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A STUDY ON HOW A SOJOURNER'S IDENTITY IS AFFECTED WHEN NOT SURROUNDED BY FAMILY OR CUSTOMARY CULTURAL TRADITIONS

By

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In Memory of My Parents

Max and Margaret Gardiner

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Foreword

> Every voyage can be said to involve a re-siting of boundaries. The traveling self is here both the self that moves physically from one place to another, following "public routes and beaten tracks" within a mapped movement, and the self that embarks on an undetermined journeying practice, having constantly to negotiate between home and abroad, native culture and adopted culture, or more creatively speaking, between a here, a there, and an elsewhere.
>
> Trinh Ti Minh-ha, *Travelers' Tales*, 1994, p.9

I first came to Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, nearly 14 years ago as an employee of Emirates Airlines. At first, I believed I would complete my three-year contract and return home to New Zealand. Instead, I met my partner, Bruce. I chose to remain in Dubai as we started a life journey together. During this time, I began my University studies, at first part-time and then, leaving my employment, full-time. Along the way, there was a temporary relocation, namely to Singapore for a year, which involved traveling between Dubai (our home), Singapore (Bruce's work apartment) and New Zealand (for university Post Graduate courses). The excitement of this year's constant sojourning and subsequent learning opportunities was short-lived when I was personally devastated by the sudden and severe illness of my mother and her