tongue nor an official or second language in the country. They could have developed an attachment to the language as a marker of both group and personal identities. Despite the status of Arabic in Kuwait as the official and native language, some Kuwaiti youth may find it hard to attach personally to it regardless of its importance for the Islamic religion or it being the language of home and for most Kuwaiti citizens the medium of communication in education and work. What do these language attitudes of Kuwaiti youth represent: resentment of traditional roles or an innovation of a new identity creative, independent, and prestigious both socially and academically? Moreover, is it more common among private school students or both private and public school students?

According to Sheikh Muhammad Abdu, a famous Egyptian Islamic modernist, "let parents refrain from sending their children to foreign schools that tend to change their habits and religious faith" promoting Arabic as the medium of classroom instruction for religious reasons as well as cultural and national ones. Preserving Arabic meant preserving

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Arab culture against Western culture influences (In Spring 2006: 155-156). However, students all over the globe think otherwise as will be seen in the following studies. In a survey conducted by Rahman in Islamabad, Pakistan, at the Quaid-i-Azam University, 100% of students answered the question "Should English medium schools be abolished?" in the negative reporting positive attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction (In Spring 2006: 243-244). Additionally, Mohammed Asad Alam and his colleagues conducted another study on the attitudes of students, teachers, and parents towards the learning of English in Saudi Arabia in 1988 where the results showed positive attitudes towards English due to its important place internationally in areas like education, business, and communication. Additionally, the participants in the study did not see English as a threat to their native language, culture, or religion. At the same time, Brown (1987:123) claims that "a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven such that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. The acquisition of a second language ...is also the acquisition of a second culture" (In Malallah 2000: 20). Consequently, Malallah (2000: 20) raises an important question: "will English be a threat to one's identity and values?". These studies bring us back to the situation of Kuwaiti youth and English spread in their discourse, which also will lead to two important correlated questions. First, does social identity dictate speakers' language behaviors? Second, do language behaviors and the way someone speaks shape identity? The answers to these questions will be within the discussion of the data analysis section specifically when talking about the fieldwork experience.

According to Bucholtz (2000: 281), youth cultures have distinctive style in fashion, music, literature, and language that were facilitated by media. Teenagers and young adults draw on rapidly changing stylistic speech variations in both constructing and displaying their identities, since performing identity is one of the symbolic uses of language (Bucholtz 2000: 280). Different youth identities mean different linguistic outcomes, since youth cultures influence language (Bucholtz 2000: 282). Professor of Linguistic

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Anthropology Norma Mendoza-Denton (1999: 41) in her ethnographic study *Fighting words: Latina girls, gangs, and language attitudes* notes that young people may use a language versus another to express allegiance and identity depending on the language's symbolic connotations. Besides choosing a language versus another, preferring certain linguistic forms and practices versus others could also function in symbolizing an identity versus another. Her research objective was to explore the linguistic correlates of peer-group identification (Mendoza-Denton 1999: 42). One of my research questions concerning the social aspect of the community is: how do students divide themselves into groups or categories? Then, I attempt to link the social aspect with the linguistic exploring the relationship between the collective social identity of cliques and linguistic practices that could shape, reinforce, or even create such identity.

Some groups adapt linguistic codes that symbolize empowerment and affirm group allegiance as in the study of professor of Language and Literatures D. Letticia Galindo (1999: 177) *Calo and taboo language use among Chicanas: A description of linguistic appropriations and innovations*. Galindo (1999: 180, 188) discusses taboo language as the language referring to sex, sex organs, bodily functions, and expletives, which are uttered for the intention of causing a negative effect on the listener explaining how cursing is a stylistic device that could convey familiarity, bonding, and intimacy.

According to Childs and Mallinson (2006: 3), Lexical linguistic items may be significant as symbolic vehicles to assert and negotiate a layer of identity such as ethnic identity, for example. Variationist sociolinguists favor quantitative analyses of phonological or grammatical items, but lexical items should not be ignored as icons of ethnolinguistic differentiation both within members of a community or outside of it (Childs and Mallinson 2006: 3-4). In fact, lexical items can be indicators of any layer of identity and are not limited as icons of ethnolinguistic variations. Childs and Mallinson (2006: 4) conducted a case study of a group of sixteen years old friends from the rural black Appalachian community of Texana, North Carolina, exploring language practices from spoken and

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instant messenger conversations to display how speakers use lexical items to construct solidarity and belonging to the Texana community.

Besides the iconicity of lexical choices, Norma Mendoza-Denton (2007: 128) emphasizes the usefulness of language structure as a whole as a resource available for youth to accomplish social functions such as cohesiveness and division. For example, speakers can use bragging as a linguistic device to spread one's reputation or popularity; at the same time it could provoke a fight if it hints at members of another group (Mendoza-Denton 2007: 132). Also, word games or known as secret languages/play languages could be used to impact others engagement with the surrounding (Mendoza-Denton 2007: 136). She (2007: 141), finally, concludes that an examination of youth linguistic practices is crucial in understanding youth subcultures.

Some other scholars of language and social attitudes and stereotypes examine such relation experimentally within the realm of experimental linguistics. For example, Erez Levon (2006) has designed an experiment to determine what acoustic features people pay attention to when judging speakers' sexuality by examining two prosodic features: pitch range and sibilant duration. Many studies identify wide pitch range as an index of gayness, but they couldn't identify a direct correlation between a speaker's pitch range and perceived sexuality (Levon 2006: 56). In Levon experiment, the two prosodic features of sibilant duration and pitch range are not enough to contribute to the listeners' perceptions of the speaker's sexuality, yet listeners in various similar experiments were remarkably accurate in their judgments of the speakers' sexuality (Levon 2006: 68).

On the power of language in expressing realities of individuals and their relationships with one another, Rosina Lippi-Green (1997) notes that language expresses "the way individuals situate themselves in relationship to others, the way they group themselves, the powers they claim for themselves and the powers they stipulate to others" (In Sterling 2000: 1). Also, Cameron & Kulick (2003: 136) claim that the study of language

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and identity in any form is a study of the relationship between ideology and practice as real social phenomena (In Erez Levon 2006: 57).

The challenge in the study of language and identity could be in the complication or what I call "problematization" made by scholars of the terms "identity", "adolescence", or "language" as broad abstract terms. Moreover, the difficulty could lie in coming up with the properly formulated variables and further linking them, since there are linguistic and social constructs to transform into variables linked by some type of relationship such as causation or correlation, for example. However, the truth remains that the relationship between language and identity can be captured whether following the variationist sociolinguist practice of correlating statistically quantifying linguistic data with social variables or following the ethnographic practice of a more holistic approach taking into consideration divers and multiple input resources.

In this section on linguistic choices, I talk about a number of correlated topics in issues of language and society. First, I look at scholars' perspectives on language contact who conclude three situations where a language besides the mother tongue becomes important for speakers: immigrant communities, post-colonial countries, and communities impacted by globalization. Since globalization has wrapped itself around almost every nation and since English is the lingua franca of our times, ESL and EFL units have become part of every major university in the globe. English comes to represent education, economic growth, and prestige. While English is learned and used instrumentally for such purposes, speakers' native languages are reserved for integrative functions such as belonging to a given identity. Globalization has its share in Kuwaiti society, the community under study, spreading English among speakers across all ages specifically the youths. The hypothesis I would like to add to these studies is that Kuwaiti speakers especially the youths identify with English for reasons that are beyond instrumental, but rather integrative and personal such as identifying with the western culture or a given social group and embracing an innovative self that is perhaps more autonomous and prestigious.

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So, the discussion here moves from language contact situations to language identification and symbolism. Malallah (2000: 20) questions whether the adoption of English can become a threat to identity and values that shows a perspective of concern, which is, admittedly, something I have considered. I think, however, language loss takes place when the second/foreign language dominates all spaces of a speaker's life including the most intimate domains hypothetically the family domain. The questions I raise show a different way of looking at the same phenomenon that of adoption or spread of English asking whether such language attitude/behavior or any other language attitude/behavior is capable of shaping speaker's identity or if social identity dictates speakers' language attitudes/behaviors. Therefore, I am more concerned about exploring the workings on such relationship between identity and language attitudes/behaviors.

At the end of this section, I discuss studies that mirror the current study relying on empirical data through case studies or ethnographic fieldwork. For example, Mendoza-Denton (1999) used ethnography to examine the linguistic correlates of peer group identification among female youths. Similarly, the current study applies ethnographic fieldwork to study the interaction between language and identity among high school female students. However, I have extended the methodologies I used in order to collect data from a variety of sources for a more comprehensive picture. Moreover, I not only look at the linguistic correlates of peer group identification from the participant speakers themselves, but also look at the language of other interlocutors in the speech community at the school. As will be shown in the data analysis and discussion chapter later, language of others especially embodied in evaluations and judgments can and will have an impact on their interlocutors' understanding and evaluation of themselves. Childs and Mallinson (2006) regard lexical items as indicators of identity not just phonological or grammatical items. As for swearing, Galindo (1999) found taboo language to be a stylistic device of intimacy and bonding, which was also applicable in the current study. The linguistic aspects I focus on

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are the lexical items as in choice of words, nicknames, topics, swearing, jargon, and secret codes that act as indicators of group identity.

2.2 Identity: Definition and Identification

Identity as a concept does not have a standard definition agreed upon across disciplines. In fact, the definitions offered are vague and less than satisfactory. Professor of Language and Communication Deborah Cameron (1990) finds the concept of 'identity' itself in need of explication, but it is even more problematic attempting to relate such an ambiguous social concept to something linguistic (In Coupland and Jaworski 1997: 57). Here, a methodological dilemma arises where formulating social constructs like identity and linguistic constructs such as linguistic behaviors into measurable variables becomes a challenge. Hence, it is best to undertake a combination of methods approach integrating both quantitative and qualitative ones. Moreover, Cameron (1990: 57) expresses the need to treat language as part of the social interacting with other forms of behavior not as separate from it or merely reflecting it, which is part of her attempt in rejecting what she calls 'language reflects society' myth or the 'correlational fallacy'. She further raises the question "Is it correct to see language use as expressing an identity which is separate from and prior to language?" and in other words "Is it not the case that the way I use language is partly constitutive of my social identity?" (Cameron 1990: 60). Besides the "correlational fallacy", Cameron (1990: 63) discusses the "organic fallacy" that views language as a living organism evolving to meet its speakers' needs. According to Cameron (1990: 66), "language is not an organism or a passive reflection, but a social institution, deeply implicated in culture, in society, in political relations at every level".

John Joseph (2004) wrote a useful book exclusively on the subject matter of language and identity Language and identity: National, ethnic, religious, but the book does not clearly define identity. The author (2004: 1-2) refers to identity as "that deeper, intangible something that constitutes who one really is, and for which we do not have a precise word". He discusses (2004: 5) the two subtypes of identity that I am interested in

exploring individual and group identity where the latter nurtures the previous and manifests itself through it symbolizing some type of reciprocal tension or what I rather call a relationship, which empowers the overall concept of identity. Identity of the social group or the individual is expressed through a multitude of means including style, dress, hobbies, skills, and language. Linguist Nancy Dorian (1994: 115) suggests that any distinctive feature other than language can mark group membership, but losing an ethnic language would indicate a loss of group identity to some extent due to the power of language as a carrier of culture.

Elinor Ochs, professor of Anthropology and Applied Linguistics, (1993) talks about "social identity" that covers a range of social personae including roles, positions, and statuses that individuals claim during the course of their lives. Ochs (1993: 288) further explains that linguistic forms whether on the structural or discourse level act as indicators of social identity for members of a network where there is regular interaction and social identity is also a dimension of the social meaning of certain linguistics constructions. Moreover, Joseph (2004: 8) points out how wrong it is to assume that personal identity is singular and coherent; rather it is shifting according to and in relation to people around us. I personally believe that Individuals can and will define a person based on their interpretation of his/her looks, behaviors, and words as well as their knowledge of that person's background experiences; still they cannot completely capture a person's identity in totality due to its richness and multiplicity of layers. Also, their understanding of who someone is relies partially on who the perceivers are and their identity.

Identity is shifting according to places and people, so besides the personal and group identities, there are facets of identity that surface according to situations and positions be it social, political, religious, ethnic, or national. There are two concepts in the literature that help describe the shifting reality of identity; 'footing' by the famous sociologist Erving Goffman and 'positioning' by professor of education Brownyn Davies and professor of Philosophy and Psychology Rom Harré. Goffman's (1981: 128) central idea of footing is that

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speakers constantly change their footing; hence the alignment that they espouse and adopt for themselves and others through the expression and management of speech production and reception. Similarly, positioning as Davies and Harré (1990: 48) define it is "the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines".

Both concepts of footing and positioning share the qualities of being dynamic, fluid, and shifting. In the case of footing, as speakers interact with each other, they shift and fluctuate across various types of speakers and listeners that Goffman prefers to call production format and recipient format respectfully. Similarly, individuals do not have single fixed identities that they exemplify; rather each person has multiple facets of identities or selves, which change through interactions with others. Therefore, within both notions, people are not static entities that are fixed to a single role or identity either specifically as a mere speaker or as an individual interacting with others in the larger schemes of society in general.

In Identity and possibility: Adolescent development and the potential of schools, professor of Counseling and Consulting Psychology Michael Nakkula (2003: 7) defines identity as an ongoing process of integrating and interpreting events and as the embodiment of understanding oneself. Through the interactions in human relationships especially meaningful ones, identity is formed (Nakkula 2003: 9, 15). Professor of Linguistics Mary Bucholtz (1999: 12), also, points out that Identities emerge through discursive and social practices and social selves are produced through interaction. The education context of the school plays a role that is critical in identity formation due to the amount of time young people spend in school (Bucholtz 1999: 9). Bucholtz's statement reinforces the researcher's choice of the school setting, in specific, to study youth social and personal identity in school cliques and how linguistic choices participate in the makeup of this social and personal identity.

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Therefore, the identity I am concerned with is that of the adolescent Kuwaiti speaker on both the personal individual level and the social group level within a certain teen network or clique. According to professor of Counseling and School Psychology Carmen Guanipa and Jose Guanipa, M.D. (1998), identifying a self-identity is an essential developmental stage for an adolescent. Psychologist Eric Erikson (1968) and psychoanalyst Peter Blos (1962, 1979) also emphasize that adolescence is the time for identity formation that develops within a social context of other community members (In Guanipa & Guanipa 1998). The only point where I drift away from Guanipa & Guanipa (1998) is my disagreement with the first part of their statement "striving for a unified and integrated sense of self may facilitate the definition of personal goals and the sense of direction. It may also promote the constructive integration into society". I would venture to say that it is only natural for most people to necessarily develop multiple identities that comply to situations and interlocutors, which does not automatically mean that these identities cannot be unified and integrated. However, people have a tendency to categorize and label others in ways that are limiting to the expression of complex identities (John Raible & Sonia Nieto 2003: 146). Reasonably, some people find it necessary to keep all of their identities in their respective domains and with the right networks. Some identities could go to the extent of being secretive, which is possible in the case of some of the recent highly publicized or what Kuwaiti press call "strange" social cliques that fail to receive the public's approval.

Identity formation has become undeniably more challenging for today's adolescent in the current existing negative socio-cultural forces of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia (Sadowski 2008: 3). In Conversationally implicating lesbian and gay identity, A. C. Liang (1999) offers couple of definitions of identity where the intersection between language, meanings, intentions, beliefs, and expectations, and cultural practices is clearly powerful as shown below.

> "Identity is not constant but emerges from the interactional flow
> through which shared meanings are negotiated between the speaker,

whose intentions to self-presentation are culturally and individually determined, and the addressee, whose expectations of possible and legitimate identities likewise combine personal and cultural beliefs. Depending on which assumptions are shared, certain implicatures, and hence identities, are more likely to be conveyed and inferred than others" (306).

"Identities, both stated and implicated, are a result of linguistic decisions made over the course of an interaction, in which each individual's contribution reflects both the individual's intention and the local and global social constraints. This process of negotiation between individuals, intentions, and social and cultural forces illustrates the intimate connection between language and identity" (307).

In this section on identity, I attempt to offer a number of definitions for the term "identity", which are suggested by other scholars who have looked at this hard-to-define construct. There are three things I have tried to capture in this discussion. First, I display the perspectives that agree on the fluidity of identity (Joseph 2004). Also, Goffman's (1981) concept of footing and Davies and Harré's (1990) concept of positioning serve to exemplify this fact. Second, I question where identity is located in relation to language as Deborah Cameron (1990) inspires me in her questioning whether identity happens separate and prior to language or if language is constitutive of social identity (In Coupland and Jaworski 1997: 60). In the current study, this relationship between language and identity is the heart of the investigation. Third, I try to show how the school community is an essential setting for identity formation as Mary Bucholtz (1999) contends. In the school context, there are multiple entities that participate in shaping students' identities including teachers, staff, and peers.

2.3 Adolescents and Social Cliques

There has been discussion of the very term "adolescence" that suggests it is as problematic of a term as "identity". According to the Columbia Encyclopedia (2008), "adolescence" is the lifetime between the start of puberty to full adulthood where a person undergoes physiological, psychological, and social changes. The psychological changes include questioning of identity, achieving appropriate sex roles, and personal independence whereas social changes means valuing peer group relations over everything

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else (Columbia Encyclopedia 2008). The word "adolescence" came originally from a Latin root meaning *to grow* as defined in (www.Dictionary.com). The term for "adolescence" in Arabic is *muraahaqa*. The term in Arabic also contains in its sense both the physiological and the psychological developments an individual goes through between puberty and adulthood. The word *adolescent* or *teenager* and *muraahiq* in Arabic are taken as insults sometimes especially by this age group. Therefore, it was important to search for the root and origin of the word in the Arabic language as well to discover whether it has a negative sense or somewhat different semantic connotation. The main root of the word is *rahaq* that has multiple meanings including come over, overtake, approach the age of sexual maturity, bring down, suffer, overburden, lie heavily, and bear down. From the same root, four words are created *muraahaqa* 'puberty', *muraahiq* 'adolescent', *irhaaq* 'pressure, oppression', and *murhiq* 'oppressive' (Cowan 1976: 362). It is interesting that the word *pressure* and *adolescence* originate from the same word root in Arabic. As a linguist and a native speaker of Arabic, I have always taken the word *muraahaqa* 'adolescence' to also signal *irhaq* 'pressure', because it is usually an overwhelming time period due to the changes the adolescent undergoes both physiological and psychological.

According to Margaret J. Finder (1997: 30), "adolescence" as a term could act as a screen deflecting attention from the complexities of the experiences of adolescents. Moreover, Burke (1990) indicates that "terministic screens" act as colored photographic lenses filtering attention either away or toward a version of reality creating a narrow lens to view the power of social dynamics (In Finder 1997: 30, 116). According to Burke (1990), "Even if any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality" (In Finders 1997: 30). In simple terms, however, Nilan and Feixa (2006: 1) define youth as the age range between twelve and thirty five or ten to thirty depending on the country; a range that includes those who could be considered children in some nations and some who are taken as adults.

Deborah Meier indicates the irony of how much adults discuss adolescents; yet how little time they spend talking with them on adolescence: "It still stuns me to realize how much we talk about them, but not with them-even how much of our terminology we hide from them, or they hide from themselves" (In Sadowski 2008). Michael Sadowski, professor of Education, (2003) and all the writers in the volume, *Adolescents at school: Perspectives on youth, identity, and education*, make a strong case that students' success or failure both academically and socially rely on questions of identity. The book is a practical source for educators, counselors, young leaders, and parents to deepen their understanding of adolescents as individuals before helping them as students. Adolescents wrestle with questions of identity more than any other age group. Middle and high school are both mirrors and shapers of the identity development experience of adolescents, since they spend several hours of their day at school. It is crucial to develop a better and deep understanding of adolescents as people before trying to help them succeed as students (Sadowski 2003: 1-2).

In her participant observation study *So who? Like how? Just what? Discourse markers in the conversations of young Canadians*, Sali Tagliamonte (2005) collected a large corpus of spoken language from young Canadians between 10 and 19 collected in 2002-2003. Her findings agree with other studies that indicate the powerful influence of peer groups on middle teenage years (high school), the correlation between adolescence and linguistic differentiation, and the extent of linguistic innovation young people adopt in contemporary urban speech communities (Tagliamonte 2005: 1896, 1911).

A very pertinent and significant study on the interactional relationship between language, identity, and social cliques is *Adolescent language and communication from an intergroup perspective* by professor of Communication Jennifer Fortman (2003) who finds the literature insufficient when it comes to adolescents and their reconciliation of various emerging facets of the self through communication and what role language plays in the process. Fortman recognizes the role language plays in defining the adolescent's social

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identity, especially language that is distinctive to a particular social clique that young people use to define their identities in relation to others. She further insists on the usefulness of a theoretical understanding on how the adolescent's identity derives from communication skills and vice versa proposing intergroup theories that offer an insight into the impact of social groups on the adolescent. Two major intergroup theories are discussed; namely communication accommodation theory, the work of Communication professor Howard Giles (CAT) (1973) and social identity theory (SIT) founded by psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel & Turner 1979) (In Fortman 2003: 104-105).

Communication Accommodation Theory explains how speakers modify their language choices depending on their interlocutors' language choices by utilizing linguistic devices to express attitudes and intentions towards one another and to maintain a positive social identity (Giles 1973; Giles, Mulac, Bradac, & Johnson 1987) (In Fortman 2003: 107). Accommodation theory (Giles and Powesland 1975) is based on the social psychological research on similarity-attraction where, for example, speakers during conversation could either move towards their interlocutors in terms of speech style 'speech convergence' or move away from the speech style of their interlocutors 'speech divergence' (In Coupland and Jaworski 1997: 233-234). Social identity as defined by Tajfel (1981: 255) is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that group membership" (In Newman and Newman 2001: 518). According to social psychologists Hogg and Abrams (1988), a basic premise of SIT is that people derive their identity from group affiliation (In Fortman 2003: 105).

Group membership and identity can be symbolized through verbal and/or nonverbal behaviors. It can be symbolized through adhering to language use through using particular words or phrases like "valley talk" or hip-hop, codes of dress, or nonverbal gestures such as secret handshakes (In Fortman 2003: 106). In the social cliques of boyat 'boy-like

girls' mentioned earlier in the background, I assumed clear group membership to be symbolized verbally through certain lexical items or slang and prosodic features like the quality of the voice itself that happened to be present during fieldwork. In Understanding girls' friendships, fights and feuds: A practical approach to girls bullying, Valerie Besag (2006), an educational psychologist and former teacher, comments on slang as a linguistic aspect of peer groups and as one of the linguistic practices especially popular among teens stating "the rapid changes found in adolescents' slang highlight the transitory nature of their codes. Their vocabulary changes rapidly to signal a change in fashion and to keep it separate from the adult domain as well as signaling those in and those out of the social peer groups" (Besag 2006: 64). Likewise, Bucholtz (2000: 281) emphasize the role of slang as the most noticeable linguistic component of youth identities. Among the nonverbal features that the group of boyat could identify with are smoking, short haircuts, and casual clothing, but it was not always the case. These are some of the features I observed some members of this clique exhibit in certain public places that appear to be their favorite hangout spots including beach clubs in particular and other amusement parks (names unstated due to the sensitivity of the subject in Kuwaiti society and to avoid any possibility of harm to members of these cliques).

In *Beyond categories: The complex identities of adolescents*, John Raible, professor of Diversity & Curriculum Studies, and Sonia Nieto, professor of Language, Literacy, and Culture, (2003) emphasize the responsibility of educators to understand the implications of identity formations for the adolescent and schooling. For example, one of the questions worth looking at is "What does it mean to be a lesbian in a school setting hostile to that identity?" (Raible and Nieto 2003: 146). Similarly, professor of Anthropology William Leap (1999: 259) assumes there is a gay culture, since he raises the question "How do gay teenagers acquire the language of gay culture?", which is a culture that includes unique "ways of talking" that he suggests justifies the term gay language rather than an argot or secret code. In addition, Leap (1999: 259) explores the connection between language and

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culture examining the convergence of language, identity construction, and gay socialization. A.C. Liang professor of Linguistics, in *Conversationally implicating lesbian and gay identity*, shows how gay and lesbian speakers develop "self-protective" linguistic practices that enable them to expose themselves only to sympathetic individuals towards their identities and avoid danger from unsympathetic others (Mary Bucholtz 1999: 10).

In addition to boyat (sexual identity), Goth, Emo, and Punk are different subcultures that are spreading among youth globally especially with the help of the Internet. For instance, some websites that target Punk, Emo, or Goth identities offer an opportunity to construct an online identity invoking such subcultures (Eric Chamberlin 2007: 193). Some participants in such websites articulate a Gothic identity through enlisting Gothic commercial brands or horror movies among their favorites, for example (Eric Chamberlin 2007: 193). In *Contemporary Gothic*, Catherine Spooner (2006: 88), professor of English and Creative Writing specializing in Gothic culture and representations of youth subcultures, suggests that despite the strong bond between Gothic and adolescence, 'Goth' is a subculture that is not restricted to teenagers only, but the public perception associates it with adolescents, which is a notion worth challenging (Spooner 2006: 93). Goth subculture is one that enacts symbolic resistance through controversial and distinguishable visual style, since style and appearance is the most defining aspect of Goth identity. For outsiders, black clothes stand out to represent Goth culture along with punk style, elaborate jewellery, vampire make up, and dyed hair (Spooner 2006: 94- 96). Products carrying a Gothic theme are so prevalent nowadays, which makes it easier to embrace a Gothic lifestyle regardless of whether on belongs and is committed to fully participate in Goth subculture (Spooner 2006: 127). There are two main reasons that led to exploring this subculture in the current research. First, dark subcultures specifically Goths, Satanists, and Emo, are hold sway in the public media lately, especially the local Kuwaiti newspapers. Second, these subcultures are widely spread among Kuwaiti bloggers and young people's personal websites. As in the case in Kuwaiti media, Catherine Spooner (2006: 93-94)

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highlights how Goth is represented negatively in mass media where the term 'Goth' is stereotyped, homogenized, and controversial. It will be clearly shown later in the data analysis and discussion chapters the type of representations Kuwaiti media display of such subcultures.

According to professor of Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies Deborah Wheeler (2003), the largest segment of Kuwaiti population is that of young people (about 57% of the population under the age of twenty-five), so these young subcultures constitute the carriers of social norms due to their weight as a social force. Barbara Newman, professor and chair of Human Development and Family Studies, and Social Psychologist Philip Newman (2001: 516) urge researchers to attend to the importance of group identity formation "as a critical experience during early adolescence, as a precursor to and explanatory variable in the formation of individual identity, and as an antecedent for subsequent investments in meaningful group relationships. There is a reciprocal relationship between group and individual identity". They further suggest (2001: 516) switching focus to teen groups instead of to the individuals only, which has considerable advantages for parenting, education, mental health practice, and public policy. Moreover, linguistic anthropologist Paul Garrett and applied linguist Patricia Baquedano-Lopez (2002: 349) emphasize that adolescents are socialized by constructing and negotiating social identities within peer groups that take place in schools and other institutions where adolescents spend most of their time.

Newman and Newman (2001) draw on cognitive developmental theory from which three cognitive capacities are considered important for forming group identity: representations, operations, and reflective thinking. Interestingly enough, the first capacity for forming group identity, representations, is concerned with the ability to use language and symbols indicating group affiliation (Newman and Newman 2001: 522). Hence, language is a major part of identity formation acting as a group identity marker. Newman and Newman (2001: 533) discuss how dismissing adolescents' commitment to their social

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cliques and peer groups would contribute to alienation from the larger community. Reasonably, looking at certain social groups negatively and labeling them as extreme or unacceptable will lead these adolescents to work towards that expectation feeling like outcasts alienated from society.

According to Rachel Simmons (2004: 8), author of *Odd Girl Speaks Out: Girls write about bullies, cliques, popularity, and jealousy*, girls' groups and cliques are formed in sixth grade. Valerie Besag, educational psychologist and former teacher, (2006: 9) analyzes girls' conversational techniques in persuading other to join their groups or in excluding them emphasizing the importance of language in accomplishing this task. According to Harris (1995), once individuals are categorized as members of a group, they take on the expected rules, standards, beliefs, attitude and conduct of that group. He, also, adds that young people who become members of a peer group will adopt the social mores, dress code, presentation, language, attitudes and behaviors the group as a whole embraces (In Besag 2006: 19). Importantly, however, Alder and Alder (1995) distinguish between friendship groups and cliques in that the first have less rigid boundaries and a more fluid membership than the latter, so outsiders have a better chance of being accepted in friendship groups. Cliques are exclusive, setting criteria for membership, a hierarchical structure and a dominant leader (In Besag 2006: 63-65). Besides friendship groups and cliques, Besag (2006: 66) talks about one more type of grouping, gangs, and defines it as groups or cliques with deviant intent common to the membership.

Even though the researcher is considering social cliques as one of the three axis of the study at hand along with identity and linguistic practices, admittedly, the very fact of positioning people into groups and tagging them with labels is a stereotyping act exposed for criticism. However, high school teacher-researcher Theresa Squires Collins, in Profile: Writing their way through: Adolescent girls and note writing, affirms that categorizing girls into groups is tempting (2003: 64). Additionally, she (2003: 64) indicates that we cannot ignore the impact of the social interactions in the school life of middle and high school

students, since the school is the place where the academic meets the personal and adolescent girls turn into young women. Similarly, identity is also a meeting place where the personal meets the social, cultural, political, sexual, religious, and the linguistic.

In this last section of the literature review chapter on adolescents and social cliques, I start with investigating the root and meaning of the word "adolescence" in both the English and Arabic languages. There was an interesting semantic fact where the root for the word "adolescence" in Arabic is the same root for the word "pressure" and it is, I dare to say, the most stressful period of a person's life indeed. In this case, language and social reality are two faces of the same coin. Then, I move to a number of studies to indicate some points pertaining to issues of identity, adolescents, and language practices similar to the goals of the current research endeavor. Jennifer Fortman (2003) finds the literature lacking when it comes to studying the role of language in defining the adolescent's identity. The current study is another attempt to explore where language stands in shaping adolescent speakers' social identities. According to Raible and Nieto (2003), there are implications of identity formation for adolescents and schooling, which is an important point for educators. Similarly, Newman and Newman (2001) suggest focusing on teen groups instead of individual teenagers, which is beneficial to venues of parenting, education, mental health practice, and public policy. I, also, intend the current study to reach a large audience of educators, parents, students, policy makers, and counselors, since the study at hand touches on a central facet of adolescents that of group identity and social image that may and can stay with the teenage student for the rest of his/her life and have major consequences on not only his/her academic performance at school, but also on his/her relationships with other entities like family, teachers, and other authorities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This is a study where the quantitative complements the qualitative. The variety of methods or what educational psychologists Creswell and Clark (2007) call the "mixed methods approach" is necessary and extremely useful in this case to achieve triangulation. Hence, multiple methods are implemented such as online surveys of blogs, survey of the school population on social cliques, ethnography including observation and participant-observation, and interviews. Research methods such as participant-observations, surveys, or open-ended interviews have empowerment potential for participants allowing them to tell their stories (Miranda 2003: 42). Mixed methods research entails the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data where the first usually involves closed-ended information such as attitudes and behaviors instruments, while the later comprises more open-ended information gathered through interviews or observations (Creswell & Clark 2007: 6).

It was the goal to pull data from different sources to reach triangulation, which is usually achieved by relying on three sources of data. This study, however, has obtained data from five different sources of both spoken and written data. First, I proposed that it is best to situate this study within an ethnographic framework for a more holistic understanding of the teens' groups within the high school community. As a researcher who is a sociolinguist playing the role of an ethnographer, I chose to be a participant-observer. Besides the ethnographic research design, it was necessary to create a survey as a basis for a pilot sociological study on Kuwaiti teen cliques in high schools both public and private. In addition, blogs and websites of Kuwaiti youth have also revealed a great deal about the diverse loyalties to "hybrid" subcultures and embracing newly adopted social global identities. The blogs and survey helped greatly in envisioning the types of identities

contemporary youth espouse. At the same time, these methods are not used for the purpose of drawing preexisting fixed expectations before going into the field.

As part of fieldwork, besides participation-observation, it was needed to have the participants' direct feedback on their membership to a given clique. Therefore, I conducted individual interviews to listen to each member of a clique without having the influence of the group coloring the responses. During fieldwork, written sources of data became available without prior planning where girls at school exchange scrapbooks, letters, and notes regularly that sometimes include secret codes and innovative systems of writing. Finally, the media projections of public and administrative opinion on recent identity outbursts among the youth of the country have developed into an independent source of data. Overall, I ended up with six different sources of data. The newspaper articles, blogs, and the survey came to constitute the preliminary sources of data, while the ethnographic fieldwork along with its interviews and written data became the main data. The data sources are detailed in sections 3.1 through 3.6 below. Section 3.7 then details the Human Subject Review board procedures that were involved and section 3.8 concludes this chapter.

3.1 Media Opinions

There has been a great deal of discussion in the local newspapers about so called problematic teen rebellions against traditions and values embraced by Kuwaiti society as the news describe the increasing popularity and public appearance of particular subcultures, namely boyat, Satanists, and Emo both in schools and in society at large. I have collected and translated twenty-seven articles from summer 2008 to summer 2009, which are written by journalists, reporters, professors, psychologists, and counselors mainly focusing on two groups homosexuals/boyat and Satanists/Emo. These news clippings serve as a proof of the currency and seriousness of the topic at hand from the point of view of the community the general public and the policy makers. Therefore, it is worthwhile examining these public opinions, as they shed light on the lives of the youths that make up the unit of

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this current project in an attempt to understand the type of images they have in the eyes of the public, which does not necessarily hold a truth-value.

<u>3.2 Personal Websites/Blogs</u>

Before carrying out the survey and entering the field, besides studying the media clippings, I conducted an online survey investigating blogs and personal websites of Kuwaiti teens; especially paying attention to so-called extreme, anti-social, and dysfunctional identities. This constitutes a mass corpus of data that is personal, natural, and accessible produced by adolescent speakers who could belong to various cliques under study. This readily available online corpus could shed light on the intricate and interwoven relations between adolescents, group identity, and language behaviors and attitudes.

Luckily, there is a website that lists the most popular Kuwaiti blogs (http://www.kuwaitblogs.com) where, noticeably, most Kuwaiti bloggers are listed by nicknames or first names not offering much personal information perhaps due to the fact that reputation is very important for Kuwaitis. Since it is a supposedly conservative society that expects its citizens to follow certain rules of conduct, these blogs constitute an opportunity to express reflections, perspectives, and beliefs that are personal and natural without social reservations. The website (http://www.kuwaitblogs.com) mentioned above was an entry point to many teens' personal virtual worlds. One of the boyat website was featured in the main webpage of Kuwaitblogs and that was enough to lead to many more boyat websites. Besides boyat, there were websites of teens subscribing to Emo, Goth, and Punk communities as well hip-hop culture and other websites where code-switching to English is a highly noticeable linguistic practice.

For the online survey of blogs, looking at nicknames was a good start where, in some cases, the name indicates a certain image or an identity. To offer an example, the blogger Dark Mysticism implies a dark image and it is in fact an individual who considers herself a member of the gothic culture where Gothicism, Satanism, and atheism are among

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her articulated interests. Moreover, words such as *Goth*, *Satan*, *dark arts*, *black metal*, and *self-injury* are used extensively throughout the blog. Therefore, the surveying blogs consisted of exploring bloggers especially ones whose nicknames are indicative of identities that are considered 'unusual' in the Kuwaiti society by casting these individuals out as outcasts or cultural misfits. As the blogger Dark Mysticism starts her blog with the opening "Tongue Tied and Twisted, Just an Earthbound Misfit". Then, I searched for terms, expressions, confessions and articulations of identity and membership to a given group identity.

The concordance software AntConc was chosen to analyze the blogs data. Entering all the data and analyzing it with AntConc is fruitful, since it allows sorting the words by frequency so the most frequent words can be calculated. They can also be interpreted when concorded in their immediate linguistic environments. This simple two-fold research method of collecting abundant naturally occurring and authentic online data of peoples' expressions of personal and/or group identity and then analyzing it in concordance software is one step in revealing the interwoven relationship between language choices and identity.

3.3 Survey

After obtaining approval from IRB and the Ministry of Education through mediations between the Ministry and the researcher's sponsoring college and place of work and getting approval letters from local districts, it was time to contact the schools by phone to arrange personal visits to meet the principals and explain the survey. I visited one public school that accepted both the survey and the fieldwork studies. Also, I contacted eight private schools, but ended with three different types of private schools in order to offer a diverse collection of schools' communities and social makeup across schools in Kuwait: all girls private school (2), co-ed private school (4), and co-ed bilingual private school (3) besides the all girls public school (1). Interestingly, students in school (2) suggested that the

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researcher conduct the survey in school (4) due to their knowledge of the diverse students body in that particular school, which they believed would be of benefit to the survey study.

After gaining access to the schools, I distributed the survey in different classrooms. The sample is random where the participants' identities cannot be identified. The survey inquired about the social cliques the students have noticed within the school and the type of characteristics that distinguish one group from another (see Appendix A for the survey questions). This survey is designed to consist of structured questions that will consequently be quantitatively measured. The survey also includes a section inquiring about some demographic information of participants such as age or school year and sex- this latter category would only be needed for private school students, since public schools are sex-segregated. The survey does not, however, entertain questions that can reveal the students' identities through personal names or the like. The survey comprises both structured questions and open-ended questions. It is helpful to gain insight about what the students from the school population as a whole think about the social cliques, since they have been members of the community longer than the researcher and would have noticed the salience of the groups. Moreover, there is a section of the survey that includes questions on language attitudes in regards to Modern Standard Arabic, English, and Kuwaiti dialect.

The number of students at public secondary schools is bigger due to the large size of public schools. Private schools are relatively smaller in size and usually combine other academic years besides high school in one building such as elementary and middle school. The plan was to ask the school officials to help administrate the survey instead of personally approaching the students, since administrating it by the help of the schools' administration department and/or the faculty will provide better chances of reaching the required number of participants. However, I ended up conducting the survey by myself in two of the four schools distributing it and being available the whole time in each classroom to clarify questions to students if necessary.

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The survey was long, so it was helpful to design it in an appealing manner with colored font accompanied with pictures of cliques in order to make it attractive to the teenage participants. I designed and distributed eight hundred survey copies total, of which half were in Arabic for the public school and the other half in English for private schools' students. I collected 380 complete surveys back form the 400 Arabic copies from the public school. I distributed the survey among 11th and 12th grade classrooms, since 10th grade students were freshmen and turned out later to be the main players in most cliques formed in the school but not all. I administered the survey completely in this school, but one of the counselors helped in introducing me to the teachers and students while approaching the classrooms. As for the private schools, I administered the survey in the all-girls private school (2), while the other two co-ed private schools offered to administer the survey. I received 292 surveys back out of the 400 English copies from all three private schools. The total number of surveys including both Arabic and English copies amounts to 672 surveys, which is a satisfactory number for a pilot study attempting to shed light on a social aspect of Kuwait high schools and the sociological diversity therein. Therefore, the survey study data proved to be prolific, as the results will suggest in the next chapter of data analysis and discussion.

3.4 Ethnography as a Research Design

Dell Hymes (1972) suggests that in order to describe and understand inquiries about language, social relations, or culture of a given community, a sociologist or an anthropologist will depend on a form of inquiry such as survey or ethnography, which he found, at the time, to be missing in sociolinguistic inquiry and greatly needed (In Gumperz & Hymes 1972: 52). Hymes (1972: 41, 53) encourages sociolinguists to aspire to explore concrete rather than abstract meanings behind language as used by speakers in real life, because in order to achieve an adequate descriptive sociolinguistic theory it has to be built on great deal of empirical work and experimentation.

Sociologist Darin Weinberg (2006: 98) offers some historical overview of the beginnings of ethnography as it started in the nineteenth century as a scientific regimen to understand humanity. Anthropologist Franz Boas and his students were among the earlier ethnographers who argued for impartial scientific data collection and analysis that yield evidence that social practices show the depth and variety of human experience and expression (Weinberg 2006: 99). During the mid-twentieth century, one of Boas's students, Edward Sapir moved away from the concept of culture towards the formal features of language and Benjamin Lee Whorf followed in his steps later (Weinberh 2006: 99-100). Weinberg (2006: 100) offers a useful definition for ethnography and what it entails: "gathering indigenous materials through participation observation and interviews with local informants and using these materials to reconstruct one's research subjects' collective worldview". Ethnography is objective, Weinberg (2006: 110) argues, where its objectivity he claims: "is not a matter of achieving correspondence between our analytic proposition and the things they are said to describe. It is, instead, simply a matter of answering questions in ways that account for the available evidence pertaining to those questions more effectively than anyone else".

Communication professor Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz (2005) also offers an excellent chapter on ethnography, its goals, description, and evaluations. It is an anthropological method developed in Anthropology relying heavily on participant observation in natural settings and documenting events through taking fieldnotes, audiotapes, photographs, and videotapes paying special attention to collecting a variety of text: conversations, rituals, and narratives (Leeds-Hurwitz 2005: 327). Documentation is usually supplemented by interviews with participants at a later stage to obtain their interpretation of documented behaviors (Leeds-Hurwitz 2005: 328). Leeds-Hurwitz (2005: 328) explains that the main goal of ethnography is to describe naturally occurring behavior that usually takes place through using multiple methods including participant observation, detailed notes, audiotaping, videotaping, in-depth interviews, and other both qualitative and quantitative

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methods. The time required for the data collection stage in ethnography depends on each individual researcher, but one year was originally the required time where major events would at least occur within a year of a community's life time (Leeds-Hurwitz 2005: 329). The second goal of ethnography after description is analysis, which goes hand in hand with the first goal, since data collection and analysis overlap in a cyclic fashion continuously and simultaneously (Leeds-Hurwitz 2005: 330). Moreover, Leeds-Hurwitz (2005: 329) explains the major difficulty with ethnography: "The researcher must incorporate multiple disparate stories into a single coherent narrative that is.... true to them all, providing original insights unavailable to the individuals involved in any one story, but which become apparent when the set is viewed as a whole". She cites anthropologist and sociologist Ifekwunigwe (1999: 57) who also discusses the same point in other words "the process of writing an ethnography is akin to quilt-making. I have all of these seemingly disparate bits and pieces in the form of participants' testimonies, my own cumulative scratchings, as well as different theoretical strands and I wish to stitch all of them together to form a coherent pattern" (In Leeds-Hurwitz 2005: 329).

Sociologists Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson (1995: 6) articulate the goal of ethnography as describing the dynamics of a given setting as seen and understood by the insiders who constitute the unit of the study. They explain that ethnography is not as simple as it might deceptively appear at first. In addition, there is a reluctance to offer advice on how to conduct ethnography to those who are willing to do so, because this type of research cannot be programmed; rather it is filled with the unexpected (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 23). Ethnography could have started as a method that is mainly descriptive; yet its usefulness does not stop at description. As Darwin remarks quoted by Selltiz et al (1959: 200) "How odd it is that anyone should not see that observation must be for or against some view, if it is to be of any service" (In Hammersley & Atkinson 1995: 24). Consequently, ethnography not only describe a natural setting with all honesty as understood by the natives of that community under observation, but also goes beyond description to a deeper

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analysis of a given natural phenomenon that could have practical implications on a larger scale.

Mistakenly, ethnography is accused of being limited by focusing on a single unit of study hence is not representative, which Hammersley & Atkinson respond to by recognizing ethnography's significance especially in action research and evaluation studies. Generalizations can be made out of ethnographic research that investigates larger numbers of cases (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 42). They further suggest the possibility of conducting a small-scale survey on a larger sample of the community studied to assess how typical a particular phenomenon or an attitude under study is (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 44). In fact, prior to entering the field for the ethnographic part of the study, the researcher took two steps ahead to examine the sociological aspect of the community: surveying blogs or personal websites and conducting a survey in four different schools. These two steps were necessary to get a better picture about the socio-cultural makeup of the students' body as well as explore the social and linguistic attitudes towards cliques and language practices in general.

In order to carry out the ethnographic investigation, I had to gain access to the schools from the gatekeepers as researchers conducting ethnography call the authorities or the leaders of the community under study (Madge 1962: 218 and Hammersley & Atkinson 1995: 63). Gaining access is a practical issue that depends on drawing on the interpersonal resources available to the researcher; yet achieving that access is not as practical (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995: 54). In fact, negotiating access is one of three main phases of ethnographic research besides data collection and analysis, all of which typically overlap (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 55). Making contact with individuals a researcher wishes to study and gaining access is an uneasy task and may require extensive 'hanging out' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 57-59). As they (1995: 64) explain, research is usually based on some background knowledge to make judgments on the most suitable way to gain access into a community. High school is the community under study on a

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macro-level scale, which is considered 'private' or 'formal' setting that is institutionalized to which gaining access could be more difficult of a procedure where boundaries as Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 63) describe are clearly marked, not easily penetrated, and policed by gatekeepers. The schools' administration departments constituted the gatekeepers for the high school community who required an official letter from the Ministry of Education.

Gaining access to the school through the principal is not enough however, since observing students' dynamics during recess in the cafeteria is not adequate to understand the social cliques. Access had to be gained from the gatekeepers of the groups, most likely the leaders of the cliques. As psychologist Lewin has shown, a central group of a community typically has a leader who acts as the gatekeeper monitoring admission of outsiders in the group (Madge 1962: 218). Gaining access, the researcher's perceived identity, and the data collected are interrelated (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995: 63). Therefore, it was important to consider extensively how to approach the community and what role to take on as a researcher. Sharing the same ethnic and national background with the community and being of a relatively close age range with the high school students acted as advantages that eased accessing cliques. At the same time, these social cliques are also subcultures and have their own codes of conduct and culture to which I am an outsider. It was best to approach the population with honesty as a researcher who is interested in social cliques' dynamics. Nevertheless, there is a problem that Labov calls the observer paradox (1972) where researchers observing language behaviors can be influencing and coloring these behaviors by their mere presence and expectations, but can researchers study social contexts without being part of them? I chose to be part of the school context as an observer and a participant trying to gain a rich and deep understanding that can only be obtained through time and an open-minded attitude with no predetermined assumptions, hypotheses, or drawn categories of the participants or the groups to which they belong. At the same time, it is detrimental to the research validity if

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too much information is revealed about the study as Hammersley & Atkinson (1995: 75) also agree that the type of information provided to participants could influence their behaviors to the point of invalidating the results. They (1995: 73) further inform that deception should be avoided at all times, but telling the "whole truth" in negotiating access to the community may not always be a wise strategy either.

After gaining access to the school community, it was time to gain access to students cliques. Truthfully, it took some time for the school community to get used to the researcher and visa versa. At the beginning, the researcher sat on the benches in the hallways during recess watching the girls walk by with their friends' groups. After establishing familiarity, students started introducing themselves to the researcher and inviting her to join their groups. Entry to the cliques under analysis started with 'hanging out' with a single member of each group at first. The ethnography started with observation in order to gain familiarity with the community. Once the borders of social cliques became clearer, it was time to enter the groups by approaching members who seem prominent in these groups then explain the study to them in an attempt to gain access to be a participant observer observing closely the dynamics of the groups, their language behaviors, and group identity. Additionally, it was necessary not to disrupt the groups' dynamics where, especially at the beginning stages, obvious note taking could be disruptive. Participants were informed that their identities will not be revealed in the research and pseudonyms will be used instead. Also, they were informed about the study, its significance, its length of time, and the methodological procedures including participant-observation, audio taping, and individual interviews.

3.5 Interviews

The Interviews took place later in the study after gaining a deeper understanding of the cliques, their dynamics, and their language behaviors. They helped in matching the observations with the insiders' more directly articulated perspectives, feelings, and opinions on a one-to-one basis away from the possibility of group conformity and to ensure the

validity of the findings. More direct statements about identity appeared in the interviews I conducted with members of social cliques during fieldwork where they were asked about their group membership and how their personal values and ideologies could either intersect or diverge from their group values and ideologies. Professor of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies Marie "Keta" Miranda (2003) explains how speakers become aware of their identities when they are put in a situation to overtly express their normal daily linguistic and social practices.

> "Through the interview process, with my naïve questions about everyday practices, my interlocutors had to put into words things that they took for granted. They had to find words to explain to a college graduate what their everyday expressions and practices meant....They discovered that they knew things that I, a college graduate, did not understand. Finding verbal expressions, putting ideas into form, the girls discovered a greater awareness of their identity in the course of presenting their everyday lives" (p. 46-47).

Miranda's statements regarding the role verbal expressions play in developing the girls awareness of their identity has taught me in advance prior to entering the field to make it clear to the girls in my research to speak the way they normally do without having any reservations. At the same time, it was important for me not to heighten their linguistic awareness. As a linguist who believes in Labov's observer's paradox, it is crucial to maintain the natural flow of events including the linguistic practices and choices in a study where the relationship between language and identity is the focus. In Finder's (1997: 20) fieldwork, the girls in each group would view themselves as "just girls", but cast judgment and derogatory labels and terms on girls in other groups such as "popular air heads" or "the snobs". This was also the case in the current study where "just girls" was the answer most girls gave especially during the interviews.

The interviews are semi-structured oral interviews (see Appendix B). They include structured questions based on Likert-type scale where participants are given a number of statements to see to what extent they agree or disagree with them in regards to issues pertaining to their personal and group identity besides few open-ended questions on the shared values, practices, and linguistic features the members of the groups share. These

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interviews served to offer the participants' subjective points of view that aided in supplementing the researchers' notes and reflections on the natural interactions and activities taking place in the community observed.

Interviews took place with the main members of the two groups in the ethnographic fieldwork. There are nine interviews total: four from boyat and five from the Emo Filipino group. Five interviews took place in the school's library, two on a bench, one on the stairs, and one in a classroom. Two interviews were recorded from the boyat (F.F. and Rahaf) and three were recorded from the Emo Filipino (Jasmine, Linz, and Sam). The questions vary slightly between the English and the Arabic interview. All interviews were conducted in Arabic except two in the Emo Filipino group who specifically requested an English version of the interview, namely Linz and Sam.

3.6 Written Data

Theresa Squires Collins (2003: 64) encourages the study of note-writing activity of adolescent girls, which motivated the researcher to consider student-written notes as a source of data. Note writing not only frees up cognitive space but also helps in discovering the importance of relationships by which individuals make sense of their identities as well as their priorities (Squires Collins 2003: 65). This is a main reason the researcher chose to survey blogs and teens' websites, since writing in a personal website or a blog is an outlet for adolescents or persons from any age group to express identities and belong to a given subculture or community. Moreover, the researcher ended up with some materials written by the students including letters and scrapbooks. In this section, I will focus on scrapbooks given by the students to the researcher where they talk more personally about themselves. This is relevant material, since students' linguistic practices is clearer on paper. However, there is written data only from members of Emo Filipino group namely Jasmine, Mimz, Linz, and Sam.

3.7 Human Subjects and Institutional Review Board

Since the study involves human subjects, it was necessary to make sure the study protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Texas at Arlington to which I am affiliated as a graduate student to gain approval as a legitimate research plan where human subjects will not be harmed in any way. The nature and purpose of the study was explained to participants. They were assured confidentiality. A waiver of consent and assent forms was requested from IRB due to the cultural expectations and norms in Kuwaiti society where signing formal written forms can be both uncomfortable for reasons of distrust and even offensive. (Such discomfort occurred, for example, with a Kuwaiti M.A. student who conducted her sociolinguistic thesis in Kuwait (Haidari 2006: 72), a work that included human subjects who did not feel comfortable about signing consent forms explaining that it is unnecessary. However, in Haidari's case, it was not an issue of trust; rather participants found signing written forms an insult which would have signaled that the relationship between the researcher and the participants would be defined as a distant formal relationship, which is not preferred in Kuwaiti society.) Instead, information sheets instead of assent forms were designed providing information about the study, the researcher, the length and procedures of the project (see Appendix C and D). In addition, information sheets rather than consent forms were made for the parents to approve of their children participating in the study (see Appendix E and F). Both information sheets clearly indicate that audiotaping will take place sometime in the study. The tapes will not be public. Similarly, participants were informed that they will be referred to by pseudonyms and their real names will not be revealed. In fact, most of the participants chose their own pseudonyms. Informational forms were written in both Arabic and English where Arabic versions are intended for students of public schools where Arabic is dominantly spoken and used as a medium of instruction, while English versions are intended for private school students where English is dominantly spoken and used for instruction. Similarly, it seemed only reasonable-- and did indeed prove to be expected—that the researcher would speak to

students in public schools in Arabic while using English with students of private schools. A copy of both forms is included as an appendix.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

There have been some challenges I came across before and during fieldwork that center on confronting awkwardly incompatible conflicts between theory, paradigm, and application. One main paradigmatic challenge is facing a clash between my personal rejection of categories due to their stereotypical nature, but at the same time a need to consider cliques, one of the main factors in this study besides language and identity. Second, the unfamiliarity of fieldwork or the ethnographic approach to the Kuwaiti community caused some confusion to students, teachers, and school personnel. Third, it was very difficult to meet the expectations of all members of the community, since teachers, school administrators, and students all had different expectations in mind for the researcher to meet. Fourth, it was also difficult trying to gain trust and acceptance in two different cliques of students that subscribe to two different subcultures. Fifth, the literature is not decisive when it comes to the relationship between language and identity: in fact, it is actually rather vague, as has been shown in the literature review chapter. One last challenge is the lack of literature on Kuwaiti youth groups.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE PRELIMINARY DATA

Newman and Newman (2001: 533) indicate the importance of the school setting to understanding adolescents and their identity as developed through group membership: "we have a living laboratory in every middle school and high school. By ignoring the centrality of group identity issues for youth, we miss an authentic and necessary teaching/learning opportunity." Interest in language and identity research has predominantly grown from ethnographic investigations where the researcher enters the natural settings of a phenomenon to collect data (Joseph 2004: 71). Following this model, I attempted to observe the school as a culture and a community by paying attention to clique formation and studying the groups' dynamics, style, and language in order to reach a deeper understanding of their social identity as a group and the personal identities of the members within.

Ethnography as a research method requires observation or participant observation, extensive note taking, and usually tape recordings (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995, Leeds-Hurwitz 2005, Madge 1962, Saville-Troike 2003, and Weinberg 2006) depending on the participants' preference and the feasibility of the recording situation. In fact, many research studies apply observations and note taking procedures; yet the difference between ethnography and other methodologies lies within two main distinctions. First, it is necessary for the ethnographer to spend an adequate amount of time in the speech community under study to gain a rich insider's perspective not influenced by predetermined categories and hypotheses. Second, ethnographies are necessarily conducted within natural contexts not artificially set up such as the case with laboratory studies.

Besides observations and participant-observations, I conducted interviews with members of the particular cliques in which I took part as a participant-observer. Interviews

were useful for asking about particular issues that arose regarding specific language behaviors and attitudes and how such practices could be relevant to group and personal identity. Thus, after the preliminary steps of examining media opinions, online blogs, gaining access through gatekeepers of the school as a whole and to the cliques in particular, and conducting a survey in the schools to gauge students' perspectives about social cliques, it was time to carry out the ethnographic investigation. Conducting a number of interviews as well as gathering written data from students finalized the ethnographic fieldwork endeavor.

In this chapter and the next of data analysis and discussion, I used the methodologies listed earlier to guide the outline of the discussion. Therefore, chapters four and five mirror the previous chapter on methodology in moving from media opinions to online websites, the survey, fieldwork, interviews, and ending with the written data from the students. In each one of these methods, I analyze the data I collected on each of the two main youth groups I studied: boyat and Emo kids. I chose this type of outline for the chapter, because it fits with my findings. For example, in the online websites and the survey sections, the discussion overlaps between the boyat clique and the Emo Filipino kids. Also, there is only written data collected from the Emo Filipino group. So, the current outline maintains consistency and organization in the way the data are presented.

4.1 Media Opinions

The earliest step was to examine media images and portrayals of youth groups. Reporting on these current socio-cultural trends provided a turning point in the direction of this study. The researcher found it useful and timely to focus on the relationship between language and identity in adolescent groups due to the importance of identity formation during adolescence and due to the great attention the media is giving to youth groups and subcultures both within and outside Kuwaiti schools. Youth constitutes the majority of the Kuwaiti population as mentioned earlier, which means that their beliefs and practices reflect a great deal about the society as a whole to other countries in a way that might not even be representative. However, the Kuwaiti media, both T.V. and newspapers, are drawn

to focus on the trends and fads Kuwaiti youth are embracing, because it is new and controversial.

The researcher collected public opinion, perception, reaction, and response to some of the subcultures among Kuwaiti youth either in the school context or the mainstream public sphere and examined these media opinions next concentrating on certain identities that make up the focus of the study throughout all its sections such as the blogs, surveys, interviews, and fieldwork. I collected twenty-seven articles from two Kuwaiti newspapers in a one-year span. The articles keep repeating the same message that Kuwaiti youth is *corrupted* and *blinded* by Western subcultures and practices that are not to be tolerated. Some writers describe these youth cliques as *criminals*, while others diagnose them as *diseased*. Therefore, terms such as *criminals* and *diseased* are examples of the language the media uses to talk about some of these youth groups. Regardless of the positions writers and authorities take in regards to the youth of the country, it is good to shed light on these views in order to understand the extent of its importance to the society, which encouraged the researcher to investigate the particular cliques she selected in the high school. It is necessary to clarify that the researcher is not taking a social or political stance here in an attempt to criticize the media or the society's position towards these youth; rather she is trying to expose accurately the same situation. It is important to note that acknowledging an audience's interpretation empowers both the audience and the cases interpreted, as seen, for example in audience reception theory, as in reader response and audience response studies, which turns to mass audiences for their interpretations and negotiations of popular and public images (Miranda 2003: 28).

4.1.1 Boyat and Gays

The first set of media sources analyzed reported on boyat and gays. According to psychiatrist Haya AlMutairi, despite the many articles written in the newspapers about boyat and homosexual men, there are no statistics and numbers validating the existence of such phenomena. She describes it as a highly confidential matter where these cases are treated with discretion, since "regular" psychological disorders are not exposed publically in

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Kuwaiti society, which indicates that it is even harder to expose *sexual identity disorders*. One of the cases reported in the newspaper was of a youth diagnosed with sexual identity disorder who blamed this condition on a family member who constantly told him as a child "you are a little girl not a boy" who is beautiful and gentle, which grew with him (AlMutairi 2008: 7).

It is important to mention Fariha AlAhmad who is a royalty figure policy maker whose name is almost always found at the mention of boyat or any of the youth cliques debated in the media. She has been quoted in eleven out of the twenty-seven articles collected. She is the head of two national committees the "Ideal Mother Committee" and the "Negative Phenomena Committee". Fariha AlAhmad expressed great distress about the *irresponsible behaviors* of some youth who imitate the *bad* samples within the society driven by *strange* trends of homosexuality (Alwatan 2008: 10). The Ideal Mother Committee strives to handle young Kuwaiti women showing signs of masculine behaviors through ways that are academically informed (Kuna 2008: 11). Fariha AlAhmad disapproved of the new law criminalizing homosexual men. According to her, they are individuals who are in need of treatment through embracing them, correcting their behaviors, shedding light on their problems, creating awareness for the Kuwaiti family and society at large, and curing them with the help of highly qualified specialists (Salim 2008a: 5). As reported by Fathila AlMueeli (2008: 9), it is one of the urgent priorities on the agenda of the committee to build a rehab center for boyat in Kuwait that will be equipped with academics, psychologists, sociologists, and doctors. Again, Fariha AlAhmad urged all the country's authorities to increase their efforts to stop the escalating growth and spread of homosexuals and Satanists.

In an article titled "We refuse transgressions and work to save our children from estrangement and loss," Fariha AlAhmad explains the goal of the Committee of Negative Phenomena to restore families and guide the youth away from *blind imitations* of the west in its *anomalous* social products that have been wildly spread out in the Kuwaiti society. Fariha AlAhmad states the committee's objection to all kinds of transgressions whether

religious, philosophical, or behavioral. She describes homosexuality or Satan worshipping as types of conduct that are increasing in the country. Moreover, she advises the government not to close the public places where these youth subcultures gather, since closing them will lead these youth groups to gather in private secretive places and hide from adult supervision (Salim 2008b: 7).

Sheik Saleh AlNaham discussed three groups: boyat, homosexual men, and Satanists. Another member of the committee, Eman AlNajada, talked about Satanists in particular those who are fighting the committee's efforts where they drew strange expressions and phrases praising Satan on the mosque closest to Fariha AlAhmad's house as the chair of the committee. Also, professor of Psychology Naeema AlTahir studied about 250 sexual identity disorder cases, which she believes are due to hormonal disorders that reflect on their voice, appearance, and behaviors. She further added that some of the cases are triggered because of the ideas other individuals have been telling them about themselves, such as in telling a boy he is beautiful and feminine on a regular basis (In Salim 2008b: 7).

Fatma Al-yatem (2008: 67) reports on boyat as a phenomenon growing rapidly in middle and high schools' classrooms. She indicates that they are psychologically different from girls imitating males not only in terms of appearance but also in the way of communing with their female classmates. She reports that specialists have emphasized the psychological nature of this phenomenon more so than being physiological or hormonal, but they also indicated that some girls have transformed into boyat out of a trend to attract attention from other girls in the school. Furthermore, she cites a number of reasons believed to lead to the spread of boyat including globalization, new technologies like the internet and satellite T.V., lack of communication with family, weak relationships between students and teachers, and the absence of proper counseling at schools (Al-yatem 2008: 67).

In Mayson Foaad's (2008: 28) interview with a group of homosexual men, she points out that homosexuals are cast as *abnormal* and *taboo*, yet are very predominant and

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noticeable as they freely express themselves through specific codes of dress, style, and behaviors. She indicates how uneasy it is to break into their closed world that only attracts its members who belong to it out of a disorder or as some kind of curiosity. During an interview with a homosexual male, he used English words for sexuality related terms (including *pure-gay*, *satisfied*, *b**ch*, *prostitute*, and *lesbian*). At the end of the interview, the interviewee expressed the wish from people to understand before they pass judgment asking why people are opposing homosexuals but not Satanists. He adds that people use many degrading terms against homosexuals that cause deep internal wounds (In Foaad 2008: 28). In "A letter from transsexuals to the Parliament members: Our problem is merely physical and we know traditions and customs", the author referred to the male transsexual by using the feminine linguistic endings (Hiba Salim 2008c: 10). One of the interviewees in the article points out "the term *motahhawilun jenseyan* 'transsexual' might cause *disgust* in some people, but there is no other term to use, because I'm an Arab and I don't want the western terminology to take part in this complaint" (Salim 2008c: 10). Here, the interviewee being a homosexual man agreed with the public's opinion in the negative evaluation of his identity that, according to him, could cause a reaction of disgust.

On the other hand, some writers protested to the Negative Phenomena Committee describing boyat, gays, and Satanists as individual cases not a wide-spread phenomenon. Fariha AlAhmad explains their position as either too liberal or unrealistic, since Kuwait's reputation for these phenomena reached the neighboring countries that use Kuwait as an example in their lectures and studies when discussing such topics elaborating that Kuwait is mentioned in many online websites in relation to these issues. Fariha AlAhmad directs the question to these writers: Do they accept converting Kuwaiti youth to gangs and groupings? She expressed her surprise at one of the writers who wrote in one of the newspapers that these so-called phenomena are mere cases, but the next day in the same newspaper another female journalist wrote an entire column investigating boyat as a growing phenomenon in schools, malls, and amusement spots. The newspaper even received

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threats warning it not to write about boyat again, which shows the extent of the phenomenon (Alwatan 2008: 16).

Fariha AlAhmad emphasizes that neglecting the youth social, psychological, and educational problems and not treating their *unoriginal* and *abnormal* behaviors will hinder the progress and civilization of Kuwaiti society. She describes boys and girls groups who she claims are imitating the west in their clothes, behaviors, and moves as painful and caused by family's neglect explaining how necessary it is to build a rehab center for persons with sexual identity disorders due to the increase in their numbers (In Salim 2008d: 12). Again, these cases/phenomena are repeatedly described as *abnormal* and *foreign* or *Western*.

Hiba Salim (2008d) reports on a number of boyat and their views of themselves. One of the boyat says the problem resides in the social and religious makeup of the family. Her father is married to another woman and she hardly sees him. Another boya says she is a girl, but has a feeling that tells her she's a male. Since her childhood, her mother bought her boys' clothes. She was the first daughter after four boys. The only time she wears girls' clothes is during special occasions. Her father differentiates in his treatment between her and her sister who is watched more carefully than her. A third one says her family was expecting a baby boy due to a mistake in the sonogram. She has three older brothers. She does not like to be called a boy, but is used to cutting her hair short and wearing T-shirts and jeans. She took responsibility at an early age, since her mother is ill and her father is always out of the country. The last one says she is considered the "man" of the house. She hates her father who has been released from prison lately. Her mother passed away three years ago and she has been taking care of her siblings. She did not have the chance to finish her education. Her siblings and her have been moving from the houses of her paternal uncles, to her maternal uncles, to the streets (In Salim 2008d: 12). As will be seen in section 4.2 as well, it is important to notice how different the language of the youth is from the language of adults talking about youth where youths describe their situations in an attempt to perhaps justify their identities or merely to explain it for others to understand.

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Mubarak Almutairi (2008) blames Kuwaiti media especially T.V. dramas that constantly show displays of homosexuality, drinking, and ill manners. According to him, society is the victim to such sick shows, since images are more powerful than words. He further adds that boyat is an *ethical disease* and a phenomenon in Kuwaiti schools that is causing panic among parents. During a visit by the minister of education to some schools, one female student expresses "protect us from boyat" (Almutairi 2008: 49). Sheik Nabeel AlAwathi indicates that there is not a single girls school in the country that does not have boyat. He claims that he discussed this phenomenon years ago, but there was no attention given to the matter. Besides boyat, he adds that homosexual men is another phenomenon spreading in Kuwait in which the mother is to blame in both cases. He describes Kuwaiti schools as corruption pits (In Mirvet AbdAldayim 2008: 5).

In another discussion on boyat by the Negative Phenomena Committee, Fariha AlAhmad declares boyat to be a phenomenon that would harm the societal fabric of Kuwait. She calls attention to the family's role and how families have a big responsibility into their children to watch the kind of friends they choose especially in this global world we live in with all its wide selections of satellite channels and online websites. She blames weak family ties in leading to negative phenomena such as boyat and Satanists that are invading the Arabic and Gulf societies and are becoming so prevalent within both sexes to the point of being performed publically disrespecting all traditions and values. Kuwait has been suffering from an *ethical crisis* among its youth from both sexes that has been noticed in public places like malls, for example (In Mirvet AbdAldayim 2009: 10).

Dr. Widad AlEssa, psychological and family counselor, emphasizes that self-confidence acts as an antibiotic to protect youth from delinquent behaviors indicating that homosexual adolescents are among the youth who have low self-esteem. Importantly, she considers family and school are among the most influential factors in shaping personality, since self-esteem is built during childhood through parent upbringing and school years. Many families constitute the reason for damaging its children and youth's self-confidence (In Kuna 2009: 6). Therefore, Doctor Jameel AlMuri stresses parents' responsibility to have

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a constructive conversation with their children as a strategy to decrease the spread of phenomena such as homosexuals and boyat (In AlSoula 2009: 38).

The head of social and psychological services unit at the ministry of education, Ganima AlRukhimi, clarified the change of the school's role from being merely informative or educational to becoming a center for the students' social, scholastic, physical, mental, psychological, and spiritual adaptation and growing. In a study conducted by the unit, there appears to be a spread of sexual identity disorders, spiritual disturbances, sexual harassment, and violence that she considers new to Kuwaiti society. Delinquent behaviors of the youth are among the hottest and most important cases regionally and globally (In Masood AlAnzi 2009: 5).

In a fieldwork study on all regions of Kuwaiti high schools, the new youth phenomena have been scanned to objectively realize the reality of the new negative behavioral scenes to be able to gauge its causes. Ganima AlRukhimi explained that fieldwork is the best type of study to be able to both describe and analyze the dimensions of the problem with preciseness and scientific analysis of both causes and effects. Social and psychological counselors of high schools have taken samples of students to study for two and a half months. The study has shown 152 cases of violence, 91 cases of sexual identity disorders, 22 cases of sexual harassment, and 10 cases of spiritual disorders. Sexual identity disorders and spiritual disturbances are limited to individual cases not a phenomenon in all Kuwaiti towns/areas, but it will spread and increase if not confronted and treated (In Masood AlAnzi 2009: 5).

Doctor Waleed Al-Tabtabaie (2009) shed light on the results of another study that surveyed 5500 Kuwaiti citizens where 55% found boyat to be an existing phenomenon in Kuwait. In addition, 9.2% found Satan worshipping to be a phenomenon in the country as well. Al-Tabtabaie further examined another study published in AlQabas newspaper on March 8th 2009 indicating an increase in negative phenomena that do not belong to the Kuwaiti community and are causing destruction to identity (2009: 66).

Overall, there is a great deal written on boyat in local newspapers, but there is a lack of academic studies carefully examining this population to gauge its extent as well as its causes. Nevertheless, the newspaper articles constituted a good starting point, especially since so many of them are written by psychologists, counselors, and professors not only journalists. There are some reoccurring themes across all these articles on boyat and homosexuality worth summarizing. First, there appears to be a debate whether boyat and homosexuals in general have become a wide-spread phenomenon or a collection of individual cases. In addition, the media describes homosexuals including boyat as a *sexual identity disorder*. Besides being diagnosed as a *disease*, they are seen as *strange*, *bad*, *or foreign*; an imitation of the west. The western world is not the only entity blamed. The family has been mentioned repeatedly in eight of the articles in this section. The family is either blamed for producing boyat and homosexuals or summoned to have a more active role and presence in the lives of their teenage children in order to avoid such *abnormalities*. Besides family, the school community is also seen as an influence. For example, one of the articles mentioned poor school counseling as a factor in producing such *deviant* behaviors. Interestingly, the family and school domains emerge as a big part of the discussion in the main ethnographic data later in chapter 5. Judgments of others are also mentioned as a factor for the negative way members of boyat and gays groups view themselves. There is a discussion on this topic of others' judgments and how big of an impact they have on self-construction of youths in the next two chapters 5 and 6.

4.1.2 Satanists and Emo

In the discussion of boyat in the newspapers, there have also been many references to Satan worshipping groups discussed by the Negative Phenomena Committee. Satanists and Emo were mentioned in fourteen out of the twenty-seven articles most of them referring to Satanists. Half of these fourteen articles mention Fariha AlAhmad and The Negative Phenomena Committee. According to Asmaa AlAnzi (2008), Satan worshippers embrace a set of ideas as a belief system or a religion where people have to freely engross themselves in desires in order to reach higher states. In her description of the group, she mentions how

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death whether natural or suicidal represents a transitory stage to higher levels and how their lives are filled with loud music, alcohol, drugs, and killing. Mishal AlAslmi (2008) indicates that Satanism is a phenomenon that appeared ten years ago in the Gulf region and is still increasing. Shuruq AlObeedi (2009) further adds that Satan worshippers are a group that target youth and one whose spread brings attention to a very serious and *fatal situation*, described as a *cultural crisis*.

Fariha AlAhmad requested authorities responsible for old buildings to demolish them, because Satanists have been practicing their rituals in empty abandoned buildings (Hiba Salim 2009: 13). She finds Satan worshipping to be an escalating phenomenon operating in a systematic and highly confidential manner as she has already submitted important and relevant information on this group besides boyat and homosexual groups since the previous parliament (Alwatan 2009: 9). Walid AlTrad (2009) reports on a story of a high school student who attended one of the lectures given by Rakaz campaign (an Islamic based campaign for youth for teaching values and guidance). The student stated "I'm 16 years old girl. I got bored of this life, so I decided to change my lifestyle. I dyed my room black and added red furniture. I am practicing strange worship rituals but to who (to Satan). I don't care for parents or relatives. I started inviting my friends to become like the loser me" (AlTrad 2009: 20).

Bedor AlMutairi (2009) offers a long discussion on the Emo subculture in *Alwatan* newspaper. According to AlMutairi, *Emo* is a word derived from 'emotional' appearing for the first time in the mid eighties through a musical rock band adding that Emo songs are based on lyrics that invite people to misery and suicide. AlMutairi claims that Emo subculture followers admire Hitler as a role model, which I think is quite an extreme proposition. She adds that members of Emo subculture are extremely sensitive and pessimistic and some are cutters especially the young who show ways to cut on their personal websites. On Emo style and appearance, the author informs that their clothes are similar for both sexes usually black and tight or they wear things that have skulls on them.

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Emo girls wear heavy black eye make up. And, in regards to their music preferences, most of them enjoy heavy metal, rock music, and black poetry (AlMutairi 2009: 14).

According to the AlMutairi article, most Kuwaiti people were not aware of this phenomenon until May 2008 when British adolescent "Hannah Bond", 13 years old, hanged herself after joining the Emo subculture. The author further provides examples of other countries that are taking measures to prevent the youth from getting absorbed by Emo subculture, namely Russia and Mexico. Russia has sanctioned a law regulating Emo websites and abandoned the spread of Emo symbols or drawings in schools and governmental buildings. The same situation has taken place in Mexico where unofficial campaigns have been fighting Emo groups. AlMutari notes that some youth claim that Emo is just a trend, but a trend might develop into a belief system sometimes even unconsciously. It could start as a trend and end in suicide, she says. Lately, the Emo phenomenon has appeared in Kuwait. It has become popular in schools public and private and has been defended by the youth as a mere trend and way of living as a sensitive person not a new religion of some sort. Young girls at schools have started to carry small pocket-knives with them to cause a cut in their wrists as a way to prove their belonging to Emo culture in front of their classmates/peers (AlMutairi 2009: 14).

Similar to the articles covering boyat, there has been a discussion in these articles whether Satanists and Emo teen groups have come to represent a phenomenon worth a national concern, given the fact that it is an Islamic Middle Eastern society with conservative teachings and expectations. Overall, the articles here show a concern that Satan worshipping threatens the spiritual fabric of the country. The articles on both Satanists and Emo express a public concern that these groups could very likely develop from a trend to something more serious like a belief system by which members live. For example, cutting is a disorder that appeared in articles on Emo, which notably reoccurred in the main ethnographic sources of data in the current study.

Emo and Satanists are two different groups, yet they seem to be somewhat confused by the Kuwaiti media as well as the general public. The situation is different

when it comes to students' opinions. As the analysis of the ethnographic data shows later, some students especially those with curiosity or interest in Emo subculture show an understanding of the variations between Emos, Goths, and Satanists. Satanists are more visible in Kuwaiti local newspapers, because the group has been present in Middle Eastern media for a longer time than Emos or Goths. On the other hand, Emo subculture is very new to both local and Middle Eastern media. In addition, Goths may not even be acknowledged or understood in this region.

Some of the newspaper articles are reported by journalists and are based on interviews either with members of the discussed subcultures whether boyat, gays, Satanists, Emos, or members of the Negative Phenomenon Committee. Consequently, these articles are mostly reporting opinions. On the other hand, other articles are written by professors, psychologists, and counselors who are relying on fieldwork studies, statistics, and analyses of these groups and subcultures. Generally speaking, public opinion is characterized by a concern for the youth of the country to be swamped away by the teachings of the new subcultures that are perceived as alternative belief systems. The authors here appear to be responding to the initiatives taken by The Negative Phenomenon Committee to treat those as *problematic* youth. Public opinions agree that these youths are *problematic* or more precisely as *diseased* and in need of counseling and treatment. I personally believe, however, the situation is more complicated. I believe that following one of these subcultures start as a trend, a fad, or even a short-term obsession of the youth. It is a brand new identity that they want to wear like a fashion statement in order to capture attention that of their peers or authority figures such as parents, teachers, or policy makers. At the same time, many of these youngsters join one of these subcultures be it boyat, homosexuals, or Emo to gain a hip and current social identity, which could develop into a personal identity and a core belief system. Overall, constant practice of a particular style may or may not penetrate the inside and affect the individual's sense of self.

After reviewing all these news reports on boyat and Satanists or Emos in the local Kuwaiti newspapers, an incongruity shows up between opinions on whether these groups

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constitute phenomena or merely a collection of individual cases; still the many discussions show how important it is regardless of the size of these communities. Therefore, gathering, translating, and analyzing media and public opinions helped enormously in gauging the seriousness of the hotly discussed and criticized social changes occurring among Kuwaiti youth and the public's reaction to such changes. At the end of this section on media opinions, it is important to note that this accumulated data from newspapers constitute a corpus very different from the one presented next in section 4.2. Section 4.1 shows how language is used to talk about adolescents in *boyat* and *Emo* groups both describing them as well as making judgments towards their behaviors and beliefs. In the next section, however, I accumulated a corpus of the language used by adolescents from these groups in their personal websites. The media corpus and the blogs corpus differ in their voices, but they share one function that of constructing these social and personal identities of youth.

<p align="center">4.2 Personal Websites/Blogs</p>

The next source of data on student youth groups came from online websites put up by Kuwaiti youth. A mini- online corpus was accumulated from twenty two websites of Kuwaiti teens in which there are eight boyat websites, six websites subscribing to Emo-Goth-Punk subcultures, two websites adopting hip-hop culture, and six websites that show regular code-switching between English and Arabic. However, at the end, I decided to compare this mini-corpus with two smaller corpora: boyat websites and the Emo-Goth-Punk websites, since these are the cliques I had the chance to study closely during the public school fieldwork.

To examine the language of these websites I used AntConc, simple concordance software that is enormously useful in adding to the insights about the youth groups even when dealing with a small sample. The copied and pasted verbal content of the websites was transformed into text documents. Entering the sources in the AntConc software provides the opportunity to access all the files at once in a single step exploring multiple aspects of these files simultaneously and in an inclusive manner. I attempted to group all four types of websites in one text document 'all blogs corpus' and process it in AntConc's word list

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function. Utilizing the word list feature enables recognizing the most frequent occurrences of both lexical and function words. The word list performs simple statistical analyses on a given corpus calculating each different word in the corpus referred to as 'word type' as well as the total number of words in the corpus 'word tokens' displaying this word list in an alphabetical order or a frequency list order (Bowker and Pearson 2002: 13, 112). It is true that AntConc calculates and enlists words according to their frequency; at the same time the corpus producer also has to check all the different instances and derivations of those 'word tokens' and match them all together to calculate more accurate results. Besides the word list function, AntConc has a keyword in content (KWIC) display showing all occurrences of given words in their immediate contexts from both sides of the words (Bowker & Pearson 2002: 13), which proved to be a useful tool as well.

The word list displayed 11,539 word types and 169,620 word tokens in the 'all blogs' corpus: boyat, Emo-Goth-Punk, hip-hop culture, and code-switching websites. I also ran the boyat websites as another smaller corpus in AntConc as well as the Emo-Goth-Punk corpus. It is important to mention that the small corpus is a disadvantage, since a bigger corpus would be more indicative of the variations in lexical items used in one group versus another. Still, the small corpus was useful in demonstrating the kind of lexical items mostly used by these virtual identities of Kuwaiti youth as well as illustrating some interesting lexical variations between the cliques studied at the fieldwork specifically boyat and Emo-Goth-Punk groups. The following table will demonstrate the most frequent words in all three corpora: all blogs, boyat, and Emo-Goth-Punk.

Table 4.1 Word Frequencies of Online Corpus

	Woman Female	Boyat	Ladiyat	Goth words	Lesbian	Butch	Emo Goth Punk	Secretive places	Homo-sexual
All blogs	150	94	49	43	41	39	38	22	14
Boyat	139	92	47	7	41	39	0	22	13
Emo-Goth-Punk	0	1	1	25	0	0	38	0	0

There are a few points worth mentioning regarding the corpus and its word frequencies results. The word frequencies table only covers the corpus data that are written in English, either in English transliteration of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or Kuwaiti dialect. Therefore, the frequency list would be longer if it included the MSA and Kuwaiti Arabic items. Additionally, the 'Goth words' as indicated in the table above cover a collection of words including *death, dark, blood, devil*, and *black* and the different derivations of these words. On the other hand, the homosexual column in the table includes more slang terms for homosexuals such as *gay, queer, fag*, and *dyke*. Also, the secretive places column refers to the 'hang out' places where the stigmatized boyat groups gather for fun. Unintentionally, most of the websites in the corpus turned out to be designed by females and are discussing females.

In these preliminary data sections collected from personal websites and blogs of some Kuwaiti teens, first I explained the different types of websites that make up the online corpus. Then, I discussed the workings of the concordance software that I utilized to compare between the two main corpora found in terms of their usage of the most common lexical items. To detect lexical variations between the two corpora, the boyat corpus and the Emo-Goth-Punk corpus, I have applied the word list and the keyword in context features (KWIC) of the concordance software AntConc to come up with the most frequent words showing in the two different corpora. The results are summarized in a table. In summary, most of the words revolved around women such as *female*, *boyat*, *ladiyat*, and *lesbian*. The

boyat corpus also displays secretive places of boyat gatherings as well as slang terms referring to homosexuals, which serve as an indication of the relevancy of the data. On the other hand, in the Emo-Goth-Punk corpus, words such as *Emo*, *Goth*, *punk*, *death, dark, blood, devil*, and *black* came out as the most frequent words. Again, these terms are used by the adolescents themselves to describe as well as construct their identities, which is different from the newspaper data where authority figures, policy makers, and the public talk about these adolescents and participate as well construct an identity for these youth groups from their own perspective.

Therefore, the subcultures discussed in the local newspapers including boyat and Emo exist in the cyber world of Kuwaiti teens. Now, it is time to discover if these identities showing in the papers as well as the virtual identities in the web show up in yet another type of preliminary data source, the survey, before turning to the next chapter on the main ethnographic fieldwork data as well as interviews to see if the researcher will come to experience these hotly debated identities in the real world.

4.3 Survey

The next source of data is the survey that was conducted at four high schools. It is very important to keep in mind that the survey is purely exploratory and not theoretically driven to test an existing hypothesis. It was designed to answer particular research questions. First, what types of social cliques exist among Kuwaiti high school youth? Second, are these social cliques similar or different between public and private schools? Third, what are the students' attitudes towards these cliques? Fourth, do these attitudes vary between public and private schools students? Fifth, what are students' linguistic attitudes towards the most obtainable language codes in the country including Kuwaiti, English, Farsi, and MSA?

The survey includes structured questions for the most part following the common Likert-type scale where students are asked questions about their attitudes and feelings towards the different social network groups they have noticed or communicated with at their respective schools. A sample of the survey is included in appendix A. The researcher

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imposed no categories; rather the students had the opportunity to list the groups they have witnessed, offering their own labels and creative names for them. This is to allow for ethnographic accuracy that arises when the informants use their own categories (Norma Mendoza-Denton 1999: 40). Similarly, in the current study, no categories were imposed on the girls; rather the survey was open-ended to the point that they had to list their own names for the cliques they noticed in their respective school. The results of the survey are statistically measured using simple statistics in SPSS. This survey is the basis of a sociological pilot study that will help in gaining a glimpse into the types of social networks available in some Kuwaiti high schools, as the results will show.

Overall, there are twenty major cliques that were repeated in the surveys across all four schools besides the category of "other" including all the small groups that were not redundant in the survey as a whole but referred to some unpopular groups of friends. The twenty cliques include boyat 'lesbian tomboys', aagad 'insulting derogatory term for Bedouins', shettar ' top students', average, blacks, Satanists, fassla 'humorous', stuck ups, ladiyat 'ladies referring to lesbian femmes', hailag 'un-classy', losers ' a description given to trouble makers, loners, and the experienced', Emo-Goth-Punk, Filipino, religious, typical Kuwaiti, international, chicken nuggets 'Americanized', jocks, cool, hijabiz 'veiled', and "others". The following table will display the major groups in the public school versus the private schools including all the diverse names given by the students. The actual number of times any group was mentioned is included in parentheses (N=).

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Table 4.2 Cliques in Public vs. Private Schools

Frequency Ranks	Private Schools Cliques	Frequency Ranks	Public Schools Cliques
1	Nerds-geeks-weirdoes-smarts-smart pants-studyholics-bookworms (N=177)	1	Boyat-schizophrenia-ssabyak 'young boy'-mustarjilat 'masculine females' (N=324)
2	Snobs-show offs-stuck ups-arrogant- populars- preps-preppy- prepsters- rich kids-spoiled brats (N=105)	2	Aagad-Bedouins-tribal-mubargaat 'face covered-(various tribes & Bedouin family names) (N=115)
3	Normal (N=33)	3	Shettar 'hard working'-smarts-geniuses-respectful-unique-science major-computers-complicated (N=203)
4	Emo-Emo wannabes-gothic-punk (N=113)	4	Normal (N=40)
5	S**ts-b**ches-rayhhen fiha 'bad reputation' (N=46)	5	Blacks-galaxy (N=15)
6	Plastics-Barbie dolls-drama queens-fashion girls-girlies (N=30)	6	Satanists (N=45)
7	Typical Kuwaiti-Kuwaiti in depth- too Kuwaiti- hhada 'indeed' Kuwaiti (N=53)	7	Fassla 'funny'-naughty-playing-loud-crazy-joke-devils-aabatt 'silly' (N=123)
8	International-multicultural-U.N.- foreigners (N=58)	8	Arrogant-"the" families 'rich'-stuck ups (N=46)
9	Dorks-losers-hailag-aagad-not cool-outcasts-loners-lame-freaks-shy-quiet-bench worms (N=55)	9	Ladiyat 'ladies meaning fem lesbians'-lez, dyed hair-fashion-cute-beauty-exaggerated look-pretty girls (N=67)
10	Chicken nuggets-Mac Chicken-westernized-Americanized-American wannabes (N=23)	10	Hailag-malaqa-asking for attention (N=61)
11	Jocks-sports-athletes-soccer fans-soccer fanatics-basketballers (N=61)	11	Corruption-loss-flirts-repeaters-loud mouth-carelessness 'losers' (N=123)
12	Cool-kawl-friendly-'talk to anyone'-socializers (N=66)	12	Emo-goth-punk (N=31)
13	Hijabiz-covered-musketeers (N=46)	13	Filipino-Indonesians-embassy of Sri Lanka-the embassy-morocco and her friends 'character in a Japanese cartoon' (N=24)
14	Boyat-tomboys (N=10)	14	Islamists-daynin 'religious'-conservatives-high virtuous morals (N=15)
15	The others-conservatives-radicals-daynin 'religious (N=9)	15	Other

Mostly, the groups were repeated in both the public school and the private schools. Some groups, however, that appeared in one versus the other are the following. The cliques blacks (racial/ethnic identity), Satanists (religious sect), and fassla 'silly/funny' (attitudinal) were mentioned in the public school survey rather than the private school surveys. I believe that the main reason why the blacks group did not show in the private school surveys at all is the diverse socio-ethnic nature of these schools that foster their ethnic and racial awareness unlike public schools that are limited in their ethnic diversity where students are mostly Kuwaiti or what is called "pure" Kuwaiti. "Pure" Kuwaiti is a vague term that is used to refer to persons whose parents are Kuwaiti and share a similar family origin of an Arab decent especially from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I think "pure" Kuwaiti is a cover for a limited and discriminatory mentality. It is a term that leads to much discrimination especially regarding decisions of marriage and establishing a family. As for the cliques in private schools, these are the groups whose names only appeared in the private educational system: socializers (attitudinal), jocks & sports fans (hobbies/interests), hijabiz 'hijab + English phonetic ending for plural' (religious), chicken nuggets (socio-cultural/national), The U.N. (socio-cultural/national), and "typical" Kuwaiti (socio-cultural/national).

Students in private schools are exposed to more nationalities and cultural backgrounds through their peers as well as the teaching faculty. Therefore, they made the distinction between being Kuwaiti and being "typical" Kuwaiti where the later is the old fashioned, traditional, and more attached socially and culturally to the Kuwaiti community. They also named groups such as *multicultural*, *The U.N.*, and *international*. In addition, there exists a group at private American schools by the name *chicken nuggets* referring to Kuwaitis who are Americanized, westernized, and American wannabes as students described them in their own words. The religious cliques appeared in both public and private schools, but it is interesting that private school students refer to girls who wear hijab as "hijabiz" using the English phonetic ending for a plural noun ending with a voiced consonant. At the end, it was best to come up with a final set of groups that appeared to be

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the most frequent in the surveys, which accumulated into twenty one groups (boyat 'tomboy lesbians', aagad 'insulting derogatory term for Bedouins', shettar 'top students', average, blacks, Satanists, fassla 'humorous', stuck ups, ladiyat 'ladies referring to lesbian femmes', hailag 'un-classy', dorks, Emo-goth-punk, Filipino, religious, typical Kuwaiti, international, chicken nuggets, jocks, cool, hijabiz, and "other").

The survey is divided into four parts. It is mostly sociological in nature except part three, which is focused on linguistic attitudes and behaviors. First, the students start by filling in demographic information of age, sex, and grade then naming four cliques they noticed at their school. The second section, part 2, is the most important section for the sociological pilot study on Kuwaiti high school cliques. It has three subsections of different types of questions. The questions in the second part of the survey focus on students' attitudes towards the different cliques they list. The attitudinal questions were condensed and encapsulated in six measures for the three main attitudinal questions in part 2 of the survey through adding up the numbers of the different scales. Participants rate the four groups one at a time based on their feelings towards each group on a thermometer measure where zero to forty is considered negative, fifty is indifferent, and sixty to a hundred is positive. The thermometer measure makes the first measure *general* of the six measures.

Next, there are six items, each scaled from 1 to 5, with the scale endpoints anchored by 1 (cold, negative, hostile, suspicious, contempt, and disgust) and by 5 (warm, positive, friendly, trusting, respect, and admiration). This second kind of question makes the second measure *personal* where the sum of these numbers is what is obtained. Then, they have a set of two questions on contact: How often do you chat or communicate with these people? and how many of your closest friends belong to this group?. These two questions measure their contact with the cliques, which make the third measure *contact* where 1 stands for "a great deal", 2 for "some", 3 for "a little", and 4 for "none". Therefore, the higher the number in this measure, the less contact they have with a clique, which is a negative indicator opposite to the first two measures *general* and *personal* where the higher the

percentage meant a more positive result; an increase of positive feelings and a higher rate of positive traits of cliques.

For measuring variation and comparing means of groups, it was best to use ANOVA. Due to the large number of groups, the researcher found it best to focus on the cliques that she studied in the field: boyat and Emo Filipino, which meant focusing on groups one (boyat), twelve (Emo-Goth-Punk), and thirteen (Filipino). These three groups were compared using three measures *general*, *personal*, and *contact*; then ANOVAS were applied to compare the groups across schools and across the two schooling systems public and private for the first two measures. The three measures mentioned earlier *general, personal*, and *contact* were used to rate cliques based on the whole sample. There are also *general, personal*, and *contact* indices that rate cliques across the public and private schooling system, and then across all four schools the public school (1), private all-girls American school (2), co-ed private American school (3), and co-ed private bilingual school (4).

The reliability of the scales and consistency of data was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient where the reliability is 0.83 for the scale *personal* and 0.87 for the scale *contact*. The scale 'general' has one question only and doesn't require a reliability test. For the ANOVA tests mentioned earlier, if the alpha level for the tests between groups on these dependent variables is less than 0.05 then it indicates that there is a difference between public and private schools in terms of the students' attitudes towards a given clique. This simple measure allows for an extremely helpful comparison between public and private high schools of Kuwait on the subject of social cliques based on the students' opinions as the insiders and members of the school community instead of the researcher, an outsider.

For group one, *boyat*, there is a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of the students in the public school versus the private schools on all scales. Students in the private schools rated the group more favorably on the feelings thermometer where the higher the temperature the warmer the feeling. The boyat clique got a total of 52.157 in comparison with 29.945 from the public school. Likewise, students in the private schools

rated the boyat clique higher on the *personal* scale 16.512 versus 13.642 for the public school students. In agreement with these results, participants in the public school scored slightly higher on the *contact* scale where the higher the score the less contact indicated. The *contact* scale covers the two questions regarding the student's contact with members of the cliques as mentioned earlier where 1 stands for "a great deal", 2 for "some", 3 for "a little", and 4 for "none". The sum of these answers makes the score of the public versus the private school participants. These three scales just discussed signify results that are indicative of the difference between public and private schools. The next three scales *general*, *personal*, and *contact* look at the attitudes in each school separately as shown below in the three following tables for each scale. For the *general* and *personal* scales, the higher the score, the more positive the feelings and the attitudes, but it is the opposite on the *contact* scale where higher means less contact hence more negative or more accurately distant from the group. The schools are ordered in the tables from the highest rate to the lowest.

One possibility is that public school students might have rated the boyat clique more negatively than the private schools because it could be more widespread in public schools due to the sex segregation. Also, it could mean that students are more tolerant in the private schools, which leads to shedding light on the difference between the public school (1) and the all-girls private school (2), since they are both sex-segregated. As shown in the tables that follow, on both scales *general* and *personal*, the all-girls private school (2) has rated the boyat clique more favorably than the public school (1). School (3) stands for the co-ed private American school and school (4) stands for the co-ed bilingual American-Arabic school. At the same time, the public school had a higher rate on the *contact* scale indicating less contact with members of the clique. The sample size of each school is represented within parentheses (N=).

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Table 4.3 Boyat- Scale *General*

School	Scale Mean
4 (N=94)	53.670
2 (N=138)	52.000
3 (N=60)	50.277
1 (N=380)	29.945

Table 4.4 Boyat- Scale *Personal*

School	Scale Mean
2 (N=138)	17.033
3 (N=60)	16.039
4 (N=94)	15.977
1 (N=380)	13.642

Table 4.5 Boyat- Scale *Contact*

School	Scale Mean
1 (N=380)	6.03
2 (N=138)	5.15
3 (N=60)	4.94
4 (N=94)	4.3

As for group twelve, Emo-Goth-Punk, there was a significant difference (at the alpha=.05 level) between the two schooling systems only on the *general* scale, unlike the other two scales where there was no significant difference. Private schools rated the group higher on the *general* scale indicating warmer feelings towards Emo kids 76.250 versus 33.166 in the public school. The following table will show the results for the scale *general* listing all four schools starting from the highest rate (the most positive) and ending with the lowest (the most negative).

Table 4.6 Emo-Goth-Punk- Scale *General*

School	Scale Mean
2 (N=138)	82.000
4 (N=94)	75.000
3 (N=60)	50.000
1 (N=380)	33.166

As has been shown, the participants from the public school scored lower in terms of their feelings and attitudes towards both group one (boyat), sexual identity, and group twelve (Emo-Goth-Punk), sub-cultural identity and lifestyle, indicating less tolerance of such social cliques or subcultures. As for group thirteen (Filipino), ethnic identity, there was no significant variation between the two schools systems on the scales *general* and *personal*. In showing the variation between all schools based on the *contact* scale, school (3) does not exist in the comparison, which could be due to the small sample of participants taken from that school, sixty students.

Table 4.7 Filipino- Scale *Contact*

School	Scale Mean
1 (N=380)	6.04
2 (N= 138)	3.5
4 (N=94)	3.25

Besides this major sociological section of the survey, part three, which makes up the linguistic part, has four questions that focus on language, where students select among the various uses of the languages available in the country (Kuwaiti dialect, MSA, English, and Farsi). They chose from the options that the language is for education, career, networking, prestige, or useful for nothing. The questions on language investigate the instrumental and integrative uses of the linguistic codes listed. The instrumental use of

language is when a language is applied for educational and career goals, while the integrative use is the more personal use of language concerning identity and belonging to a given speech and social community. Then, the participants answer a question on whether English is popular and why, which is a more open-ended question. This fifth and last question was the only one with no validity on the Chi-square test among the five questions of the survey's linguistic part, which is reasonable due to its variation from the other questions on language use and attitudes. The Chi-square tests the difference between the two schooling systems: public and private.

Here I have used the visual aid of tables to show the difference between the responses between students of the public schooling system and the private schooling system on the matter of language use and linguistic attitudes towards the most popular linguistic codes in the country. It is a significant comparison to see the impact of the school community on the linguistic attitudes of its students, since there is a major difference between public schools and private schools when it comes to the medium of teaching and socialization. Therefore it is important to see how great of an effect a school's linguistic makeup has on the students' linguistic attitudes and beliefs as the following tables show.

Table 4.8 Kuwaiti Dialect Uses

	Public school students	Private schools students	Total number of students
1-education Count % Within Q1	104 78.2%	29 21.8%	133 100%
2- finding a job Count % Within Q1	36 39.6%	55 60.4%	91 100%
3-social networking Count % Within Q1	195 53.6%	169 46.4%	364 100%
4-prestige Count % Within Q1	30 68.2%	14 31.8%	44 100%
5-not useful Count % Within Q1	10 34.5%	19 65.5%	29 100%
Total Count % Within Q1	375 56.7%	286 43.3%	661 100%

Table 4.9 Modern Standard Arabic Uses

	Public school students	Private schools students	Total number of students
1-education Count % Within Q2	269 69.0%	121 31.0%	390 100%
2- finding a job Count % Within Q2	40 34.2%	77 65.8%	117 100%
3-social networking Count % Within Q2	1 2.6%	38 97.4%	39 100%
4-prestige Count % Within Q2	5 20.8%	19 79.2%	24 100%
5-not useful Count % Within Q2	61 66.3%	31 33.7%	92 100%
Total Count % Within Q2	376 56.8%	286 43.2%	662 100%

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Table 4.10 Farsi Language Uses

	Public school students	Private schools students	Total number of students
1-education Count % Within Q3	18 64.3%	10 35.7%	28 100%
2- finding a job Count % Within Q3	18 36.0%	32 64.0%	50 100%
3-social networking Count % Within Q3	49 70.0%	21 30.0%	70 100%
4-prestige Count % Within Q3	26 66.7%	13 33.3%	39 100%
5-not useful Count % Within Q3	257 55.3%	208 44.7%	465 100%
Total Count % Within Q3	368 56.4%	284 43.6%	652 100%

Table 4.11 English Language Uses

	Public school students	Private schools students	Total number of students
1-education Count % Within Q4	182 54.3%	153 45.7%	335 100%
2- finding a job Count % Within Q4	123 59.4%	84 40.6%	207 100%
3-social networking Count % Within Q4	21 35.0%	39 65.0%	60 100%
4-prestige Count % Within Q4	36 90.0%	4 10.0%	40 100%
5-not useful Count % Within Q4	14 70.0%	6 30.0%	20 100%
Total Count %Within Q4	376 56.8%	286 43.2%	662 100%

Table 4.12 Reasons English Is Popular in Kuwait

	Public school students	Private schools students	Total number of students
1-not popular Count % Within Q5	20 58.8%	14 41.2%	34 100%
2- media Count % Within Q5	93 39.4%	143 60.6%	236 100%
3-1st Gulf War Count % Within Q5	12 30.8%	27 69.2%	39 100%
4-U.S. army Count % Within Q5	4 80.0%	1 20.0%	5 100%
5-foreign schools Count % Within Q5	81 46.6%	93 53.4%	174 100%
6-others Count % Within Q5	129 95.6%	6 4.4%	135 100%
Total Count % Within Q5	339 54.4%	284 45.6%	623 100%

To summarize the significant findings of these tables on the linguistic part of the survey, it is worth mentioning the highest number of students who agreed on certain uses of a given language among the linguistic options that the researcher proposed in the survey. For Kuwaiti dialect, a total of 364 students found the local dialect to be useful for social networking. As for MSA, a total of 390 students from both schooling systems public and private found English useful for education. Of those 390 students who found English useful for educational purposes, 69% were public school students, and 31% were private school students. The fact that more students at the public school found MSA useful for education is somewhat expected, since this language is necessary in all classes taught unlike at private schools, which only teach a class on the Arabic language and a class on Islamic studies in Arabic. Interestingly, a large number of students from both schooling systems found Farsi not useful as a language. Equal numbers of students in public and private schools agreed on the unimportance of Farsi amounting to a total of 465 students. Additionally, equal numbers of students in both school systems found English to be useful mostly for education and career purposes. A total of 335 found English useful for education and 207 found it useful for finding a job.

In the last question about the reasons of the popularity of English and whether students agreed with the statement, 236 chose media as the reason, 174 chose the spread of foreign schools, and 135 chose 'other'. This last open-ended category yielded some interesting reasons for why students explained the popularity of English. Among these reasons are instrumental goals including education, gaining knowledge, studying abroad, and getting a good job. Besides these instrumental reasons for learning English, some students viewed it as a negative phenomenon of blind imitation of the Western culture and English speakers especially from the U.S. and the U.K. Others reasoned that it lay within the language itself being intrinsically beautiful, easy, and cool. The idea of English being cool lead many to claim that people learn English to merely 'show off', since it is the language of arrogance, luxury, richness, and prestige. In addition, some students explained that it is popular, because it is an important asset in serving as the global unifying lingua

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franca of the world. Others, however, offered historical and social reasons such as past British colonization, marriage to foreigners, and the contact with foreign workers, tourists, and residents. Also, being an obligatory subject in schools (starting from first grade and continuing until college) contributes to its spread. Besides being taught in schools, there are several institutes that teach English language classes. Others learn English to be able to communicate with other cultures during their travel or learn it during their travel as well.

The last part of the survey is for the use of the researcher. It is a qualitative section in which students describe each of the cliques they chose, since some of the names they provide are not clear to an outsider. The survey represents the final stage of the preliminary data and acts as a transitional stage from the preliminary data to the main ethnographic data, which will be analyzed and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC DATA

Recent studies of youth cultures have been dominated by ethnographic methods. Rhoda MacRae (2007: 51) indicates that ethnography is becoming popular among researchers who are trying to understand how adolescents go about constructing their identities as members of youth cultures. For example, Bucholtz (2000: 282) finds it important to study youth culture practices within an ethnographic research design instead of analyzing their language practices separately and out of context, since the linguistic level is just one of the stylistic resources youth use to produce their age-based identities. Speakers are creative in using language according to the specific contexts they are in and the social and interactional goals they want to achieve in which language and culture are reshaped to fit new identities.

Ethnographic fieldwork enabled the production of a macro-level description of the school culture as a whole and a more accurate micro-level analysis of particular social cliques up close. Among the linguistic forms that I came across as articulations of identity within social cliques are specific lexical items or jargon, the types of topics, swearing, nicknames, secret codes, code switching, and language varieties. There is also the nonverbal aspect to communication as well such as appearance, hairstyle, gestures, body language, touch, expressions of emotions, and symbols. In addition, there is the paralinguistic component of voice quality and loudness. Since this is a sociolinguistic study more so than a discourse analysis or pragmatic investigation, however, I focused on the linguistic forms and devices that occur as regular patterns of a group's conversational and communication style by which it distinguishes itself from other social networks at the school. These linguistic devices consist of particular lexical choices, group jargon indicative of solidarity and group belonging, and the use of swearing as a social practice of

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endearment. Haidari (2006: 89) found in her investigation of social gatherings of men versus women in Kuwait that women use fewer swear words than men in their respective peer groups. However, there are certain social cliques of female teens who use profanity regularly more than some male teens to assert an identity that is reflective of group identity and indicative of a certain ideology or mentality. This situation exemplifies Labov's concept of covert prestige whereby nonstandard linguistic forms are prestigious to certain speech communities (In Coupland & Jaworski 1997: 165).

One of the cliques investigated in the study showed a greater preference for English. It is possible that the preference of English as a medium of expression and sociability among youth hints at a phenomenon that some scholars in Communication refer to as *passing* from one identity to another, which is a tactic for resisting static categorization through passing that enables people to "steal" some privilege and "fun" (Moon 1998: 322-323). In fact, professor of Communication Dreama Moon offers a number of useful and insightful definitions for *passing*, of which two may be relevant to this linguistic situation. First, Tyler (1994: 212) defines *passing* as "a politically viable response to oppression" (In Moon 1998: 323). Second, Daniel (1992) sees *passing* in terms of membership group and reference group where the latter is the group an individual passing shifts to out of admiration and value (In Moon 1998: 323).

Therefore, it can be argued that English, not being the native language, acts as a medium to distance oneself from society's expectations and obligations. Another applicable reason could simply be a kind of prestige associated with using English as it symbolizes science, technology, and economic status, which can be a highly expected candidate as other linguistic studies have shown (Malalla 2000, Joseph 2004, and Wernberg-Moller 1999). As for adolescents adhering to so called unoriginal social cliques invading the Kuwaiti community, identifying with such subcultures could be an outcry for liberation from traditional roles and obligations or simply a result from tremendous autonomy given by the family leading to irresponsible, anti-social, or destructive behaviors through affiliations to such extreme cliques.

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5.1 Introducing the Ethnographic Fieldwork

According to Marie "Keta" Miranda (2003: 22), introducing an ethnographic study oftentimes start with the arrival scene to orient the reader to an unfamiliar place. The current researcher spent five months in a public school community from November 2008 to March 2009. It was a big school construction of two floors. There was a spacious outdoor backyard of basketball and soccer fields, but they were not accessible to the students and blocked by a fence. To the researcher's disadvantage, the schooling system for high schools have recently changed in Kuwait and there is no longer a cafeteria where students can spend longer breaks in their respected spots of the cafeteria. The cafeteria was turned into a theater room for school plays and special ceremonies. In all public Kuwaiti schools from elementary to high school, there are two short recess periods. The shortcoming with the new schooling system as regards fieldwork is that the recess periods are very short, twenty minutes for the first recess period and fifteen minutes for the second one. After spending two months in the field, I recognized the reality of the cliques in the school. At the same time, I have to say, the divisions are not always rigid, which could indicate that 'group' may be a more accurate name than 'clique', but I use the two terms interchangeably throughout the study. I have learned a great deal about different cliques in the particular high school I was investigating and gained insights about the members of the cliques that covered a spectrum of facets of their lives including family background, academic achievement, athletic skills, hobbies, crushes, and linguistic practices.

Many students thought the researcher was a new teacher and others identified her as a psychologist, counselor, or news reporter. Carrying a notebook in the field attracted attention from the students and led to more than raising eyebrows, since students kept asking about the notebook's content. Sometimes, I would not take the notebook to the field or would take a smaller one to make the students feel at ease. Also, the students preferred not using the tape recorder, even during the individual interviews for some. The second reason for not using the tape recorder is the difficulty of tape recording in the field. It is not a controlled environment. Girls walk in and out of the cliques most of the time. They keep

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walking around in the hallways coming across other cliques, random students, teachers, and staff.

A very interesting comment from a student mirrors what was indicated by Rachel Simmons (2004) mentioned earlier in chapter two about cliques formation starting in sixth grade. Harry Potter is the nickname given to this student who asked "What are you doing here?" and after explaining the research she elaborated "Cliques and groups start from seventh grade and you will see in ninth grade we start to get away from each other and we get to know who is really with us and who's not". It is amusing when the girls at the school finally realized the role of the researcher and her interest in high school students. For instance, one time, Leila called the researcher out yelling "come here. Daloul come fast. There is a fight. Come on write write". At another encounter, among the first ones with the girls at the school, the following exchange took place with a couple of students about the research. F.F. from a boyat clique and her ladiya friend Fulla one time asked why their school was chosen for fieldwork. Fulla showed disgust towards the school.

Fulla: yuk. Didn't you find another school besides ours? Here, nobody likes anybody.

Researcher: I see many groups and cliques, but everybody talks to everybody.

F.F. : it's fake.

5.2 The Boyat Clique

5.2.1 The Boyat Clique In the Field

In a study of mixed methods, it is a challenge incorporating data from different sources, but it is especially challenging where the heart of the study lies in the empirical data gathered in the field from real speakers in a real community. In this case, the high school girls are the speakers and school cliques are the small speaking communities that exist in a larger community that of the school. After data collection came the data analysis stage. In a semi ethnographic approach of fieldwork, it is necessary to work on the data analysis and writing simultaneously. During this period, certain patterns become obvious. A very powerful finding arising in the data is the impact certain institutions have on the

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youth, namely family, friends, and school. It lies in the feedback these organizations provide to the youth that participate in shaping who they are. Four of these domains are explained below: student self-descriptions are laid out in 5.2.1.1, the influences of other people at school including teachers and peers in section 5.2.1.2, friends influences in 5.2.1.3, and family influences in section 5.2.1.4.

5.2.1.1 Self Descriptions

Identity construction is a fluid and continuous social process in which individuals create and recreate their social and personal personas. I propose that identity is formed out of a mutual effort between the individuals themselves and the interlocutors with whom they interact. Therefore, I want to shed light on the adolescents in the fieldwork as active participants in building their social group identities before turning attention to others who also participate in their identity formation, since it is not a one-sided process.

The first three months of fieldwork were spent with a group referred to by the name of its leader M.Z. I refrained from labeling them until I reached the interviews stage with the members of the clique where I asked them more directly about their group social identity. During the early encounters with this group, the members did not express their identity very explicitly, but with time and during the interviews, they became more direct and honest. For example, F.F. did not identify herself as a boya until the day of the interview. Prior to the interview, she talked about her sister instead of herself "my sister is boya and I'm proud".

After greetings and inquiries about the researcher' role during the first exchange with Rahaf, a member of M.Z. group, she shockingly declared: "Study me. Do some psychological research on me" indicating that she has a disease of *isterjal* 'masculinity'. Rahaf opened up in a school trip to an amusement park identifying herself as girl-loving boya 'lesbian tomboy'. She elaborated that this was an identity she had to confront her father with one day when he overheard her flirting with a girl on the phone to which she explained "Dad, I love girls". Her father just took the cell phone away from her for a month as a punishment. However, she got caught again talking to girls and her family decided the

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girls are distracting her from her studies, hence banning her from owning any cell phone. She still had a cell phone and two different phone lines that she kept a secret from her family. She was holding a black backpack with a picture of hip-hop male singers on the way back from the school trip as she rode with the researcher instead of the school bus after her family's permission. She said it is her friend's (Romeo) backpack to which she commented: "looking at this backpack, it's like Romeo really wants our families to have their doubts about us" referring to doubts about their sexual boya identity. Rahaf called the researcher the most. The first time she called, she was complaining about her weekly family gathering at her grandmother's house. Following is the short conversation that took place, which shows an interesting outlook on identity formation from the point of view of this participant where the individual is a passive recipient of others' influences.

Rahaf: I don't feel like it. It's a lot of talking. It's all girls, but there are boyat there.

Researcher: Who are they? Your cousins from your mom's side or your dad's side? Is it fun?

Rahaf: yes. My cousins, my mom's side. They corrupted me.

Researcher: No one gets corrupted unless they do it willingly. Don't blame it on people (jokingly).

Rahaf: (giggles)

During a few talks with the counselor, she discussed the case of M.Z. She is a dark skinny 19 years old girl who has repeated 10th grade three times. She plays in a national sports team. She has twenty siblings. Her father is married to four women. The counselor rationalized that M.Z.'s family background has pushed her to violence and seeking control over others, but maintained that she is not boya. It is problematic when the students, teachers, administration, and M.Z. herself share an understanding and an agreement of her identity as a boya, a sexual identity, while the counselor held another understanding. It would have been possible that her diagnosis is the accurate one, but the researcher ruled that out after M.Z.'s confession during the interview of belonging to boyat. She did not bring it up; rather told the researcher that she does not know how to express herself but will

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be completely honest if asked more direct and specific questions. The researcher introduced the topic starting by asking the question: why do some girls at the school call you boya? The question does not state that she is in fact one, but is inquiring about the truth of the reputation she has gained. She simply said that it's true directly verbalizing the identity she chose for herself.

Sometimes, the stories speakers share revealed a great deal about them. Through stories, hidden identities were exposed between the story lines. One time, M.Z. shared an anecdote about a school fight incident that gave away the identity she has been protecting. Interestingly, the first thing she highlighted was her hair that was shorter looking like a boy, she said. It was last year, her lover was involved in a fight at school, but she did not want to be part of a girls fight "it's a girls fight, hair pulling". Her friends yelled "Moody, your lover is in a fight", a comment made the teachers turn their heads trying to find who Moody was, since it is a nickname for Mohammad, a male's name. At the same time, the word "lover" stimulated shock from teachers, since lesbian relationships are not tolerated and would be punished by sending the girls to the vice principal and the counselor and even to the extent of calling for their parents.

In directly verbalizing descriptions of self or through the telling of stories and the sharing of past history, there is more than the revelation of identities. There is a construction and reaffirmation of these social group memberships or personal lifestyle choices. Identity is not merely personal. It is socially constructed via interactions and associations with others in the community. Therefore, besides self-statements, I find it necessary to examine how other social entities influence adolescents group identity.

5.2.1.2 School Influences: Peers and Teachers

The school community is an influential social institution where adolescents spend a great deal of time socializing with others including school peers, classmates, friends, and teachers. In Kuwait, specifically, school is believed to have a disciplinary role. In fact, the Ministry of Education in Kuwait is translated in Arabic to *Wizarat Al Tarbiya*, which corresponds to 'Ministry of upbringing, discipline, or instruction'. Consequently, in that

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socio-cultural context, the school is believed to participate in upbringing students as well as educating them. In this section, I will display a number of scenarios that took place during fieldwork in which the girls in the M.Z. clique were framed as boyat by a cast of characters at the school including school peers, classmates, counselors, and teachers.

On many occasions, I have heard girls at the school defending their femininity against remarks made by other girls. Hearing the word *feminine* was constant. Perhaps, there was a fear of being viewed as tomboyish or as one of the boyat 'lesbian tomboys'. Sometimes, girls will engage in a verbal contest making fun of each other's body, hair, and height and who is more feminine and who is not, which is a practice I call a "self-definition contest." The girls engage in it to prove their membership to girls' planet. For example, there is a stigma against short hair. A girl at the school cut her hair really short and the rumors began about her transformation into a tomboy lesbian. Girls stared, gossiped, and finally decided that the girl with the new short haircut is the "project" of a new boya, which meant a boya in transformation. Jasmine, a ladiya 'lady or lesbian femme', followed this girl tailing her while holding her arm to which Rahaf commented that Jasmine is a fan of boyat "every ten days she's with a new boya. Sales". Even though the girl did not show any obvious nonverbal or verbal signals that could categorize her as a boya, a group of girls sitting by the researcher insisted on defining her as one "it's a new boya". The secret lies in the hair. It is the source of rumors and gossip.

While starting at the field, the counselor informed the researcher about a seminar conducted at the school where all the girls considered boyat by the school administration were invited to listen to a speaker lecturing on sexual identity disorder. M.Z. was among the students invited to listen to the seminar. She shared her personal transition to a boya explaining that she only became a boya to prove to the girls who assigned that identity to her that she can become one. Seemingly, it is blame directed at others be it school peers, sports team members, or friends who introduced her to the identity, yet she chose to actualize their suspicions that took part in her identity formation.

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Students engage in defining their classmates' identities. However, the definitions they label each other with are sometimes false and misrepresentative. At the same time, some people give in to false representations given to them by others symbolizing a self-fulfilling prophecy. They do not just give in to it, but they embrace it as their own, welcome it, and take it in at face value. For example, one day, Rahaf was taking Shoody aside after whispering to the researcher "I'm setting up F.F. with Shoody" meaning 'hooking them up' to which Shoody calls out "I don't walk with her alone without mihhrem 'a protective male who a girl cannot marry in the Islamic religion like a brother, father, grandfather, or uncle'" jokingly hinting that being with Rahaf is like being with a man.

Through the activity of gossip, Linz, leader of the Emo Filipino group, was shaping another student's identity "by the way, F.F. is a boya. She is so happy showing your phone number that you gave her to the girls". That was the day F.F. asked for the researcher's phone number "teacher, I want to tell you a private matter. Can I have your number? I'll call you today". F.F. asked the researcher once "is something different about me today?" to which she replied "you look pretty" noticing the change in her eyebrows shape. M.Z. agreed "yes, she looks prettier", so the researcher asked Jaz for her opinion as well, since she is mostly quiet. F.F. did not like this late question interpreting it differently objecting "what for? I am exactly like her" referring to the fact that both of them are boyat and Jaz does not need to express her opinion about F.F. looks even though it was not the researcher's intention.

Another example of school peers engagement in defining each other comes clear when I was walking with Rahaf and Leila, Leila commented that girls stare at her a lot and it is annoying to her to which Rahaf explains, "if girls look at you, that means they want you" trying to tell Leila girls could have an interest in her for a girlfriend suggesting that Leila is potentially not straight. Leila is 11th grader tomboyish-looking girl who girls call a wannabe boya. At another day as the researcher was accompanied by Leila, Rahaf joined the conversation starting with the following opening:

Rahaf: hi boya. (greeting in English)

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Leila: if I'm boya, what are you?

Rahaf: a gay boy.

Leila: May Allah help you deal with yourself.

Boyat do not like Leila, as they think she is a fake boya who pretends to be one at school while wearing makeup when hanging out after school. Seemingly, boyat of Kuwait are not supposed to wear makeup. There is a mutual dislike between Leila and boyat like Rahaf, M.Z., and Romeo. Romeo says Leila is a boya at school only, hence she is a fake boya. Rahaf calls Leila arrogant while M.Z. calls her khikriya 'coward'. At the same time, Leila always asks 'Why do you hang out with these boyat?' She especially dislikes Romeo and calls her hhuthala 'low person' or zebala 'garbage' every time she sees her.

Sometimes, it appeared to be an obsession of the boyat at the school to compete with each other over girls. They also worried when it came to new boyat. Leila was among the ones they considered to be trying to join their world. They tried to study her constantly dropping hints about fake boyat while seeing her. Leila does not overtly identify with boyat, but she seems to have an interest in girls even if it is a slight one. She constantly talked about a girl from out of school she considered her best friend, but who would not treat her nicely. After a while, she started talking about another girl she met at one of the 'hang out' places where many lesbians get together, although it is not an exclusive place for lesbians. However, it gained a reputation for attracting lesbians. Leila changed to the point of arousing disgust from many girls at the school who described her as arrogant, fake boya, and maleeqa 'a person who is silly but not funny and whose presence is not taken lightly'. Boyat of school are always on the look out for new competitions and Leila was forming a new threat even though she did not claim it. To these young girls, being a boya meant not being a girl. For example, the following exchange took place between F.F., M.Z., and the researcher.

F.F.: where did you go yesterday, teacher?

Researcher: Avenues (a mall's name in Kuwait). I even saw Leila.

M.Z.: she's a girl, right? (excited)

Moreover, Rahaf engages in a categorization game regularly pointing out cliques at the school and labeling girls perceiving them negatively for the most part. She talked about a girl who the researcher would never have thought is a boya, since it does not show on her looks until Rahaf brought attention to it. She called on a short girl wearing a hijab with big eyes and big smile then simply said "teacher, this girl is boya" to which the girl replied with shock cussing at Rahaf then snapping "Why don't you put a poster on my back too that says I'm boya?" angry at Rahaf for exposing her in front of the researcher. Rahaf constantly points out girls to the researcher categorizing them as one of the boyat, ladiyat, bad reputation girls, and Filipino. Rahaf is not the only one in the M.Z. group who engages in categorizing students. Blackey, a tomboy girl in eleventh grade, was once looking at a girl's pictures. I asked who the girl in the picture was and she said it's a friend of hers to which M.Z. objected screaming "no! It's her lady. She's a she-male" and she in fact said "she-male" in English. This statement led Blackey to chase after M.Z. threatening to beat her up while swearing at her. In the lingua of Kuwaiti youth especially among girls, a lady means a lesbian femme.

Rahaf bullied one of the ladiyat calling her the school's player adding that Jasmine calls herself s**t. Again, language is a tool that people use to define each other. Rahaf repeatedly defined Jasmine as a girl of bad reputation calling her names in Arabic, but Jasmine took the labels with a light heart, which could indicate an acceptance of the identification to the point of pride. Language is a social tool that identifies the self and others with certain images, themes, principles, and agendas. Jasmine and M.Z. used to be a couple where M.Z. is the boya and Jasmine is the lady. Students at the school nickname Jasmine Kumari and M.Z. Raju, which are Indian names, since they say M.Z. looks like a stereotypical dark and skinny Indian guy while Jasmine looks like a dark Indian lady with very long and soft black hair. One time M.Z. pulled Jasmine's hair placing strands of it on her face and changing her voice to higher pitch while repeating "my hair" to which Jasmine replied "Being a girl does not suit you". The concept of being a girl and not being a girl is widespread in the school and in the lingua of Kuwaiti teen girls to a great noticeable extent

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where being a boya means extracting oneself from womanhood completely shedding loyalties to femininity.

The girls call Jasmine the cartoon character Pocahontas because of her brown complexion, long black hair, slim figure, and beautiful features that look native American. Jasmine talks about M.Z. a lot. They used to be more than close friends, but Jasmine's mother commanded her daughter not to speak to M.Z. The relationship has turned bitter lately and gossip has not stopped from both ends. M.Z. kept calling Jasmine a s**t of bad manners, while Jasmine called M.Z. a boya who is a two-faced liar who is not to be trusted. She also described her a "pimp" bringing girls for her younger 15 years old brother in return of money. Jasmine said "M.Z. and Tuta have business in the bathrooms kissing. One time I caught them and M.Z. started laughing nervously and now she can't look me in the eye. And, F.F. and Jaz stand outside the bathroom watching 'bodyguards' ". Through gossip, the researcher could identify many of the cliques and the identities they carry. For example, Tuta's clique as the ladiyat became clearer through Jasmine's telling of Tuta's relationship to M.Z. Plus, it emphasized M.Z.'s identity as boya. Jasmine also mentioned that M.Z. has a file in the Ministry of Education as a "personal case", since she is truly lesbian and not merely a fake tomboy lesbian, since some identify with boyat merely asking for popularity and attention. Jasmine explained that M.Z. has issues and is a source of troubles. Jasmine kept talking about M.Z. obsessing about her latest news especially in regards to relationships and crushes. She mentioned a new name of the latest crush of M.Z. disappointedly saying, "one is not enough for her. She has two".

One time, Linz, leader of the Emo Filipino group, was holding the researcher's arm while walking in the hallways, but got interrupted by M.Z. who made a ready to attack move telling Linz that she can't hold the researcher's arm. Linz replied "girls. We are girls not lesbians". M.Z. ignored it and walked away, while Noor, a friend of the group, warned Linz "now, a boya will take you to a corner and beats you up". Noor is a close friend of Sam, 10th grader who has failed 10th grade before and is repeating it. Noor informed the researcher that she gets disrespectful stares from girls at the school, because she is a friend with the

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Filipino group, but adds that these racist attitudes are forbidden in Islam since all people are created equal.

Romeo has a reputation of a boya, but many rumors followed this particular girl and the stories about her personal life varied greatly. She rarely talked to the researcher. One time she came to tell the researcher to go check a broken light in one of the classrooms "teacher, teacher go look at the light some girls broke in one of the 10th grade classes", which it turned out later she broke herself. Romeo purposefully talked in a strangely pretentious high-pitched voice then said "I'm soft" to which girls laughed commenting "being a girl doesn't suit you". Again, schoolmates and friends constitute a big influence on self-understanding and representation. Romeo, boya, accompanied by her large ladiyat group came to the researcher for the first time complaining about the vice principal who took Romeo's cell phone away. Cell phones are not acceptable in public schools. Her complaint was about the vice principal's invasion of her privacy by browsing through Romeo's pictures on the cell phone yelling "I swear I'll file a complaint at the police station against them". One of her teachers caught her and took her cell phone away to the administration after looking at the cell phone's content first asking Romeo whether the girls' pictures in her cell phone were taken by force. Here, teachers also make assumptions about students' identities. In this case, the teacher hinted that Romeo could be abusing other girls or sexually harassing them.

Teachers participate sometimes in defining students mistakenly stressing an unappreciated identity in public in front of other students or teachers for the purpose of sarcasm. For example, a teacher calls Rahaf Ya Ragil 'you man-Egyptian dialect' while another teacher calls M.Z. Ya thakar 'you male-Egyptian dialect' reminding them of not belonging to the female world. The fact that they brought it up to the researcher must mean how much of an effect such remarks have on their understanding of themselves and further on their reaction and attitudes towards others at the school. Additionally, M.Z. told the researcher that girls at school asked her if she "hooked up" with the researcher, which clearly indicates her boya identity. However, this last remark made by the students could

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compromise the reputation and name of the researcher, since students could not grasp the purpose of hanging out with the most feared group in school, M.Z. group, a boyat group. Finding a balance between the research's endeavors and protecting the researcher's name could be challenging in a society where one cannot afford to lose a decent reputation. The problem also lies in the unfamiliarity with the fieldwork or ethnographic research approaches especially to those high school students.

The situation that struck me the most out of these encounters between the boyat and other members of the school community is the incident where a selected sample of students who are labeled *boyat* by school authority, including counselors, teachers, or administrators, were invited to attend a seminar discussing boyat and sexual identity disorder. This leads to the question: on what basis did the school select the audience for this particular seminar? By this deliberate selection of the audience sample, the school authorities actively shaped those girls' view of themselves. What is even more powerful than school authority is the effect of friends on adolescents' social identity that I will discuss in the next section.

5.2.1.3 The Friends Circle: Nicknames, Profanity, and Jargon

Many adolescents spend most of their time socializing with their friends who can leave prominent prints on their personalities. During fieldwork, I have observed a strong connection between linguistic behaviors and group identity in social cliques among adolescents. For instance, the boyat clique members built familiarity and belonging through linguistic practices including assigning nicknames, interest in similar topics, comfort with explicit language, sarcasm, and jargon. Besides the linguistic aspects of the group, there are nonlinguistic features such as the dress code, hairstyle, sports, and bullying.

Students assign nicknames for famous girls in school. These nicknames refer to things such as looks, bullying, or attitude. M.Z. has many nicknames such as (ssahhib watar 7azeen 'the one with the sad cord', Moody, Galaxy, Fahad) being a very popular girl in school for staying in the same grade for three years, being a lesbian tomboy, and having no

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hesitation to engage in bullying or fights. Fahad is a boy's name as is Moody, which is a nickname for the name Mohammad. Galaxy is a name for a chocolate brand popular in Kuwait. I believe the name was given to her because of her dark complexion. The type of nicknames given to certain individuals can influence the way they view themselves. It is interesting how M.Z. has nicknames of male names. In terms of the range of topics discussed in M.Z.'s group, it included girls' looks, provoking fights, cell phones, sports, other boyat, hanging out, teasing and poking fun at others including teachers and administrators.

The M.Z. group of boyat, specifically Rahaf and M.Z. used explicit language sometimes despite the presence of the researcher, using obscenities and taboo words of sexual content. According to Labov's concept of covert prestige mentioned earlier, the use of obscene language or having knowledge of explicit topics related to sexuality seems to be considered an advantage and an emphasis of membership to this boyat group the same way nonstandard linguistic choices are regarded by certain speech communities as prestigious. The same conclusion was found in Peter Trudgill's (1989) study *The social differentiation of English in Norwich*, he followed the steps of Labov studying the co-variation between linguistic and social variables more specifically focusing on phonological variables and the sociological variables of social class, social context, and sex. He found a case of covert prestige in his study where men used more nonstandard forms of working class speech, since it is associated with roughness, toughness, and masculinity that is considered prestigious to those particular speakers.

At other times, the boyat were more implicit and careful about their language depending on the secrecy of the topic. For instance, there was a CD Rahaf mentioned to some girls a couple of times in front of the researcher, but was very vague in her language. She mentioned it to different girls asking Jasmine one time. Jasmine explained to the researcher who looked puzzled that it was a "sexy" CD. She used the English word *sexy* referring to a CD of explicit sexual content. Here, Jasmine used English and the linguistic tool of code switching possibly to avoid the power of the native language when talking in obscenities. It is not as offensive when uttered in a foreign language.

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The day of the big fight between the two cliques, boyat and Filipino, started when Rahaf spit in the middle of the Filipino group. Linz started cussing in Tagalog. Members of both cliques laughed. Rahaf mockingly tried to imitate what Linz was saying in Tagalog then she took off her shoe pointing it in front of Linz's face, which led Linz to take off her slippers and slapped them together as an indication of being ready to attack. The fight started when Rahaf pushed Linz to the wall chocking her. In that situation, I had to choose between the school's side and the students' side and I chose the latter. There were no teachers around and the rest of the girls stood watching enjoying the violent scene. Getting in the middle of the chaos under flying shoes, threats, and name calling was necessary to stop the fight before someone gets hurt. The school's administrators requested my story of the fight, but I did not cooperate, which compromised continuing fieldwork at the school. The vice principal questioned my long stay at their school even though I have already explained the extent of time that could be required from one to two academic semesters. Luckily, the counselor explained to the vice principal the necessity of understanding and respecting my position in order to maintain the trust of the students and their relationship with the researcher.

One time the M.Z. group requested the researcher's company with them while they were punished by the vice principal at the school's library. I asked about their friendship and F.F. explained how sports are a big reason in linking them together since most of them first met in the fitness hall during basketball practice and other sports. Rahaf and F.F. have known each other since kindergarten, however F.F. confessed later that they are not close friends but merely members of the same clique explaining, "Rahaf and I, I feel we have the same life. Every time I say something, she says yes yes yes. Also, boya and boya" pointing at Rahaf and herself. Here, the sexual identity has become a connecting factor between two individuals who have joined and shaped a circle of friends sharing a similar situation and similar identity or a facet of it. F.F. directly expressed herself as a boya. Also, F.F. brought attention to Rahaf 's academic performance where her GPA used to be around 93% in 9th grade, but as F.F. said "her attitudes and behaviors spoiled it". F.F. told the

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researcher earlier that she is proud of her boya sister, but was told by her sister that this identity does not suit her. She asked the researcher about her opinion, which put the researcher in a sensitive situation trying to decide whether to stay in the researcher's position or step out into another role that of a counselor, friend, or an older sister. The role of the researcher is fluid and susceptible to change depending on the context and situation (Rhoda MacRae 2007: 60). It was indeed a question about personal beliefs as well. The researcher was torn between her Islamic faith that rejects homosexuality and her personal principles of freedom for all and respect to difference. The researcher ended up advising F.F. to be true to herself and follow her heart to be who she really is and not wear any identity as if it was a fashion statement as it is the case with many straight girls in the country who have decided to become boyat all at the same time period, which led to the media frenzy.

When new girls join a clique, they either stay in the group, break the group into sides, or discontinue hanging out with the group. Nora is an average looking girl who started hanging out with the boyat clique. Rahaf offered to explain why Nora is a friend of the group. The connection between Nora and this boyat clique is the sexual orientation. Nora is also oriented towards girls, but ladiyat 'feminine lesbians' like her. Nora explained, "my lover Kholoud is lesbian" uttering the word *lesbian* in English. Rahaf commented on that last statement "Nora got corrupted". Strangely, Rahaf finds being attracted towards girls is a form of corruption and not a normal state even though she is boya who is into girls, but she is the tomboy lesbian, which she finds very different from Nora's case "ladiya with ladiya is different. You don't find boya with boya. No".

Among the other friends of the group is Shatha, a boya who used to be friends with M.Z., but the friendship has turned bitter and friends became enemies. The hard feelings started due to a desire for control from both sides to take over leadership of boyat in school as M.Z. put it "she wants to become the school's Aantar but girls tell me I am the Aantar of the school". Aantar is a popular black slave and warrior from old Arabia history who is known for strength, brevity, and legendary love story. M.Z. is considered the prototypical

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boya in the school by the whole school including the teaching faculty, students, and administration. However, she does not express that identity clearly or directly around the researcher unlike Rahaf who constantly reminds everyone around her of it leaving no room for speculations.

Friends define each other's identities. One time M.Z. and Jaz were making fun of Rahaf 's flower-shaped hair clip to which Rahaf replied sarcastically "hair clips are the source of femininity" and the whole group laughed hysterically. Rahaf demonstrates characteristics of a bully yelling, cussing, spitting, pushing, and abusing other students both verbally and physically. At the same time and surprisingly, Rahaf gets treated badly by students mostly being abused verbally. Many girls make fun of her hair, posture, walk, and looks. Moreover, Rahaf 's friends make fun of her including M.Z. who Rahaf considers her closest friend. M.Z. describes Rahaf as the beast in the Disney movie beauty and the beast.

An episode where femininity is defined by the fact of having a boyfriend or otherwise losing your femininity and risking being labeled a boya is exemplified in Leila and her group of friends. One day, her friends were all congratulating her calling out mabrook mabrook 'congratulations'. Leila shyly replied, "you have created a scandal guys. I have talked to a guy" to which her friend Ayat simply commented, "she became a female". Defining womanhood has become characterized by having a boyfriend. Not having one could lead girls to impose a lesbian identity on that girl or more accurately the boya identity. When I asked her if she is happy about the new experience of talking to a guy for the first time, she blamed it on her friends who kept urging her to date someone "it's their fault. They corrupted me". Her friend Ayat announced again "finally, we became females" referring to Leila, but Leila angrily defended herself "you donkey, we have always been females". I also asked her why some girls at school call her a fake boya who wears makeup outside school to which she just said she is confident about her identity. Then, she complained that whatever she becomes does not make people happy.

Groups create a kind of small community background knowledge through familiarity of the members' nicknames, anecdotes, gossip, stereotypes, and group jargon. Group

jargon is a great indicator of group membership and background knowledge sharing. For example, there is a phrase that Rahaf says when seeing certain girls at school that is rather vague "original Shiko Riko". I asked about the meaning of the phrase, but she kept refusing to explain it "I'm afraid to tell you and you get mad or upset and maybe will tell my mother", but the researcher reminded her that what the girls say or do is not to be shared with others and their privacy is not to be compromised, but all she offered was one word "ssina'ei" 'artificial'. I had to investigate around the school community what that meant and the answer was shocking, since it referred to sex toys. The shared background knowledge is best described by Clark and Marshall (1981) in *Definite reference and mutual knowledge* as knowledge of mutual beliefs, expectations, and mutually held propositional attitudes that is an essential ingredient in conversation, in meaning, and in language in general. Community membership is one type of mutual knowledge varieties the authors talk about concerning the things that all members of a given community know and assume that everyone else in the community knows as well.

As shown from the boyat clique discussion, the members emphasized their group identity through a variety of strategies both verbal and nonverbal. Verbally and linguistically, the group engaged in conversations of similar topics. They shared a certain level of comfort with obscenities. They created their own group jargon. Nonverbally, the group played the same sports. They enjoyed bulling other girls and igniting fights. More importantly, they expressed how their sexual identity and orientation played a strong connecting factor in their friendship.

5.2.1.4 Family Influences

Besides school peers and friends, family participates in shaping and emphasizing a particular identity for their children sometimes unaware of their influential role in doing so. The identities teenagers take on during teen years could be temporary, but families could in fact make it permanent. For instance, Rahaf has mentioned one time that her mother recommends her to join the police force once she graduates from high school, saying, "nothing suits you better than the police force". It is one of the stereotypes in Kuwait that

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females who are willing to join the police are aggressive and likely boyat 'lesbian tomboys', but it is a stereotype overall. Rahaf talked about the time she put a pink hair clip and her brother told her to take it off "what are you going to change anyway". Family can define its members in a negative light. The fact that Rahaf pointed out her family comments on her femininity hints at the effect those comments had on her attitudes.

Language is powerful in that it can and will shape identity and direct people's emotions and attitudes. For example, Rahaf 's family keeps playing the role of shaping her boya character. Rahaf wants to cut her hair shorter in a boyish haircut but hesitates "it's not nice to cut a boy haircut and wear men's clothes. At least long hair will cover up the men's clothes, right? Now, the guy working at the supermarket calls me ya basha 'rich man'. Tomorrow when I cut my hair, what is he going to call me? Mohammad? My father says 'you look like a boy now. What are you going to look like after you cut your hair?'"

Family defines its members sometimes destructively like Rahaf's family who keeps stabbing her femininity by repeating the sarcastic comments on her physical appearance. Families in Kuwait have a negative attitude towards boyat, so it is likely that her family is not aware of their influence on her identity. She gets reaffirming messages associating and confirming that she appears or acts as a boy from her classmates, friends, and even family members. Besides participation-observations in the field of the effect social institutions have on adolescents including school, friends, and family, I have also discussed participants' descriptions of themselves, which are more elaborate during the interviews stage of the research as examined in the next section.

5.2.2. The Boyat Clique in Interviews

As mentioned in chapter 3 in section 3.5 on interviews, all interviews were conducted in Arabic except two. The Arabic interview questions are translated as shown in the table illustrated next. The table comprises the structured questions at the beginning of the interviews intended for warm up to engage the participants in a discussion about their group membership. There are nine students' interviews total four from the boyat clique and

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five from the Emo Filipino clique. In this section, I display a quantitative overview of the

four interviews with the four members of the boyat clique.

Table 5.1 Boyat Interviews

	F.F.	M.Z.	Jaz	Rahaf
Q1- I see myself as a member of this group.	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree
Q2- Being a member in this group is central to my sense of self.	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	2 Agree	2 Agree
Q3- I maintain the same behaviors, attitudes, and values with or without the group.	4 Disagree	2 Agree	2 Agree	4 Disagree
Q4- I feel proud to be a member in this group.	2 Agree	_	2 Agree	4 Disagree
Q5- speech style is important to being a member in this group.	4 Disagree	4 Disagree	4 Disagree	1 Strongly agree
Q6- Swearing is totally acceptable in our group.	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree
Q7- The way I look is important to being a member in this group.	1 Strongly agree	4 Disagree	1 Strongly agree	4 Disagree
Q8- Our group is greatly valued by the students at the school.	2 Agree	2 Agree	2 Agree	Sometimes
Q9- Our group is greatly valued by the teachers and administrators at school.	4 Disagree	2 Agree	2 Agree	4 Disagree
Q10- Any student can join our group easily.	2 Agree	-	4 Disagree	4 Disagree

First, F.F.'s interview was recorded. She is 16 years old, a student in 10th grade, and a member at the athletics school team as well as starting in the soccer team.   She described her clique as "just girls" who are friends coming to school for studying and learning who also cooperate with girls to solve problems and conflicts.   Besides M.Z., Jaz, and Rahaf, she also mentioned Jasmine, Linz, and Zizi from the Emo Filipino group. F.F. considers herself a main member to whom membership is crucial, however M.Z. is always busy and there is no understanding between the members. "I feel M.Z. and Jaz the most important to me, the main ones and M.Z., I feel she's 'The member'. She's everything, the owner, and she takes my advice. I'm her counselor, the vice principal". In terms of language use, it is important to the group. The group has a difasha 'careless, pushy, uncensored, and very informal' speech style. The group engages in dirty words and swearing heavily.

According to F.F., students respect the group and love the members "They respect us and love us. We are people who cooperate with all, so they love us. If a girl and another girl fight, we cooperate to bring them together. We don't like to fight, but we feel that Rahaf is different from us. Rahaf likes people to fight". Teachers and staff know the clique very well "because of the problems we make. We cause it". When the researcher asked about the kinds of problems that make them popular to faculty and staff, she explained "like for example, a girl we liked today to get in a fight wit her, that's it we put her in mind to make a fight with her. We will make a fight. We fight with her and act silly with her and we make fun of her clothes, her style, like that always. Even the teacher, we act silly with her. I swear to Great God". To F.F., teachers do not hate the group; they offer their advice, but when asked whether there is respect to the group from the teaching faculty and staff F.F. answered negatively "I don't feel they respect us".

New members are welcome, but if a new girl is shy and quiet, the group will change her. Style is important for the group "she has to be like us. For example, when I first entered this friendship, I wasn't used to dress like this. I used to wear just like normal girls, but then I went and changed my style like M.Z. I wear pullover. I became like M.Z. we are all like this like Jaz has not been used to wearing jackets like with print. We changed her style. She was

so quiet last year. We changed her quick. She became like us yea and that's it. Even Rahaf". She also added that they mostly wear "nigg*". By "nigg*" clothes, F.F. refers to loose style clothes influenced by hip-hop culture. It is easy to join as new members in the group, but "she has to be like us" F.F. asserted, "we change her style, her clothes, her speech like us. We swear and that we will make her swear like us. She gives up her soul to be with us".

The open-ended questions included "overall, please tell me the common features, values, or practices that connect all the group members together" and "what forms of language do you believe members of this group typically use? For example do this group use the following language forms: English vocabulary, swearing, secret language, Farsi, Kuwaiti dialect, MSA, code switching, slang, or others?". F.F. found their sexual identity and lifestyle is what defines and connects them "We don't want to feel there is a difference between us and boys. We don't want to feel the difference". In the following exchange with F.F., it became clear that her identity as boya started out of environmental reasons at home due to her family upbringing.

> F.F.: that's always on our minds. Why is it always like, for example, my mother always my mother and father and teachers like why do they tell us these are boys' clothes? Wear girls clothes go change it like that. We don't want this. We don't want to feel a difference between us and girls and boys. We don't like.
>
> Researcher: do you feel different from girls?
>
> F.F.: yes always.
>
> Researcher: why?
>
> F.F.: I don't know like since I was born after my mother has a boy and she really cared for him and left me, so before it was very much F. F. F. since she got this boy, she cared for him so much and they get him and put for him stuff that he exactly wants, so my mom started doing that ...sometimes I feel she differentiates and I don't like that that so I scold her no mom this can't happen, I tell her. They prefer a boy to a girl.

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In terms of shared linguistic practices, the group swears regularly and frequently "the girl who joins us has to cuss has to". The jargon is exclusive for dirty words and hand movements that the group did not feel comfortable sharing with the researcher "in front of like in front of you respectful we don't do like that, but the girl who wants this we do it for her yea that's it hand moves, swearing, everything no body understands it but us" specifying Rahaf, M.Z., and Jaz by 'us'. In addition, she mentioned that Blackey is someone who understands their jargon as well explaining that she is a friend of the group who hangs out with her own friends, but she is boya, F.F. explained. One of the words F.F. shared is the group's creation ezbid 'fu**ing' "sometimes girls tell us why are you like that. We don't understand your talk". According to F.F., there is so much pride in the group jargon that nobody understands but the group, since it brings the group together. F.F. last words on the group is that is it a life changing group that changes new members and that the whole school knows it's a boyat clique, since it is a famous clique in the school. F.F. finally says "I have been a boya since 8th grade".

F.F. was interviewed first because of her open personality and willingness to help the researcher. In fact, F.F. made it easier to access the other members of the clique especially the leader. M.Z. is considered the boyat leader to her group and the rest of the school who names the clique by her name, but she seems to have another opinion. M.Z. is 19 years old who has repeated 10th grade three times. She refuses the term 'clique' explaining that a clique dictates having a leader, but their group is only a group of friends who she indentifies as F.F., Rahaf, Jaz, and herself. She added that it is only a group at school that shares the same mentality and same style, since they all wear the same clothes' brand names. At her previous friends group, it consisted of all black members who shared the same speech style. M.Z. explained that a girl's style does not matter, since what matters is the inside. However, a new member to their group may choose to change her style with time, but it is not obligatory.

The girls at the school love the group as M.Z. indicated, "girls love us but...we scared them. They put in mind that we are moody, so they mind their own business we look

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like a fight. Like Salwa, she thought I'm a snob sometimes I'm not in the mood sometimes I act snobby". When asked if she thinks students, teachers, and staff respect the group, she said, "respect, they have to. I don't know about F.F. and Jaz, but to them I am the star" meaning number one troublemaker making the star of the administration department. M.Z. elaborates on her behaviors and attitudes at school "I was naughty, did not acknowledge my studies. The administration department wants to discipline me, but pressure does not give results. The administration department thinks I am moody and stubborn, which I am. The rules here are ridiculous. I was at another school, they did not control me". She says that style is important inside and outside school and her uniqueness lies in breaking school's rules and trouble making.

As for commonalities, M.Z. agreed with F.F. in that sport brings the group together, since they play the same sport. Besides sport, there is also mentality and naughtiness. The group gossips 24/7 as M.Z. puts it especially making fun of other girls. They swear a lot and use nonverbal secret cues like winks and eye contact that only the group members understand. Rahaf feels strongly about the group and M.Z. specially that she will engage in physical fights and bullies whoever sets hand on M.Z. M.Z. recommended I ask Rahaf about the group jargon, since she has a better memory of these things, she said. She further said that they use English for cussing, because it is more prestigious and prettier for that purpose. Here, she as a speaker is assigning intrinsic values to English namely *pretty* and *prestigious*.

M.Z. likes poetry and writes in her journal. To add, she concluded with "I love all people and don't hate anyone it's true I swear. Maybe there are people who hate me I have to make them love me and make peace with the people who hate me. I dislike the word 'hate you'". Regarding the word *boya* she explained, "the word boya bothers me but I am boya it's personal freedom we can't judge based on looks. I am influenced by my brothers same thing with Jaz., F.F. only at school". She totally refused recording the interview and did not bring the subject about being a boya until the researcher asked her why the girls were calling her by that term. She told the researcher up front that she has a hard time

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expressing herself, but she will answer any questions with all honesty. Even though she identifies herself as boya, she does not prefer the term and does not agree with people who judge others based on looks.

After F.F. and M.Z., Jaz was interviewed next. She is 17 years old currently in 10th grade. She identifies M.Z. and F.F. as her group of friends. According to Jaz it was F.F. who approached M.Z. first to become her friend, but M.Z. "investigated" her first to make sure F.F. is not hailag 'low class' or awazim 'a Bedouin family name'. She mentioned that she has made a suggestion to the group to get a group nickname standing for the three girls' first initials. Rahaf is not included in Jaz's discussion perhaps because Rahaf has transferred to another school by the time of this interview. Again, in Jaz's interview, the same shared features and values that appeared in both F.F. and M.Z.'s interviews reappeared. This group shares naughtiness, harassing other students, playing the same sport, and clothing style of loose jeans and pull-over in order to make it clear for other that they are boyat.

Informality, swearing, and talking about girls characterize the speech style within this group. Jaz agreed with M.Z. that the group uses English for swearing, but she finds Linz of the Emo Filipino group to be the most knowledgeable of the English language and Filipino vocabulary. Jaz said that her family swears a lot at home, which is normal for her to swear with her brothers and sister. Similarly, F.F. family has tolerance of swearing around the house especially with her older brother who encourages her to be boya, since F.F. tells him about all her crushes whether with boys or girls. This last comment by Jaz suggested that F.F. is bisexual. Jaz also mentioned the same jargon word F.F. mentioned ezbid 'f***ing' that the group created. Besides the jargon within the group, Jaz's family has their own family linguistic jargon by adding the letter T from the Arabic alphabet as a prefix to each single word making it hard to outsiders to follow the conversation. She added that her cousins also have their own jargon speaking the words backward starting from the last letter of each word and ending with the first letter.

Rahaf was interviewed last. She is fifteen and a half years old in 10th grade. Rahaf defined the group consisting of M.Z., Jaz, F.F., and Romeo. Again, sport appears as the

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mutual connection among the group members as Rahaf mentioned soccer, volleyball, and athletics. When asked if she feels proud being a member of the group, she agreed but expressed hesitation due to her unhappiness with their academic performance, personalities, and speech style. Appearance is not important for the group as much as the girl's heart, behaviors, and morals. Girls respect the group, but it varies sometimes. The group does not show appreciation or respect to teachers and staff who in turn do not respect the group. If a new girl wants to join the group, she has to speak similarly to the group and carries their overall style in order to be accepted "M.Z. and F.F. influenced me influenced me in terms of behaviors, their success, their status at school. They made an impact and I became like them". However, Rahaf expressed strongly that there is a type of girls she does not prefer to accept in the group as the following quote explains her point.

> "The girl may turn out to have better behaviors than us, so we don't want her to be corrupted. I don't accept it for any girl to go through what we are going through. I'm not content about this way of course. If the girl is okay in terms of her studies, never failed once in her life, she enters with us; it is a sure thing her behavior will change. She will change for sure to the worst not to the better."

It was evident in the interviews that group membership is important to the M.Z. clique's girls. To them, membership constituted group conformity as F.F. from the boyat clique put it "she gives up her soul to be with us" when referring to new members joining the group. Conformity is realized through sharing a mutual dress code, hobbies, mentality, and most importantly a similar speaking style. The members agreed that language use is important to group membership. Some of the linguistic aspects characterizing the group included heavy swearing, jargon, and gossip about girls. Sometimes, they switched to English while swearing, because as the group leader M.Z. indicated it is *prettier* and more *prestigious* attaching intrinsic values to the language, which also appeared in the survey portion of the study in the previous chapter. Swearing is acceptable in the group, perhaps because it is acceptable and practiced in their family circles. The group jargon was explicit mostly sexual. The members take pride in their jargon creating solidarity and alienating outsiders. Sexual identity is a strong connecting factor linking these girls

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together, which Jaz pointed out when explaining how wearing loose jeans and big sweaters is a way to appear as boyat in front of others. M.Z. identified herself as boya, but expressed a discomfort with the term *boya* explaining how others use the term to classify individuals based solely on their appearances. Therefore, the label *boya* reduces individuals to a limited one facet of an identity that make boyat a target for criticism and stigma.

<div align="center">5.3 The Emo Filipino Clique</div>

5.3.1 The Emo Filipino Clique In the Field

According to Allyson Goce Tintiangco-Cubales (2005: 140), pinayism is a woman of Filipino descent, a Filipino in America, and/or a Filipino American. Even though Pinayism is localized in U.S., Pinays who live the America are still affected by Pinays who live in the Philippines, Australia, Canada, Kuwait, and Japan (Tintiangco-Cubales 2005: 140, 142). Surprisingly, the stereotypes Tintiangoco-Cubales (2005: 143) points out of Pinays of U.S. described as submissive, mail-order brides, prostitutes, and maids or domestic workers echo about Pinays in Kuwait as well as the data from the fieldwork and the attitudes towards Filipino groups in the survey reveal.

5.3.1.1 Self Descriptions

The Emo Filipino group was more diverse in that two different identities were being outplayed an ethnic one and a sub-cultural one. The Filipino identity was reserved for those whose mothers were Filipinas (Linz, Mimz, and Sam). Doy and Jasmine were close friends of the Filipino girls and shared their identification with the Emo subculture. Through personal statements and comments on their social group identity, the girls revealed facets of their Emo or Filipino identities as shows in the fieldwork observations and discussions.

The Filipino group was absent the first day of school after the spring break except Jasmine who when asked about her friends said "who Filipino?" which meant it was acceptable for this group to be called Filipino by insiders. During the second recess period on the day of the big fight mentioned earlier, Jasmine from the Emo Filipino group mentioned that Linz took eight tablets of aspirin. I asked Linz why eight tablets to which she

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explained in English "I'm fine I took them to cool down plus I want to forget". Jasmine said that eight tablets were nothing. One time Jasmine took thirty tablets after a fight with her mother, but luckily nothing happened. Besides the abuse of painkillers by some of the members of this clique, some were cutters as well.

Jasmine is a ladiya 'lesbian femme' who hangs out with the Emo Filipino clique. She told the researcher about being a cutter wounding her arm with the edge of scissors when feeling sad, because she does not let out negative emotions those of sadness or anger. Therefore, there is no pain while cutting due to the powerful feeling of taking control, she said. However, the researcher does not promote such behavior, since it is a psychological disorder in need of a psychiatrist treatment. Many girls at the school are cutters as the researcher has come to discover. For example, Bashayer, a girl who belongs to a group students call the cuties or the experienced, practices this habit of cutting due to emotional frustrations of loving a girl. Bashayer gets into relationships and crushes over both girls and boys out of boredom as she told the researcher. I spent some time with Bashayer and her group of friends. She indicated that some girls call her boya due to her short haircut and her attitude towards that definition is carelessness. The following conversation took place with Nadia that revealed the disturbing fact again among members of other groups who are not necessarily Emo, cutting.

Nadia: hey gorgeous. Nice shades.

Researcher: where have you been? Haven't seen you in a while.

Nadia: busy hooking up with girls.

Researcher: girls, not a girl?

Nadia: girls.

Researcher: inside school or outside?

Nadia: inside school. I have hooked up with two girls in 10th grade now.

Researcher: is it ok with them? They don't get upset?

Nadia: it's normal (indifferent facial expression).

Researcher: what is that? (pointing at a brown spot on her left hand)

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Nadia: that's me. I hurt myself with scissors. I was mad so I took the scissors and took off the skin.

Researcher: so you did it on purpose?

Nadia: yes on purpose.

Researcher: why?

Nadia: I was mad.

Researcher: how old are you?

Nadia: 16.

Researcher: why do you do that?

Nadia: there is more here and here all with scissors (pointing at different spots on her body) here at my upper arm and everywhere in my body. Let's walk. Are you here waiting for someone?

Researcher: yes, I am waiting for Jasmine. We will go look for Linz.

Nadia: Linz Filipino?

Researcher: yes.

Nadia: the embassy (carrying out the researcher's purse). Let me steal your purse and go (joking).

Researcher: (laughing) oh really?

Nadia: here she comes (pointing at Jasmine).

At the researcher's first contact with the Emo subculture at the school, they introduced the researcher to a game they call Wika 'Widgi board game' where they write the English alphabet, numbers, and the word goodbye on a piece of paper plus the letter A on the left upper corner and letter B on the right upper corner. For this game, besides the piece of paper, three candles are required besides a small glass. It has to be played in a dark room that does not contain any Quranic verses. In addition, the players have to believe in Wika who is a ghost of a dead person who would answer any of your questions and if she does not want to answer, the glass on which you place your hand will move over the word goodbye.

One time, there was a discussion among the group members about Emo subculture and how others mistake it for Goths and Satanists. Linz asked the researcher to accompany her to the English department to pick up her assignment from her English teacher. It was an assignment rejected by her teacher, particularly because it was a topic about Emo subculture. She went to take the assignment back to keep the Emo pictures she glued to the assignment papers. Caveman was accompanying the group on that day and found it important to clarify to the researcher that Emo and Satanists are two different things, which is a distinction teachers cannot see, she said. Caveman who holds M.Z. as her role modal also shows an interest in what appears to be Emo, Goth, or punk style. She constantly sketches drawings of skulls in black ink coloring it with bright colors of pink, blue, orange, or yellow drawing them on her arm and hand constantly. She gave the researcher couple of these sketches. One of the girls in the group described Emo as gothic, which Linz disagreed with making a distinction as well. The girls elaborated that teachers rejected Linz's report on Emo because of their misconception that Emo means Satan worshipping. Linz further added that most Emos are in rock bands and many of her friends are Emo as the researcher can observe them in Linz's personal website.

The self-descriptions here illustrated a tendency of negativity and self-hurt associated with Emo subculture such as drug dependency and cutting. The girls in this group found it necessary to clarify to the researcher the distinction between Emo and other subcultures specifically Goths, punk, or Satanists. It is an identity that is explicitly chosen as shown in Linz's online blog who I consider to be the leader of the group. However, Emo is an identity that is rejected by some members of the school community as in the incident with Linz's English teacher and her rejection of the choice of topic for the class assignment. Therefore, besides self analysis and description, it is essential to look at how the reactions of others to this identity affect the way the girls in the Emo Filipino group view themselves and how they react in response.

5.3.1.2 School Influences: Peers and Faculty

Similar to the attitudes the school community displayed towards the boyat clique, there were the same negative attitudes towards the Emo Filipino girls. This time, the hard feelings were mostly fueled by racism against the half-pinay students who experienced name-calling and prejudice because of their Filipino mothers. The Emo Filipino group was looked down upon and treated with disrespect and disgust from other students. The racist and sarcastic remarks made by school peers and classmates had their effect on the group identity and attitudes.

There was prejudice against the group other students called Filipino, the maids, or the embassy. There are many girls at the school who have negative feelings towards this group and do not even hesitate to show them. For example, Rahaf showed disrespect to the group looking right at them remarking "Dalal. Pick a maid for yourself", since most of the members have Filipino mothers and many maids/housekeepers in Kuwait come from the Philippines. There is prejudice to the extent of racism at such a young age among high school students where the level of acceptance and tolerance of diversity is sadly low. On a winter cold morning, Leila 's friends were making fun of her "you became Filipino yuk", because she wore jeans underneath her school uniform in the winter. They explained that girls in that clique wear jeans underneath their uniforms. I asked why the attitude of disgust "yuk" towards that clique to which one of Leila 's friends said "because they are just yuk. You can smell their cheap men's cologne from afar along the hallway".

Seeing the researcher with the Emo Filipino clique, Rahaf came up greeting the clique loudly "Emo" to which Linz, an overt leader to the Emo Filipino group, replied while laughing happily "OMG, does it show on our looks that we are Emo?" Linz is a 10th grader who is the daughter of a Kuwaiti father and a Filipino mother. She has one sister Mimz who is in 11th grade and a member of the Emo Filipino group as well. Their father had passed away. They live with their mother and do not keep connections with their father's family. Linz is younger than her sister, but is more outgoing and outspoken. She gets many racist remarks from other girls, perhaps because she speaks in Tagalog more and knows it more

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than her sister. However, she is not afraid to fight back to the point of getting in physical fights.

The researcher became friends with the most helpful counselor in the school community. She has noticed that the researcher transferred from the boyat group to the Emo Filipino group. She particularly inquired about Linz, which emphasized that she was the leader of her group. She stated that Linz has a problematic case of verbal violence that is caused by her feeling of social rejection by other students. The researcher noticed Linz's use of taboo words extensively in both speaking and writing in her personal website. She also engaged in physical fights with some girls who called her names that are based on racist comments on the basis on her mother's nationality. Linz used taboo words in both Arabic and English but used the English F word more extensively even in normal conversations including conversing with the researcher such as in "I'm fu**ing cool".

The counselor seemed aware and attentive that M.Z. and Linz are the two leaders of the groups that made the focus of the study where M.Z. is the boyat group leader and Linz is the leader of the Emo Filipino group. She also started taking both students to counseling sessions asking them questions about their family life, academic performance, and their attitude problems. She invited Linz to a seminar on anger management that took place at the school. However, the counselor accused the public speaker of lack of understanding and hasty judgment on Linz, which only made the rebellious student more distant and angry. Upon asking the girls about their anger management techniques, the speaker frowned at Linz's strategy of releasing anger through listening to heavy metal music to which the speaker accused "why? It's forbidden. Don't you know these are Satanists?" It is the misunderstanding Linz and her group discussed with the researcher at an earlier day where the public confuses Emo, Gothic, and Satanists.

The judgments of inferiority school peers and classmates made about the Emo Filipino girls led to some angry responses. Some group members code-switched between Kuwaiti Arabic, English, and Tagalog. Speaking Tagalog specially created this hostility. There is a heavy use of swearing in the group specifically in English. Perhaps, the use of

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foreign languages such as English and Tagalog was perceived by others as an alienation device to exclude outsiders. Besides school peers, the counselor discussed with the researcher the troubles the Emo Filipino group go through because of discrimination from the other students. She particularly expressed concern about Linz as the leader of the group who the counselor described as a case of verbal violence. Hence, she organized a seminar on anger management by a visiting speaker. Nevertheless, the seminar did not go well with Linz due to the public speaker's judgments on Linz's practices of listening to heavy metal and mistakenly associating this music genre with Satanists.

5.3.1.3 Family Influences

Family greatly participates in shaping the identities of their children. Jasmine complained about her mother strict rules and her dissatisfaction with her daughter who she keeps calling a loose girl, which Jasmine finds unfairly false. She said that when her mother kept accusing her of talking to a guy, she started doing that after the accusation and when being accused of dating a guy, she dated him and at her own house. Now, her mother accuses her of intending to engage in sexual activity, which Jasmine wondered frustratingly asking the researcher if her mother in fact wants her to follow along. Jasmine came to school one day with her arm in bandage. The researcher was shocked when hearing the story behind the injury. Jasmine explained that she was hit by a boya who is a friend of her friends who hit her because Jasmine refused to date her. Jasmine added that she was M.Z.'s ladiya and after their break up she lost interest in dating or relationships and feels like a divorced woman.

Jasmine was the only example from the Emo Filipino group illustrating the great influence of family on their children's perspective of themselves. There appears to be tension in the mother-daughter relationship that is possibly leading Jasmine to confusion by joining the Emo Filipino group after breaking up with M.Z. from the boyat clique. Overall, the two groups are vastly distinct. Here, the mother figure exercised pressure over her teenage daughter shedding away trust and confidence in the daughter's morals and reputation leading her to wonder if it is truly the case. Lately, Jasmine has been identifying

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with the Emo subculture where she finds comfort in the dark side engaging in the disturbing cutting disorder and living as a victim of harsh scrutiny from others who are closely surrounding her such as a family member, her mother, and school peers who cast insulting labels on her calling her *loose girl* and *sl***.

5.3.1.4 The Friends Circle: Code-Switching and Profanity

This circle of friends has different influences over its members. For example, Linz plays a major role in the practice of Tagalog with other half pinay girls in her group including her sister Mimz and Sam. Moreover, she has an impact on Jasmine's identification with Emo subculture and her preference of English over Arabic as will be shown in a later section on the girls' written notes. In general, the group values Emo mentality and lifestyle to the point of encouraging the researcher to embrace it.

In this group, there is richness of linguistic codes mixing Kuwaiti dialect with Tagalog and English. Usually, code switching takes place between Kuwaiti and Tagalog mixing sentences or whole utterances. In terms of English, however, it is usually some vocabulary and phrases inserted occasionally into the conversation. Linz also creatively colors Kuwaiti verbs by adding English morphological endings such as –ing. Linz made fun of Bedouins and their dialect "Bedouins are aagad ewww ugya ugya 'I don't want in Tagalog' ", which is something Rahaf from boyat clique does most of the time as well. Therefore, prejudice goes in all different ways where Filipino dislike Badow 'Bedouins' calling them aagad 'insulting derogatory term for Bedouins' and where other groups in the school call Filipino 'maids'. Linz has been making visits to the vice principal's office more often now because of her increasing fights with Khadija who is the daughter of a physics teacher at the school. They always get into a fight, because Khadija uses Linz's Filipino mother as an insult, while Linz uses Sheikh's Egyptian mother as an insult as well. It is a war filled with prejudice. Linz says in English "I'm on the black list" meaning on the list of the vice principal for bad behavior due to the physical fights she is getting in lately with Khadija and others.

One time Linz recalled an argument that took place out of school at a mall between her friend Sam's sister and some other girl where the argument took place in English using taboo words such as the B word and the F word plus using the middle finger, as Linz indicated. Linz colored her hair again brownish blonde this time. She explained how she usually colors her hair at home explaining the whole process in English regardless of Zizi's presence. They asked the researcher if she's "mix", because she accidently switched to English with the phrase "have fun" while commenting about something said in the group to which Linz excitedly said "God, English, fun". When Linz was heading to her final exam and asked the researcher to accompany her to her classroom, she hugged her and said in English "wish me luck". Linz's iPod has only English songs such as hip-hop, rap, rock, and heavy metal. At the end of fieldwork, she gave the researcher four music CDs that had English songs from all different genres especially hip-hop, rock, and heavy metal. One time Linz was singing English songs while belly dancing to them. She knew it was funny to dance to something that does not rhyme. When the researcher arrived, she yelled something in Tagalog that translates to "I was saying where are you? I have been looking for you".

Linz's sister Mimz calls their Filipino friend Sam Dollie 'doll' "she looks like a Filipino Dollie". Mimz liked the researcher's bright shoes, but complained about her big feet while her sister has small feet "her feet are small. I swear they're a Filipina feet". Sam has not been hanging out with the group lately, but spending most of her time with her classmate and new friend Noor, which was making Linz somewhat jealous. The group came across Sam and Noor one time and Linz yelled at Sam in Tagalog. The researcher did not understand the content of the message but knew Linz was not happy. Interestingly, Linz was talking to her in Tagalog, but Sam was answering each time in Kuwaiti "we're busy with projects". It seemed to be a case of speech divergence from Giles and Powesland (1975) accommodation theory mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter where Sam did not make an effort to reciprocate the same linguistic choices of Linz; rather she was moving away from her interlocutor's speech style or linguistic choices distinguishing

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herself from her interlocutor. Also, it is likely that Sam wanted to make sure her friend Noor understood Linz's accusations who accused Sam of pretending to be busy doing assignments in the classroom with Noor then leaving to walk around the school with Noor favoring her over the group. Linz started and ended the conversation in Tagalog then ending with the Arabic word khaynah 'traitor'. Sam walked away as the recess period ended with the ringing of the bell calling out to Linz in English "call me".

Emo Filipino group wanted to "hang out" with the researcher during the weekends, but Mimz warned "but there are boys" to which Linz followed in English "come second break here in our place to take your number and decide". M.Z. jumped in the middle of the group saying in English sarcastically "what's up?" Girls at the school noticed that Linz switches to English regularly and they take the chance to tease her about it making unsuccessful attempts to imitate her or say something in English. For example, Dana from the dance clique, as they call themselves, asked Linz once "what's the means of this?" when Linz was talking in English, which led Linz to raise a high five to the researcher while repeating the question sarcastically. Interestingly, in a public school where Arabic is the medium of instruction and socialization, Linz switches between Arabic and English even when communicating to her teachers.

The group asked the researcher to hang out with them after finals making suggestions such as movies, eating out, or simply gaz 'walking or cruising around to hang out'. Linz even suggested joining them for a Filipino movie showing soon clarifying that it should not be a problem with the English subtitles. At one point, Linz started talking to the researcher in Tagalog then realized and apologized "Sorry, I forgot and I talked to you in Filipino" referring to Tagalog by Filipino. On another occasion, the group was talking about a topic Linz did not enjoy so she repeated the Tagalog word bastos 'I don't want to hear'. Also, Linz called her older sister boubou 'stupid', because she is not as good in Tagalog as her younger sister. Sam indicated that besides Tagalog she knows two more languages of Philippines. This group hangs out in school and outside school going to movies and the beach by hard rock diner as a favorite hang out place. Linz and Sam are the members

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switching to Tagalog mostly even though Jasmine, Noor, Doy, and Zero can't understand it. This group requested that the researcher join them in their hanging out outside school, but that she should dress like an Emo.

Linz: wear Emo clothes black or red.

Mimz: wear "nigg*" clothes.

Noor: I don't care about you guys. I'll be different. I'll dress up.

Sam: I'm different. I'm classy, but I wear black still.

After Independence Day and Liberation Day break, Linz excitedly told the researcher about her break and adventures with boys recounting events of the holiday in Kuwaiti, Tagalog, and English. She gave a boy the F word, but he still didn't stop spraying her with foam. So, she raised the peace hand sign while repeating "peace" begging him to stop, but he misunderstood her and told her the B word. She made fun of the linguistic misunderstanding. Sometimes, Linz feels comfortable to conduct most of the conversation in English. The researcher simply responds in the language variety Linz initiates whether English or Arabic. One particular day, Linz talked mostly in English focusing on the researcher for the most part. This level of attentiveness to the researcher happened during the last month of fieldwork after gaining a greater level of comfort and familiarity between the researcher and participants. She asked "do you like this school? And what do you like about it?" and "what are your suggestions for this school?" adding, "I personally would like lockers like America, but you know how it is here. It's jungle. Zoo. There are two types of animals here Badow 'Bedouins' and Hhathar 'urban'. It is important to explain the distinction between Badow and Hhathar that goes all the way to the pre-oil period in Kuwait where Badow lived in the desert herding sheep and Hhathar lived by the Arabian Gulf towards the heart of the country relying on fishing, diving for pearls, and building boats. These two communities developed two different dialects that still live to this day. Some Badow members embraced the Hhathar dialect, so it is not a rigid classification.

Finders indicates that meeting students outside school in informal settings enabled the trust to build in the researcher negotiating a relationship that did not look like the

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relationships with other adults. For example, one of the students in Finder's (1997: 17) study was once referring to her as "That's not a teacher, that's Peg" indicating that the researcher is trustworthy not to report any misconduct to the principal's office. One day, Linz and Mimz asked the researcher to join them in the weekend to meet their friends from outside school. It was a big group of boys and girls wearing Emo clothes and Emo haircuts. The girls mostly wore black, pink, and white and heavy eyeliner. Five of them besides Mimz and Linz were also half Kuwaiti and half Pinoy/Pinay. They switched from Kuwaiti to English to Tagalog. The girls wore many metal chains and wristbands all black and silver. Linz switched more to Kuwaiti when passing by boys. As a group of boys passed by, one of them said something to Linz in Tagalog, which was a cussing word. In that particular area by the beach where they hang out every weekend, many half Pinoy/Pinay Kuwaiti young people spend the weekend. Perhaps, it is a place where they do not feel as different from the rest of the Kuwaiti society. There were many SUVs and sport cars with groups of girls and boys playing Western rap music on their advanced cars' stereo systems. Some were walking their puppies or dogs. The young people over there, I dare to say even if it sounded stereotypical, did not look like what some may classify as the "typical Kuwaitis" who follow the more traditional dress code. Many boys were skating on skateboards, some were riding their bicycles, and some were seated in circles by the beach playing drums.

On the researcher's birthday, Jasmine and her classmates threw a surprise party. Linz and her group pretended they did not know and just said "let's check it out" in English when Jasmine yelled from the second floor for the researcher to go to her classroom for a birthday party. The researcher did not know it would be for her. Linz and her sister Mimz typed two separate letters for the researcher on her birthday that were written in English and had pictures of Emo girls from the internet along with a rock wrist band made of studded black leather. Linz stressed that the researcher has to wear the wristband and become an Emo. She also gave her a long necklace made of black string and a wooden skull.

Overall, the negative feelings are mutual between the Emo Filipino girls and the other students. There is a lack of respect and acceptance of difference. The group has

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their own discriminatory remarks about other groups in school. For example, Linz called the school a zoo where two types of animals reside Badow and Hhathar basically insulting the two major groups of Kuwaiti society with which she fails to identify. These negative attitudes must be the result of the racism and verbal abuse the group undergoes from their school peers driving the group even farther from the rest of the school community and creating a subculture of self abuse and anger. It is the same subculture that sets linguistic borders to exclude outsiders via the use of mixed codes other than Kuwaiti Arabic, namely English and Tagalog.

5.3.2. The Emo Filipino Clique In Interviews

As mentioned earlier, there are nine interviews. Four interviews were conducted with the boyat clique members and five with the Emo Filipino clique members. Two of the five interviews with the Emo Filipino clique members were conducted in English.

Table 5.2 Emo Filipino Interviews

	Jasmine	Mimz	Doy
Q1- I see myself as a member of this group.	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree
Q2- Being a member in this group is central to my sense of self.	2 Agree	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree
Q3- I maintain the same behaviors, attitudes, and values with or without the group.	4 Disagree	2 Agree	2 Agree
Q4- I feel proud to be a member in this group.	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree
Q5- speech style is important to being a member in this group.	2 Agree	1 Strongly agree	4 Disagree
Q6- Swearing is totally acceptable in our group.	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree
Q7- The way I look is important to being a member in this group.	4 Disagree	2 Agree	4 Disagree

Table 5.2- continued

Q8- Our group is greatly valued by the students at the school.	5 Strongly disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly disagree
Q9- Our group is greatly valued by the teachers and administrators at school.	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	2 Agree
Q10- Any student can join our group.	2 Agree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly disagree

Table 5.3 Emo Filipino English Interviews

	Linz	Sam
Q1-I see myself as a member of this group.	2 Agree	2 Agree
Q2-Being a member in this group is central to my sense of self.	2 Agree	4 Disagree
Q3-Being a member in this group has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	3 Sometimes	2 Agree
Q4-I value being a member in this group.	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree
Q5-I feel proud to be a member in this group	1 Strongly agree	1 Strongly agree
Q6-Belonging to this group is unimportant to what kind of person I am	3 Sometimes	4 Disagree
Q7-The way I speak is important to being a member in this group	2 Agree	1 Strongly agree
Q8-Swearing is totally acceptable in our group.	3 Sometimes	2 Agree
Q9-The way I look is important to being a member in this group	4 Disagree	4 Disagree
Q10-Our group is greatly valued by the students at the school.	4 Disagree	4 Disagree
Q11-Our group is greatly valued by the teachers and administrators at school.	4 Disagree	2 Agree
Q12-Any student can join our group easily.	4 Disagree	2 Agree

Jasmine was interviewed first. Jasmine is 16 and half years old in 11th grade who used to be a member of M.Z. group but not as a boya. She was M.Z.'s girlfriend. Her friends now are Mimz, Linz, and the Filipino group during recess, Rataj and May in the classroom, and Fay and Fulla who were also members in M.Z. clique previously. Jasmine said that the group does not get offended when called Filipino by her and in turn call her the Siri Lankan. The girls at school absolutely don't have or show respect towards this group making them the joke of the school. According to Jasmine, it is easy to join the group, but the group does not accept girls with temper. They prefer laid back fun girls.

The group usually talks about the gossip surrounding famous Western celebrities actors and singers. They talk about new songs and make scrapbooks. They don't listen to Arabic music only English. Jasmine indicated that the group members speak in Kuwaiti and code switch to English and Tagalog on a regular basis. Jasmine speaks to the group in English on the phone away from the school. She said that many of the group members understand the Filipino cuss words. The group cusses in either Tagalog or English. They refer to Tagalog by Filipino. Swearing is an important part of the group speech. As for secret codes, Jasmine has her own personal secret language made of drawings. For example a drawing of a house stands for a letter versus a drawing of a tree standing for another letter. Her classmate Fatom has another secret language made of different shapes of lines making up a whole alphabet system (See Appendix G).

Second, Linz the overt leader of Emo Filipino group was interviewed. She is 15 years old in 10th grade. Sam is her closest friend at school. Outside school, there are two groups of friends she hangs out with: the boys group and 'Angels of Death' clique. She asked for the interview to be in English, but mentioned she may switch to Arabic at some parts if necessary. She said there is no particular name she would give to the school group. This group of girls has been hanging out for two years. Linz is very independent thinker, outgoing, and outspoken. To her, friends' advice could be wrong sometimes, so she distinguishes between the clique and herself as two different things. Linz does not see herself as the top as she said and the way all the members speak is important equally, since

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sharing is important between friends. Girls who are quiet are not welcomed in the group, because Linz describes them as "freaks" or "dead". As for looks, they are not important to friendships "her inside. The way she feels not the way she looks". Linz said 'relationship' instead of 'friendship' by mistake but made sure to correct herself not to be mistaken for a lesbian.

In terms of how acceptable swearing is in the group, Linz made a distinction between swearing while joking and serious swearing "look, in jokes we mostly are using the bad words together but it's ok but we're gonna put the line the red line we're not gonna go up to it yea limitation that's called. There's limit with the things that we say because sometimes those words gonna break our friendship together yea so I don't like to broke our friendship just for some words after what after few years together we are like friends and we share things". In terms of students' use of her mother as an insult, she explained, "the most important thing when they say I'm from the other country, I don't care. I'm so proud of myself, that's all".

> "Look, as I said I'm proud of myself. I don't care what their words, their f***ing words I don't like it yea I don't like it just say whatever you want. Talk with yourself, talk with the chair, everything. I'm not gonna listen to any word, coz if I listen to any word, they will see that I'm the one who feel like so angry with myself. I haven't even trust in myself yea so I feel like I'm so proud of being a Filipino. Of course I'm half Filipino not all yea mostly yea and I'm so proud to be who I am proud to be….if they don't like it then hit your head to the ground I don't care yea coz you know these jungle people when they hear a word, they repeat it all the time. They hear the word Emo like Emo Emo Emo Emo everywhere….coz it's new word for them, so they think Emo yea like the jungle aagad yea yea it's better when you be like it's ok you heard some word ok be cool….don't act like omg I can say it's Emo or I can say it's punk or it's rock or ….when I'm angry I listen to metal rock and then and after they said what's metal rock? I was like yea you're laughing and you're saying things putting comments but you didn't even understand the word".

Linz talked about Rahaf who teaches Filipino bad words to other students saying it means "hi" just so they start using bad words in front of Linz to offend her "people saying things they didn't know what it means, it's b***s*** I hate it". People use words such as 'bi***', 'f***', or 'mother fu**er' without realizing their meanings assuming it is a way to look cool in front of other students. Interestingly, Linz does direct transfer from Kuwaiti Arabic to English

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with certain expressions such as "do you want me to dance or something?", which really means "so what? What do you want me to do?". Linz expressed unhappiness with girls who learn Tagalog bad words from their housemaids instead of learning "useful" expressions.

Linz's late father spoke seven languages due to traveling constantly besides being married to six wives from various nationalities (Iraqi, Indian, Iranian, Filipino, and American). She has six other siblings besides her sister Mimz, but has no relationships with them both before and after their father's passing away. While talking about her maternal grandparents lolo 'grandfather' and lola 'grandmother', she did not know the word for grandchild in English or Arabic, so she used the Tagalog word for it "apu". Linz actually defines the researcher's role as a friend instead of a researcher "now, you're like taking things from the girls just to learn, teach yourself by yourself, getting friends just to know. You know I like to make friends in other country and in the chat in the chat you can see I have from Indians, from Egypt, and from Philippines the mostly people I like to so here I can learn things". She has learned Tagalog on her own from media especially Satellite T.V. and writing down the words in order to talk with her lola 'grandmother' who doesn't speak either English or Arabic. Linz discussed her love for learning languages like her late father explaining how Tagalog has many Spanish words like como estaka resonating with the Spanish como estas 'how are you'.

Linz faces racism even outside school by young boys as young as eight or nine years old offering her money "5 K.D. 5 K.D. you know what means right? Means 5 K.D. go to bed with him. I think 8 or 9 years old catching their mobiles 'hey give me your number'. They think that coz Filipino you know their style it's not like here traditional cultural yaani 'meaning' everything is changed yaani 'meaning' they're Christian yea. They think that every person in Philippines is they call *puck puck* it means bi***". Linz identifies herself as half-and-half nationality or half pinay. She described Kuwaiti women as *marty* 'spoiled' comparing them with Filipino women who are content, she said. To her, slang is the best linguistic code "I hate British. I like street language you know and the most thing I like it is the rapper Lil Wayne you know him? Who sang lollipop. I like the way he talk". She talked

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about her favorite music that included Filipino songs, metal rock, and Emo songs. Moreover, she talked about her five personal websites, her preference for punk style outfits, and her nicknames such as Emo queen and pinky girl.

She expressed the same dislike to Leila that Leila expressed regarding the Filipino group. Linz called her Indian dog, because Leila has been harassing her since middle school calling her and her older sister Mimz "bi*** Filipina looking for nationality from the guys doing things just to get nationality" even though they are already Kuwaiti since their father is. Linz showed signs of violence, since it is the strategy she used against racist remarks and insults towards her mother and sister. During 8th grade, a student alongside her mother called Linz's mother names, which made Linz physically abuse both of them ending it with cutting the girl's hair with scissors. The mother transferred her daughter outside the school out of concern for her daughter from Linz. At another incident at the current high school, another girl was transferred to another school to be protected from Linz who got a knife from the administration department's small kitchen threatening to kill a girl who insulted her mother verbally. Linz threatened the school that she would kill the girl if she is kept with her in the classroom, but the girl transferred all together along her mother who was a teacher at the same school as well. Her reaction to people disrespecting the fact that she is half pinay is fighting back by getting physically involved. However, she is working on changing her anger reaction by avoiding problems and ignoring others' judgments. Sometimes, girls at the school do not understand her, but her clique outside school Angles of Death does "my shila 'clique' my group understand every single word I say you know we're putting words together, hang out together". She described the school rules as *bangit* 'not nice' as well as boring, since they do not try to learn from students or appreciate their talents.

Third, the leader's sister Mimz was interviewed. She is 17 years old in 11th grade. Her friends are Doy, Jasmine, Zero, Jamela, Sam, Linz, and the researcher. To her, speech style is important in order to be a member in the group. For example, someone impatient and controlling during conversation is not welcomed. Swearing is accepted completely

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and it very much present in the group 24 hours as Mimz put it. Appearance is important in the sense the girl has to be clean and tidy. Some things matter more than her looks such as her walking style, her topics, and her morals. When asked about the other students' attitudes towards the group, Mimz expressed how the girls do not show respect for them calling the group Emo as well as saying things like "yuk" without any reason. She said that this treatment from other students makes her feel like an alien to the extent of hearing some girls tell them that they must be afraid of the sun since they are Emo, which is of course an outright misconception or possibly meant as a tease. For new girls to join the group is not easy based on old experience with an old friend Hiam who pretends to be Emo following the Emo dress code, dying her hair pink, and spreading lies about drinking blood.

The group is connected by love and sharing, but the ambitions are different. The style is generally a cool and funky style. They have been friends a long time especially Doy whom she has known since kindergarten. Zero is an old friend to the group too, but the researcher noticed she has been hanging out with her own group of friends. At school, Mimz prefers to speak Kuwaiti to feel Kuwaiti, but uses English with their clique outside school. She does not speak as much Tagalog as her sister Linz. She seems to be trying hard to feel similar to the rest of the school, which appeared in her statement "I don't speak Filipino that much and before it was English but not much now. I am Kuwaiti anyway". She has access to Farsi, since her late father spoke it along six other languages. She uses Farsi for gossip. As for jargon, Mimz and her sister use some abbreviations or numbers to remain ambiguous in front of other listeners such as Lays potato chips for 'lesbian', 010 for middle finger, and other numbers for bad words. When asked if she uses Kuwaiti, she calls it local language "lots of local".

When it comes to code switching, she differs from her sister and refrains from code witching to English in order to avoid embarrassing other girls who are weak at English "Arabic, I'm not like my sister normal for her to embarrass people. There may be Bedouins who do not know how to speak English. Also, there are some new Kuwaiti words I don't understand and there are girls who speak so fast I don't understand them". She stereotyped

Bedouin families being unsupportive of teaching English to their children. Unlike Linz, Mimz did not request an English interview and conducted all the interview in Kuwaiti except for some occasional code switching to English for particular words such as 'gangsters', 'style', 'hard rock', 'heavy metal', 'lyrics', 'really bad', 'in our religion', 'skateboard', and 'wannabes'.

Mimz explained how the fact that their late father had lived in America made him gain Western customs. He worked as a waiter there, which made Kuwaitis assume he is not Kuwaiti. She said he encouraged her sister and her to listen to rock music. She further expressed her opinion regarding heavy metal music "some people say heavy metal is forbidden, but I listen. It is true that it's all screaming, but when you read the lyrics, it is true, forbidden in our religion. Anyway, all songs are forbidden in our religion. Westerners corrupt us like that. You see all people are imitating westerners skateboard...I feel by the hard rock they always play heavy metal songs and there are gangsters". By Hard Rock diner, many boys give them astonished looks at their Emo style.

The fourth interview took place with Doy. She is 16 years old in 11th grade. Her group of friends are Mimz, Linz, Jasmine, Zero, and Nadia "who is like a boy she's boya". Swearing is not only acceptable in the group, but also accepted at the house for Doy's family. Doy swears in both Kuwaiti and English. She said that it is actually her favorite hobby. Doy finds certain things that bring the group together such as dislike for Egyptians, working on personal websites, love for rap, and heavy metal. English is used sometimes. The group has taught her Filipino cuss words. Doy also has knowledge of Farsi language, but does not use it in school. As for jargon, she also mentioned the word Lays for 'lesbian'. Doy added that the group gets harassed by many girls especially Leila and her clique "yuk yuk even to Mimz' mother. They are 12th grade supposed to be our role model. We all have since last year we fought with girls. The first fight, a girl said you are boya and I want to be your ladiya so I started screaming and a fight took place".

It is worth mentioning that Mimz and Doy asked for their interviews to be done at each other's presence. Towards the end of Doy's interview, she asked Mimz an unexpected

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question about cutting. Mimz said she does not cut herself, but Doy is a cutter as well as her sister, Zero, Jasmine, M.Z., and Nadia. They use blades and needles "we don't feel. We used to feel stress". Doy uses everything she said including scissors and razors besides taking many bills and energy drinks. Mimz said that they drink red bull energy drink with aspirin in it. Doy also mentioned taking 5 aspirin bills with soft drinks.

Finally, it was Sam's interview. She is 18 years old repeating 10th grade for the third time. Sam suspects that she has exams phobia, which could explain why she is still in 10th grade. She also has a problem with Arabic in general both the standard form and the spoken Kuwaiti dialect. Sam asked specifically for an interview in English. She doesn't give her group of friends a name; rather it is a fun group called Filipino by other girls at the school. To her, it includes Mimz, Linz, and Doy. Sam believes being a member of a group is not central to her sense of self but being a friend is. The way the girls speak in the group is extremely important, since respect is the most important thing. However, the group uses cussing words. She also mentioned the clique outside the school with Mimz and Linz that she described as punk rock. She said the colors in that clique are black and pink for girls the princess Emo style with the tiara. In addition, she defined yellow, green, pink, and black as Emo colors elaborating that there are Emo shirts, Emo cell phones, and Emo bags.

It is worth mentioning that the first thing Sam said before starting the interview is "ok, wait. There are so many cliques at school, why us? Or are you seeing another clique too?" in Kuwaiti. Sam thinks that not having a clique name is a way of making new members feel comfortable "we didn't name it shila 'clique' so the girls won't say we are that and they are invader as if they're coming not welcomed that's why we didn't name it." She feels that Jasmine and her friend Noor are not part of the group as much as friends who occasionally hang out with the group. Girls at the school call Mimz, Linz, and Sam Filipino "the funny thing about it is that yes my mother is Filipina and my father is Kuwaiti but that which means that I am Kuwaiti. They are laughing at me while half of them. I know many girls here at the school their moms are Indian and Egyptian and what else there is

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Indonesian there are so many here in 11th grade. Ok her mom is Indian why are you coming to me? I mean her mom is INDIAN."

She described the girls at the school as jealous of the half-and-half kids like her that they call Filipino: "they get jealous. They don't appreciate us, bring us down but they look for you when not around". Among the racist remarks or signs students make to offend the group is saying "yuk"; something that was brought up before by Mimz and Doy as well as observed in Leila 's clique. In addition, the girls would call them some names that are common housekeepers' names in Kuwait such as Mary or Kumari just to bother the Filipino group hinting that their mothers are housekeepers, because they are Asian and not Kuwaiti. In fact, some families give the housekeeper a name different from her own for easier pronunciation. Moreover, the students at the school would pretend to be cleaning and dusting around whenever coming across the Filipino group in order to make them angry and uncomfortable.

Sam notices girls making insulting comments and moves to mock the fact that Mimz, Linz, and Sam have Filipino mothers, but Sam does not tell Linz who does not notice it sometimes while engaging in conversation. Sam said Linz has a temper and she would get in a fight with those girls "I have learned that what's the point of fighting?" Sam has been expelled from school for a month because of a previous fight begun by her reacting to insults from students. This is the third year for Sam in 10th grade. Sam has a weakness in her Kuwaiti dialect and does not understand many words from her friend and classmate Noor as well as other girls at the school who tell her "what do you mean by what is that? Even a kid at 1st grade will be able to reply to you". Sam finds Mimz and Linz better than her in Arabic unlike her who uses English in the house "why because even with their mom they talk in Arabic". Sam's family is always traveling. Moreover, they speak English at the house including their father.

Besides the disrespectful treatment from other students, some teachers are as disrespectful. One time, one of the staff members called Sam 'garbage' and treated her mother as if nonexistent in the room. She said that some teachers do not respect her and

her mother only for the fact that her mother is a foreigner. Also, there is a teacher who does not correct her workbook at all since she found out Sam's mother is a Filipina. She made it clear to say the teacher is Egyptian. For some reasons, it appeared as a common theme in all of the interviews by Doy, Linz, Mimz, and Sam to have hard feelings against Egyptians. Again, Sam repeated that "pure" girls think they are better than "the half girls" out of jealousy.

To Sam, it is not a matter of style that connects the group; rather it is about respect for each other, common speech style, hang out places, and similar musical taste where all members listen to English songs except Doy. Sam talked about celebrities like Angelina Jolie and Jennifer Aniston in magazines and on MTV, which is something Jasmine has mentioned as a common topic within this group. Sam thinks having Filipino mothers is not the connector, since there are Jasmine, Doy, and Jamela (Zizi's sister) whose mothers are Kuwaiti, yet it could be a connector for Mimz, Linz, and Sam "maybe between me and Linz and Mimz maybe you will say that we are a bit close to each other because we feel like we are one we feel like we are totally like totally the same because it is true our moms are Filipinas, we speak English very good, and most of the time we see us when we talk we switch Filipino English you want to catch some Arabic words ok".

Sam mentioned the typical forms of language circulating in the group including English, swearing, secret language, slang, code switching, and little Kuwaiti. Sam does not prefer swearing, but the group swears a lot at the same time they make sure not to swear at her respecting her preference. There are certain hand movements they use instead of words that remind them of past situations. Besides a regular use of English especially with Mimz and Linz, they converse in Tagalog. In fact, Sam code switched the most during the interviews. Mimz and Linz are very important to Sam more so than being in a group. Being with her group of friends is important to Sam, since it affects the kind of person she is where friends can take from each other's personalities when all sides are strong especially talking about Linz. She does not like to feel tied down to a clique, but hanging out with new friends and classmates was making Linz angry mentioning the incident during fieldwork

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when Linz started arguing in Tagalog with Sam excluding all listeners from the conversation.

Sam's mother is Christian, but she chose to believe in both religions of her parents calling it "Christ-Islam". Also, the fact that Sam has many guy friends she hangs out with outside school made many girls at the school talk about her reputation. However, they do not realize that being brought up in a household with a Muslim father and Christian mother has made Sam somewhat different from the teenagers who are brought up in all Kuwaiti household.

Sam: if they are pure, to them it is better to be pure

Researcher: who is that? Who says?

Sam: like most of the girls.

Researcher: who? The Kuwaitis you mean?

Sam: yes the pure pure. They like the girl who's pure like them. You know why? Because if they have someone not pure like me, they will feel why does she have and I don't, so for them it's better to stay away.

At the end of the interview Sam requested to add a message to whoever reads her words "I wanna add something. I want to tell the people who read the book to think positive. Imagine if you are in a traffic and you're in a hurry to watch a series at home instead think positive think I like traffic just put nice music on. You'll see the returning series. I will see it later instead relax, read a small book with you, put nice music, call someone say hi say hello".

The interviews had a number of commonalities. All five girls talked about the friendship that links them together. It is not an enclosed clique per se, but has been isolated by other students who call them the Filipino or the Emo clique. The group became the joke of the school prone to disrespect, disgust, and harassment. As Sam put it, the other *pure* girls dislike the *half-and-half* girls like her and her friends Linz and Mimz who are half Kuwaiti and half Filipino. While Sam explained it as a matter of jealousy, Linz elucidated that it is the negative ethnic stereotypes some Kuwaitis hold against Asian women especially Filipinas being portrayed as gold diggers. All girls agreed that other

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students do not hesitate to insult the group calling them *maids* and *housekeepers*. The group reactions to this hate were mostly anger, physical abuse, and *verbal violence* as the counselor described it. The Emo Filipino group swears a lot especially at other students who bully them. They resort to English and Filipino cuss words that are familiar to all members including the ones who are *pure* Kuwaiti, to use Sam's expression. Other students would learn English and Tagalog cuss words as a strategy to agitate the group. As Linz said, it is a way to appear cool. The language use here serves social functions to both elevate oneself to a higher standard of prestige in that given socio-cultural context and to use particular linguistic forms as a weapon to harass and degrade.

The stereotypes go both ways, since there were comments from the group made about other nationalities like Egyptians and Indians. Additionally, Mimz, for example, stereotyped Badow being uneducated in English. Fluency is English is one of the three factors connecting the three half pinay girls together as Sam pointed out. Besides English, all three girls Sam, Linz, and Mimz are half Filipino and speak Tagalog. Therefore, there is a constant code switching in the group even during the presence of Jasmine and Doy and other friends of the group. Most of their friends know and use the Filipino cuss words. However, Mimz refrained from speaking English in school in front of other girls in order to avoid any potential embarrassment in case they did not speak it. Seemingly, there is a value judgment and an embarrassment attached to people who do not speak English. The interviews revealed rich data about the Emo Filipino group and how they view themselves and other students and how the other girls' comments and treatment towards them also participate in shaping their group identity. Now, it is time to turn to the last part of the data on the Emo Filipino group that was not available in the boyat clique, the written notes.

5.3.3 The Emo Filipino Clique In Writings

As mentioned in chapter 3 section 3.6, the written data comes from members of the Emo Filipino group only. The written data I will look at come from two scrapbooks; one made by a collection of students I came across in the field besides all members of the Emo Filipino group (except Doy), and another scrapbook made by Jasmine that also had letters

from Linz and Mimz. The girls talked about the nicknames they chose for themselves, their favorites things, future dreams, and descriptions of who they are. Their writings are meant to inform the researcher about their personal individual selves in a more intimate way written freely on paper, and expressed with words, colors, and drawings.

First, Mimz drew a skull symbol calling herself "Evil Mimi". All her favorite singers and actors are Western celebrities. Moreover, her favorite T.V. series are American ones including *Days of our Lives*, *Summerland*, *The OC*, and *Grey's Anatomy*. She names members of the Emo Filipino group as her closest friends. She answers all the questions in English but code switches to Arabic occasionally. Among the nicknames she uses for herself are *devil chick*, *panda*, and *rock star chick*. She listens to rock, metal rock, rap, hip-hop, and country. She aspires to become an English teacher in the future. Mimz defines the researcher as a best friend and buddy as written in her own words in the internet chatting lingo or txt messaging abbreviated form "ur ma Bst fwind and ma sis and a sweet girl'". In a letter she wrote to the researcher signed with "Mims the Devil Chick" she wrote "luv ya so so so much, I will miss ya. Don't forget me ok cuz if u 4get me I will kill ya loool yala ma a6awel 3laich 'alright I won't make it long'. Chawzz T.C.". At the end, she listed three personal websites of hers.

As the short letter of Mimz shows, some numbers are used for some Arabic sounds that do not exist in English such as 6 for the voiceless emphatic dental/alveolar stop and 3 for the voiced pharyngeal fricative. There are also 7 the voiceless pharyngeal fricative, 9 the voiceless emphatic dental/alveolar fricative, 8 the voiceless uvular stop, and 5 the voiceless velar fricative. In his book *Txtng: The gr8 db8*, linguist David Crystal (2008: 125) indicates that numerals are used in Arabic texts as a replacement of letter that do not take place in Roman alphabet as he offers the example of number 2 to represent the Arabic glottal stop as in the word *insha'llah* 'God willing' appearing as *insha2llah* or even abbreviated to *isa*. He (2008: 6) further suggests that it is normal to have vowel-less writing system in Arabic language.

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Jasmine has made a whole scrapbook for the researcher. The first page was bright pink with a sticker of a bunny she called "Emo bunny" that says "Welcome to our world". She code switches between Arabic and English, but still uses English alphabets for Arabic alongside numbers as in texting language or online language as used in email or chat rooms. Her interests range between Emo, punk, rock, rap, hip- hop, and romantic songs. Her favorite movies and songs are English "its my fav I don't like Arabic songs bcoz I don't understand wat they say". Jasmine seemed very influenced by Linz in her letter concluding with "nd fu** this world". Jasmine has offered a number of nicknames such as *Emo gurl*, the *Siri Lankan*, *sexy cat*, and *Pocahontas*. She gave her opinion of M.Z., Jaz, and F.F. in the boyat group "Jaz, she's quiet but she have a big heart & she's cute. F.F., crazy one but she's so funny". Also, Jasmine gives some nicknames to M.Z. like *black flakes* (chocolate brand name), *the sad string player*, *Fahood* and *HHamood* (male nicknames). Moreover, she included English poems on friendship besides songs of Chris Brown. Her favorite subject is English. Jasmine defined the researcher as a friend and sister she was hoping for "Best Best friend". In the final letter by Jasmine to the researcher, she started it with "Hi" surrounded by two big crosses and signed with "Emo cat" along with 'I love you' written in Arabic with her own blood as she pointed out.

Linz and Sam use English mostly, especially Sam. For Linz, there is heavy use of cuss/taboo words even in greetings. She also uses English letters even for Arabic words unlike Mimz and Jasmine who code switch to Arabic using both English letters and Arabic writing system. Linz uses slang more. When asked about her identity, she explicitly said that she answers with "I'm punk rock Emo goth pinky sporty normal half pinoy sweetie cutie real fwend 'friend' cool luv music gurl that's me all what I know that I'm fu**ing cool". Also, she wants her future partner to also be half pinoy who is punk, rock, Emo, Goth, and metal style who likes rap, hi-hop, metal rock, and country music. Linz expressed a dislike to aagad during the fieldwork and the interview as well as in writing "I hate 3egad 'aagad' ppl they are not allowed in ma list 2 hell I don't care about them". Similar to Jasmine, English is her favorite subject in school. Her future goals are between a lawyer, businesswoman, or an

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English teacher like her sister Mimz. Linz defines the researcher as a best friend. At the last letter she wrote for the researcher, she wrote 'I love you so much' in English, Arabic 'A7bich', and Tagalog 'mahal kita sobra', which shows an interesting use of the three languages accessible to her. She had the letters either in pink and gray or black and red. There were personal drawings of skulls and blades dripping with blood underneath them written "If I bleed it means I love you", which is a gothic idea of love that is correlated with suffering and agony.

Sam was the last one who wrote in the scrapbook, leaving a note that was very brief and used English only. Her favorite colors are red and black, which also were the favorite colors of all members of the group. She aspires to become an interior designer in the future. Her favorite music is hip-hop and love songs in general. She said in the interview she is Emo or princess Emo that is more classy than punk. In addition, she advised the researcher to stay away from wearing white when hanging out with their clique outside school along with Mimz and Linz, because white is so far from Emo colors. However, Sam appeared to value individuality separating herself a little from the group. She ended her notes with stating that she considers the researcher an older sister.

The journal writing data worked well to complement the fieldwork observations and the interviews emphasizing similar themes. There was code switching in the writing as was found orally in the field and during interviews with the Emo Filipino girls, where most of them switch between English and Kuwaiti. Tagalog also showed up in Linz's writings. The students listed their nicknames, which happened to be English ones. Besides the English nicknames, the Emo Filipino girls listed English songs, English T.V. shows, and English celebrities as their favorites. Swearing was also evident in writing. Additionally, the Emo or Goth subculture was expressed in the drawing of skulls, crosses, and blades dripping with blood. Finally, there was a use of texting or chatting language where numbers were used to replaces Arabic sounds that do not have Roman alphabet equivalents. Overall, the journal writing agreed with the interviews and the ethnographic fieldwork notes achieving triangulation.

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CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND REALIZATIONS

6.1 Linguistic Realizations

The research started to explore language behaviors of a group of friends to examine how their linguistic choices and practices express a collective identity of the group as well as the personal identity of the members. However, spending some time in the field has presented a new dimension worth analyzing. Language can strongly influence and shape identity. At the same time, group membership and collective identity will shape language behaviors in return. Therefore, a cycle is created where linguistic behaviors and identity interact influencing one another. This is in line with language change studies where a cycle presents itself between language change and social change or social mobility. For example, Susan Gal (1978) in *Language change and sex roles in a bilingual community* showed how women of bilingual Hungarian-German Oberwart Austria led the movement of social change due to the linguistic choices they were making favoring German over Hungarian the symbol of peasant status moving the whole community from bilingualism to monolingualism on a gradual and systematic basis (In Coupland & Jaworski 1997). Similarly, in the introduction of Labov's (1972) study of Black English vernacular, he states how the language code he was studying defines and is defined in return by the social organization of peer groups in that community of the inner city. This exemplifies the same cycle I came to discover in my research between language and identity. The language of the speakers and the interlocutors with whom they interact and associate plays an influential role in youth identity construction.

As a linguist, I will articulate the most important discovery during this ethnographic fieldwork in the way most relevant to a linguist; more precisely, in terms of grammar and syntactic word order. In linguistic terms, language is the actor acting like the subject of a sentence and people become the object of the action. Identity formation and self-

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definition is the action. As a result, language shapes identity. This is not, however, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in another guise, either the strong (linguistic determinism) or the weak version (linguistic relativity). Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956) made a case for language being the authority that has the final say on cultural norms stating "Which was first: the language patterns or the cultural norms? In main they have grown up together, constantly influencing each other. But, in this partnership the nature of the language is the factor that limits free plasticity and rigidifies channels of development in the more autocratic way". He further added "language thus represents the mass mind; it is affected by inventions and innovations but affected little and slowly, whereas to inventors and innovators it legislates with the decree immediate" (In Coupland & Jaworski 1997: 459). However, I am not eradicating people's freewill whether to be influenced or not by the linguistic package directed at them from other interlocutors. By the linguistic package, I am referring to the linguistic input coming from others that carries direct or indirect remarks about someone's identity. It is the language that shapes like a sculptor, sketches like an artist, and snaps a photo of people like a photographer but it is much deeper, because it is an individual with a mind and heart that will consciously or unconsciously accept that input. At the same time, individuals can also choose not to fall to others' judgments.

A researcher can go to the field attempting to explore one thing only to conclude with another. Although the researcher went to the field with no prior assumptions, categories, or hypotheses, there was an inclination to believe that there are cliques in high schools, in which each clique is characterized by a code of speaking possessing a unique set of linguistic tools including greetings, swearing, loudness, obscenity, jargon, and linguistic behaviors and attitudes. Nevertheless, having contact with students and participating in cliques has revealed far greater discovery of the potent relationship between language and identity. The original dilemma leading to the research's idea in the first place was whether the way we speak determines who we are or whether who we are determines how we speak. Being a participant observer in a public school has shown how language can partly shape identity.

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The force of language is potential when others like family, friends, and the school community direct judgments towards people's core. Family shapes identity. Circles of friends and cliques shape identity. Classmates shape identity. Teachers at schools shape students' identities. All these people and groups define individuals' identities through language casting individuals as X or Y in statements and judgments that can have a lasting effect, perhaps for a lifetime. This does not mean that people are programmed automata fed by verbal input to produce a social output where the verbal input of others' statements and judgments represent the linguistic construct or independent variable impacting the social construct, and where the dependent variable is identity. At the same time, I have to say, environment and people have an enormous influential power in shaping, re-shaping, and emphasizing a particular identity. Therefore, there is still the verbal input that goes in individuals' heads with its package where people digest this input and give out a social output making their own social choices to be or not to be influenced by such input as the following model illustrates this point.

Identity Formation

Speaker judgments----verbal input ----> Listener Conviction ----internalizing----> Listener's behavior ----social output----> Identity (linguistic and nonlinguistic behaviors)

Therefore, Identity formation takes place in the order of language, conviction, and behavior.

The influence of family, friends, and school on youth identity formation is observable in the other research methods as well, not only in the ethnographic fieldwork. As I indicated earlier in the methodology chapter, I applied a "mixed methods approach" of both quantitative and qualitative date gathering relevant information from different sources to achieve triangulation where the newspaper article, blogs, and the survey served as the preliminary data and the fieldwork notes, interviews, and journal writing constituted the main ethnographic data. The application of the structured and quantitative portion of the survey proved rewarding in acquiring findings about linguistic attitudes of students in both

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public and private high schools towards the available language codes in the country including Kuwaiti dialect, Modern Standard Arabic, Farsi, and English. The survey was the venue to reach these findings; exploring the effect the linguistic culture of the school community could have on students' linguistic attitudes and behaviors. The quantitative data in both the survey and the blogs complimented the qualitative data showing language's role in serving different functions whether instrumental or social. Youth collective identity framing and social and personal symbolism was the social function of language I focused on particularly in this research, where young speakers and the interlocutors with whom they associate participate in a mutual effort in forming, confirming, and reaffirming adolescent's identity.

The different data sources focused on different uses of language. For instance, adolescents constituted the focus of the newspaper articles as well as the teens' blogs. Nevertheless, the media source expressed opinions of the public as well as professionals in fields of education, psychology, counseling, and policy making projecting language about the youth that both describes as well as judges and makes evaluations of youth subcultures, evaluations that happened to be consistently negative. Although the experts and the professional voices projected expressed milder judgments of the youth subcultures concerned than the journalists and policy makers, they still took the position of viewing the youths as diseased and disorder cases expressing concern and a motivation to reform those problematic youths.

As mentioned earlier in the media opinions section in chapter 4 and as professor of Psychology Naeema AlTahir indicated, the ideas other individuals say about someone's sense of self trigger some of these cases discussed in the newspaper (In Salim 2008b: 7). Also, Dr. Widad AlEssa, psychological and family counselor, emphasizes that family and school shape personality (In Kuna 2009: 6). Blame is directed towards family from both media and the cases interviewed. Among the factors leading to spread of boyat discussed in the newspapers include lack of communication with the family, weak student-teacher relations, and poor counseling at school. Some of the homosexuals interviewed in the

news expressed the same view that people's harsh judgment and derogatory language cause deep psychological damages to them.

Besides family, the newspapers emphasize the importance of school peers and friends on teenagers' values and practices. Besides talking about the role of others on identity formation among teenagers, the newspapers diagnosed boyat as individuals with sexual identity disorder. Therefore, media and public opinion also participated in defining teenagers besides the family, school, and friends. In regards to the Emo subculture, the newspapers discussed the problem of cutting that could start as a trend and develop into a belief system. One last noticeable highlight in the newspapers was the use of English for sexuality related terms.

Boyat and Emo cliques are not only discussed in the local newspapers but also show up in the virtual identities of personal websites and blogs of Kuwaiti teens. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between the language in the blogs and the language use in the media where the first is descriptive and the latter is evaluative and judgmental, since the blogs are produced by adolescent speakers talking about themselves, while the media is projecting language about youth casting judgments and evaluations that were consistently negative. Therefore, youth culture is the focus in both the media data and the blogs data. Besides the mention of boyat and Emo kids in the media and blogs, they were among the cliques listed and described in the exploratory survey I conducted. The survey was structured to produce quantitative data on high school cliques in Kuwait examining both social and linguistic attitudes of adolescents' students that varied across the public and private schooling systems. It was especially useful in arriving at the students' linguistic attitudes towards the available language codes in the country: Kuwaiti dialect, Modern Standard Arabic, Farsi, and English. These were the preliminary data that set up the study before going to the field.

In terms of the main ethnographic data making the heart of the study, the role of language in shaping identity of youth subcultures was most evident during fieldwork. Among the most underscored features in the field was the influence of others on teenagers'

self esteem and identity construction. Again, the family, friends, and school have an impact on the youth. The feedback these institutions provide to the youth participates in shaping their identities. The family can be destructive to its children, drawing negative images for their children through breaking their confidence. In regards to the influence of friends and school peers, boyat place blame on their school peers and friends who assigned their boya identity and encouraged its growth. Students give their peers nicknames sometimes. The nature of the nicknames can affect the way a high school student evaluates herself. Moreover, teachers also participate in providing their input on students' identities. Identity was sometimes verbally asserted in a more direct way. Besides self-descriptions, identity could be realized through a number of things such as anecdotes, gossip, group jargon, swearing, and language varieties. Story telling reveals hidden identities. Group jargon indicates belonging of the members and the exclusion of others. Swearing is prestigious to some cliques, which exemplifies Labov's concept of covert prestige. Code switching exists in the different cliques especially switching between English and Arabic and using English for obscenities or sexuality related terms. During the boyat interviews, two linguistic features were emphasized the most, namely jargon and swearing. Most of the jargon revolves around secret profanities. Furthermore, the clique expressed the tendency towards swearing in English, since as they say, "English is more prestigious especially when swearing".

Overall, the ethnographic fieldwork drew a specific image of the boya identity that I summarize as an extreme identity that carries specific qualifications. Being a boya means not being a girl, to the Kuwaiti high school girls. The boya does not wear make up or feminine clothes, is into sports, has short hair, and has good fighting skills. They try to take on masculine traits but they do it in an extreme way emphasizing the negative qualities such as bullying, violence, and profanity.

As for the Emo identity, there is an agreement between the newspapers descriptions and the practices of the Emo Filipino girls in the field. Among the characteristics I noticed were cutting and listening to heavy metal and rock music. In regards to the linguistic

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features shared by the Emo Filipino clique members were jargon, swearing, gossip, and code switching. Swearing was always in English. Farsi was reserved for gossip. Code switching was the most apparent linguistic feature in this group. The members, especially the leader and the girls whose mothers are Filipinas, code switched between Kuwaiti, English, and Tagalog. The girls in this group have nicknames like the girls in the boyat clique, but their nicknames indicate their belonging to Emo subculture. Additionally, the Emo Filipino girls used texting lingo in their written notes. Besides the influence of friends on values and practices, other school peers exercise an influence on the identity of the high school girls. Other school students practiced bullying against the Emo Filipino girls through racist and derogatory remarks such as *the maids*. Along with the influence of friends and school peers, family participated in this youth identity formation as exemplified by Jasmine and her mother's mistrust in her daughter's reputation calling her a loose girl.

I believe we all participate in categorizing each other, placing people into boxes arranging them into groups with label stickers glued to their backs, which is exactly what the researcher is encountering in this research. Unfortunately, in the middle of the fieldwork, I realized that the research I was setting forth--starting with raising the question of "what are the cliques available at the schools"--is counter to the paradigm I embrace, which is one that entails rejecting general categories of individuals and instead giving more meaning to individuality and distinction of every case encountered. At the same time, it is hard to deny that some people want to be classified and labeled, embracing a more widespread identity where self realization is obtained through membership to a larger identity of a group. Additionally, cliques do exist in high schools as well as other institutions. The high school is just a miniature society reflecting some of the realities outside. Also, in defense of individuality, the researcher did not impose a limited set of categories. It was the students who decided on the cliques and gave them their own names, both in the survey and during the fieldwork. During fieldwork, students were not being judged solely based on their looks or membership to a group. They were being identified with an identity relying on many factors joined together, including personal expressions of self, anecdotes, attitude, circle of

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friends or membership to a clique, and appearance. Many factors have been considered both linguistic and nonlinguistic alike, including social, cultural, educational, and psychological issues of the participants involved and the both the school community and the larger socio-cultural community.

Additionally, the interviews helped in matching the field notes and participants' direct self-evaluations of their social group identities. Interestingly, some of the students' self-evaluations were negative reflecting the same judgments and harsh language the media projected in the process of displaying, criticizing, and diagnosing youth subcultures as *abnormal* and *disordered*. At the end of fieldwork, I received some private journal writing as an additional data source from the Emo Filipino clique, which again showed the dark culture of negativity and self hurt in which these adolescents participated. This material emphasized the same messages found in the media, blogs, survey, the field, and interviews.

This study has shown the researcher many facts about research besides the social and linguistic findings discovered about linguistic behaviors, identity, and social cliques in public versus private high schools. First, sometimes a researcher has to confront a reality of having to compromise either part of the research or compromise the name (reputation); especially in a society where the name is everything; once you lose it, you lose everything with it. In some instances, girls at the school would question the researcher's rationale behind "hanging out" with certain stigmatized girls or groups. At the same time, these groups would sometimes invite the researcher to their gathering places outside school that have a reputation for being exclusive for certain stigmatized groups namely lesbians. Therefore, the researcher's name is at risk of judgment that can turn out to be poor, misinformed, or downright false. Second, it is hard to be completely honest with the subjects and maintain objectivity, so the challenge lies in keeping a balance between being honest and being objective. Third, besides the battle between the research and the researcher's reputation, honesty with the participants and objectivity, there is also a possible incongruity between the researcher's paradigm and the research design.

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This study is intended to be an exploration of the intricate relationships between language attitudes and behaviors, adolescents' subcultures, and social and personal identity. At the same time, it serves as an examination of the problematic notion of identity; a term that is complex and perplexing to define. Furthermore, the present study attempts to capture the interdependent interaction between a multiplicity of factors including language behaviors, language attitudes, social cliques, adolescents, and social/personal identity. It aims at observing adolescents' subgroups in both public and private high schools, examining their language attitudes and behaviors, and finally exploring the role of language practices in defining and sustaining different adolescents' cliques and social/personal identities. The present study is not based on negative assumptions against social cliques that have been criticized by Kuwaiti society; rather it tries to examine these subcultures particularly studying their discourse and how certain language choices express particular social identities through the lenses of the group. It aims at exposing the naked truth without covering it up or adorning it.

Just as Labov (1972) emphasized the importance of understanding the ways that vernacular culture uses language and how it develops within this culture, I strongly believe in the significance of seeking an understanding of youth culture in order to understand their speech, even from a linguistic point of view. I prefer to study language within its social context with all its complexities instead of detaching the speaker from the linguistic form, sound, or meaning. Consequently, I chose to pay attention to youth culture in order to understand their language choices and behaviors and vice versa, since language and identity are intimately connected. There was a richness of language and behaviors and a diversity of linguistic attitudes including code switching and the preference of one language code over another, different value judgments and intrinsic values associated with a given language, language hostility and verbal violence, secretive sexual jargon, texting lingo, speech divergence, and the social and personal symbolism of lexical and discourse linguistic choices and practices. Besides the focus of this study being sociolinguistic or linguistic, since language is social, it is a study calling for attention from a variety of

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disciplines and authorities including counselors, policy makers, educators, academics, linguists, sociologists, parents, and students. It is intended for a wide range of audience that I aspire to reach through raising awareness about a multiplicity of issues beyond academic linguistic findings. It sheds light on youth problems and concerns that are affected by parenting, counseling, social and cultural expectations, group membership and group conformity, and teacher-student relation.

By the end of any study, it is important to be able to answer: "What is the focus of my study?", "What are my research questions?", "How was it inspired?", and "Why is it significant in both the field in specific and the society in general?" (Miranda 2003). In this study, I attempted to both raise these questions as well as offer informed and insightful answers. Finders (1997: 131) encourages following in the footsteps of the Chinese-American author Maxine Hong Kingston who responds to Bill Moyer's (1988) question "Do you think you can change the world?" by stating "Oh, yes, and we do it word by word....I change the language. I change people's mouths. I change the world".

6.2 Community Reflections

The researcher found it part of her mission that she could, besides exposing the truth of Kuwaiti schools, help the students with their problems at least by raising awareness of the types of social and psychological troubles some of these young girls go through. The counselor kept asking the researcher for names and problems that are taking place in the school. No names of students were given only names of the problems that the counselor never had heard of, such as the critical boyat training periods before transferring to full boya-hood and the disturbing and dangerous cutting psychological disorder. For the sake of the students' privacy, no names were given at all, although it could have been helpful. At the same time, they might be in danger of being transferred from the school by the administration once were discovered. Unfortunately, transferring the problematic students is one of the ways the school treats a problem at her institution, by removing it and throwing it to another school to deal with it.

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There was a teacher who taught Arabic language classes at the school who found the survey problematic and controversial at the beginning of the fieldwork. She expressed concern at the pictures on the cover of the survey, accusing the researcher of spreading messages to students to adopt Western practices, such as in joining gothic, Satanist, or Emo subcultures due to the nature of the pictures. At the end of the study, she came to the researcher again inquiring about the study and whether the researcher was going to permanently join the school as a counselor or a teacher. It was the week before the last when she approached the researcher again. She stated "I have seen you with a particular group of girls. Are you guiding them? Are you giving them advice?" to which the researcher explained, "I am not here to treat them. I tell the counselor at the school you have problems like this and that and it is the counselor's job". In this case, the teacher had a certain expectation for the researcher to fulfill. It was a negotiation of roles, expectations, and perspectives. The researcher clearly had a different paradigm to embrace: that of exposing the naked truth without hiding the fact that certain disturbing cases exist in the society. Besides that, guidance does not work without a true attempt to understand the students as individuals first before looking at them as mere students devoid of the complex web of family background, psychological makeup, and social group membership. There was a clash between tolerance, consideration, and understanding with conservativeness to the point of harshness that scolds and rushes to change attitudes without taking the first step first, understanding.

Many changes have been taking place since the fieldwork started. The researcher believes that the ethnographic fieldwork study has been an eye opener to the whole school community. The counselor has been more attentive to the problematic cases of students who have been displaying violence, controversial sexual identity, and academic failure. The school has also decided to allow teachers to mingle with students during recess, which was not allowed prior to fieldwork. Lately, the most troublesome and mischievous girls at the school have been punished lately more often by the school authorities by grouping

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them together on recess periods in a given room with a couple of teachers who would work with them on certain school projects or constructive activities.

At the last day of the study, both the participants and the researcher cried while saying goodbyes. The students had gifts, letters, and scrapbooks to give the researcher where they talked about themselves more freely entrusting the researcher with their fears, secrets, crushes, and dreams. Although, the researcher had become very close to the participants by the end of the study, the facts will be spoken as they are with objectivity that is crowned with an understanding and consideration for each individual participant. They were the priority throughout the study and were put ahead of the school administrative and teaching authorities.

6.3 Future Applications

One future study that can be developed based on this work is building on the preliminary data from the newspaper articles turning it into a corpus study like the one that was conducted with the blogs corpus. These two corpora can be compared in a lexical investigation in terms of the most frequent word usages. They are interestingly different corpora in two ways. First, they come from different sources one projecting the teenager's voice and the other one projecting the media's voice including the general public, journalists and reporters, and academics and authority figures. Second, the teenager voice displays language use of the youth, while the media is expressing opinions about adolescents; hence exhibiting language about the youth. The goal, therefore, will be to examine and compare the terms and descriptions made by adolescents and about them.

In addition, this study can be expanded in the future to examine other social cliques in a comparative study between public schools and private schools. It can be further applied in any social setting or any age group, because language use and identity in all its facets are interconnected and intertwined so intimately. This sociolinguistic bond is everywhere. Cliques are widespread in all walks of life be it social, political, academic, or spiritual. This study, however, chose to focus on adolescents as an age group in the school setting in a specific socio-cultural community to investigate as well as pay attention

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to the connection linking between linguistic feedback and adolescents group identity and how social institutions such as family, friends, and school community participate in constructing that identity.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTION

Dear student,
Thank you for choosing to take part in this survey study. Please do <u>not</u> write your name, as this should be anonymous. Please answer all the questions honestly.

<center>**Part 1**</center>

Age:
Sex:
Grade:

1) List four of the social groups (cliques) you have noticed at your school:
   1.

   2.

   3.

   4.

<center>**Part 2**</center>

Based on the groups you listed above, please name the group and answer the related questions. This survey should be anonymous, so please do not write your name and answer all the questions as honestly and clearly as you can.

<u>**Group 1 (Name):**</u>

1) How do you feel about **group 1** in general? Please rate this group on a thermometer that runs from zero (0) to a hundred (100). The higher the number, the more favorable you feel towards this group. The lower the number, the less favorable you feel. If you feel neither warm nor cold towards them, rate them at 50.

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

2) Please indicate how you feel about **group 1** by rating the following scales. Circle the number on each scale that describes how you personally feel toward this group:

warm	1	2	3	4	5	cold
negative	1	2	3	4	5	positive
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	hostile
suspicious	1	2	3	4	5	trusting
respect	1	2	3	4	5	contempt
admiration	1	2	3	4	5	disgust

3) Think about your contact with people who belong to **group 1** and check one

answer per question:

a) How often do you chat or communicate with these people?

   1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

b) How many of your closest friends belong to this group?

   1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

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c) How different do you feel from people in this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

d) How much does it bother you to be mistaken for someone who belongs to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

Group 2 (Name): _____

1) How do you feel about **group 2** in general? Please rate this group on a thermometer that runs from zero (0) to a hundred (100). The higher the number, the more favorable you feel towards this group. The lower the number, the less favorable you feel. If you feel neither warm nor cold towards them, rate them at 50.

     0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

2) Please indicate how you feel about **group 2** by rating the following scales. Circle the number on each scale that describes how you personally feel toward this group:

warm	1	2	3	4	5	cold
negative	1	2	3	4	5	positive
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	hostile
suspicious	1	2	3	4	5	trusting
respect	1	2	3	4	5	contempt
admiration	1	2	3	4	5	disgust

3) Think about your contact with people who belong to **group 2** and check one

answer per question:

a) How often do you chat or communicate with these people?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

b) How many of your closest friends belong to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

c) How different do you feel from people in this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

d) How much does it bother you to be mistaken for someone who belongs to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

Group 3 (Name): _____

1) How do you feel about **group 3** in general? Please rate this group on a thermometer that runs from zero (0) to a hundred (100). The higher the number, the more favorable you feel towards this group. The lower the number, the less favorable you feel. If you feel neither warm nor cold towards them, rate them at 50.

     0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

2) Please indicate how you feel about **group 3** by rating the following scales. Circle the number on each scale that describes how you personally feel toward this group:

warm	1	2	3	4	5	cold
negative	1	2	3	4	5	positive
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	hostile
suspicious	1	2	3	4	5	trusting
respect	1	2	3	4	5	contempt
admiration	1	2	3	4	5	disgust

3) Think about your contact with people who belong to **group 3** and check one

answer per question:

a) How often do you chat or communicate with these people?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

b) How many of your closest friends belong to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

c) How different do you feel from people in this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

d) How much does it bother you to be mistaken for someone who belongs to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

Group 4 (Name): _____

1) How do you feel about **group 4** in general? Please rate this group on a thermometer that runs from zero (0) to a hundred (100). The higher the number, the more favorable you feel towards this group. The lower the number, the less favorable you feel. If you feel neither warm nor cold towards them, rate them at 50.

    0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

2) Please indicate how you feel about **group 4** by rating the following scales. Circle the number on each scale that describes how you personally feel toward this group:

warm	1	2	3	4	5	cold
negative	1	2	3	4	5	positive
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	hostile
suspicious	1	2	3	4	5	trusting
respect	1	2	3	4	5	contempt
admiration	1	2	3	4	5	disgust

3) Think about your contact with people who belong to **group 4** and check one

answer per question:

a) How often do you chat or communicate with these people?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

b) How many of your closest friends belong to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

c) How different do you feel from people in this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

d) How much does it bother you to be mistaken for someone who belongs to this group?

  1 a great deal   2 some   3 a little   4 none at all

Part 3

1) Think about the major languages spoken in Kuwait such as Modern Standard

Arabic, Kuwaiti dialect, Farsi, and English and check all the answers that apply:

a) **Kuwaiti dialect** is useful for:

  1 education   2 finding a job   3 social networking   4 prestige   5 it is not useful

b) **Modern Standard Arabic** is useful for:

  1 education   2 finding a job   3 social networking   4 prestige   5 it is not useful

c) **Farsi** is useful for:

1 education   2 finding a job   3 social networking   4 prestige   5 it is not useful

d) **English** is useful for:

1 education   2 finding a job   3 social networking   4 prestige   5 it is not useful

e) What might have caused the popularity of English in Kuwait?

  1   It is not popular

  2   Media

  3   U.S. support in 1991 Kuwait's liberation

  4   Presence of American army

  5   Increase of foreign schools

  6   Other _____

1) Based on the social cliques you provided at the beginning of the survey, is there a

group you feel that you belong to? (If so, which one/ones?)

2) Is there a group you do **not** belong to but that you wish you could be part of? (If so, which one is it?)

3) What major traits distinguish the members of each group you mentioned here?

Group (1)

     a) How do members of each group dress?

     b) How do members of each group perform academically?

     c) What are the shared personal interests or hobbies of each group's members?

Group (2)

     a) How do members of each group dress?

     b) How do members of each group perform academically?

     c) What are the shared personal interests or hobbies of each group's members?

Group (3)

     a) How do members of each group dress?

     b) How do members of each group perform academically?

     c) What are the shared personal interests or hobbies of each group's members? **Group (4)**

     a) How do members of each group dress?

     b) How do members of each group perform academically?

     c) What are the shared personal interests or hobbies of each group's members?

<div align="right">

Best Regards
Dalal S. Almubayei

</div>

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTION

Age: School year: Social clique:

Part 1

    1. I see myself as a member of this group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    2. Being a member in this group is central to my sense of self.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    3. Being a member in this group has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    4. I value being a member in this group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    5. I feel proud to be a member in this group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    6. Belonging to this group is unimportant to what kind of person I am.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    7. The way I speak is important to being a member in this group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    8. Swearing is totally acceptable in our group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    9. The way I look is important to being a member in this group.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    10. Our group is greatly valued by the students at the school.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    11. Our group is greatly valued by the teachers and administrators at school.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree
    12. Any student can join our group easily.

I strongly agree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   I strongly disagree

Part 2

    13. Overall, please tell me the common features, values, or practices that connect all the group members together.

    14. What forms of language do you believe members of this group typically use? For example, does this group use the following language forms?

        1 English vocabulary   2 swearing   3 Farsi   4 secret language   5 slang
        6 Kuwaiti dialect   7 Modern Standard Arabic   8 code switching

        9 others_____

APPENDIX C

SURVEY ASSENT INFO SHEET

Dear student

My name is Dalal Almubayei. I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Laurel Smith Stvan in the Department of Linguistics at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am conducting a survey study that requires the participation of Kuwaiti secondary school students grade 10 to 12 to learn from their perspectives and views of aspects relevant to their respective educational institutions.

I am requesting your participation that will involve answering a survey where you mostly circle the answers. Time to complete the survey will depend on each participant, but it should take 30 to 45 minutes. Participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. No real names will be requested.

Although there might not be direct benefit to you, the benefit of your participation is greatly helpful in gaining insights about Kuwaiti secondary schools. Your participation will further help educationalists and academics alike understand the needs and interests of students. This study as part of my PhD dissertation aims at contributing to the efforts of improving the options relevant to the lives of students.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at my phone number 9441976 or at my email dalal.almubayei@mavs.uta.edu or you can contact Dr. Laurel Stvan at stvan@uta.edu

Sincerely,
Dalal S. Almubayei

APPENDIX D

ETHNOGRAPHY ASSENT INFO SHEET

Dear student

My name is Dalal Almubayei. I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Laurel Smith Stvan in the Department of Linguistics at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am conducting an observational study that requires the participation of Kuwaiti secondary school students grade 10 to 12 to learn from their perspectives on the subject of social network groups as they develop in their respective educational institutions.

I am requesting your consent to participate in a participant-observation study where I will physically take part in your network of friends observing interactions in an attempt to understand the dynamics of social network groups. Audiotaping could take place sometime later in the course of the study. However, the tapes will not be public and will be accessed only by me. Also, at a later time during the study, you will be asked to participate in an interview to ask about your group membership. It is expected that this study will last for one or two academic semesters. Participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. No real names will be identified; pseudonyms will be used instead.

Although there might not be direct benefit to you, the benefit of your participation is greatly helpful in gaining insights about social cliques in Kuwaiti secondary schools. Your participation will further help educationalists and academics alike understand the needs and interests of your social network at school. This study as part of my PhD dissertation aims at contributing to the efforts of improving the options relevant to the lives of students.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at phone number 9441976 or at my email dalal.almubayei@mavs.uta.edu

Sincerely,
Dalal S. Almubayei

APPENDIX E

SURVEY CONSENT INFO SHEET

Dear parent

My name is Dalal Almubayei. I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Laurel Smith Stvan in the Department of Linguistics at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am conducting a survey study that requires the participation of Kuwaiti secondary school students grade 10 to 12 to learn from their perspective and views about aspects of their respective educational institutions.

I am requesting the participation of your daughter/son that will involve answering a survey where they mostly circle the answers. Time to complete the survey will depend on each participant, but it should take 30 to 45 minutes. Participation is voluntary. If they choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. No real names will be requested to ensure confidentiality.

Although there might not be direct benefit, the benefit of your child's participation is greatly helpful in gaining insights about Kuwaiti secondary schools. The students' participation will further help educationalists and academics alike to understand the needs and interests of students. This study as part of my PhD dissertation contributes to the efforts of improving the options relevant to the lives of students.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at my phone number 9441976 or at my email dalal.almubayei@mavs.uta.edu or you can contact Dr. Laurel Stvan at stvan@uta.edu

Sincerely,
Dalal S. Almubayei

APPENDIX F

ETHNOGRAPHY CONSENT INFO SHEET

Dear parent

My name is Dalal Almubayei. I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Laurel Smith Stvan in the Department of Linguistics at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am conducting a study that requires the participation of Kuwaiti secondary school students grade 10 to 12 to learn from their perspectives on the subject of social network groups as they develop in their respective educational institutions.

I am requesting your consent of the participation of your daughter/son in a participant-observation study where I will physically take part in her/his social network of friends at school observing interactions in an attempt to understand the dynamics of social cliques. Audiotaping could take place sometime later in the course of the study. However, the tapes will not be public and will be accessed only by me. Also at a later time during the study, the participants will be asked to take part in an informal interview to ask about their group membership. Participation is voluntary. If they choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. No real names will be identified; pseudonyms will be used instead.

Although there might not be direct benefits, the benefit of your child's participation is greatly helpful in gaining insights about social cliques in Kuwaiti secondary schools. Your daughter/son participation will further help educationalists and academics alike understand the needs and interests of your social network at school. This study as part of my PhD dissertation aims at contributing to the efforts of improving the options relevant to the lives of students.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at phone number 9441976 or at my email dalal.almubayei@mavs.uta.edu

Sincerely,
Dalal S. Almubayei

APPENDIX G

WRITTEN SECRET LANGUAGES

A B C D E F G K L M N

H I J

O P Q R S T U V W

X Y Z

169

أ ب ت ث ج خ ذ ه ذ

ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ

ي و ه ن م ل ك ق ف

ة

170

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Dalal Almubayei was born and raised in Kuwait speaking Arabic all her life. She has lived in the United States for nine years studying and specializing in Linguistics. Being embraced by a language and a culture so distinct from her own made her appreciate languages and people; a wholehearted appreciation developed into a life long journey of exploration in the realm of sociolinguistics where language and people are inseparable. Her research interests range between Sociolinguistics, Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, and Corpus Linguistics focusing mainly on sociolinguistic topics including language attitudes and behaviors, language stereotypes, language and identity, and language and youth. As a former EFL instructor, she also has interests in TESL/TEFL classroom issues, language policies, and second language acquisition. This dissertation is dedicated to her parents Fatma AlSabri and Saleh Almubayei who take a lot of pride in this work.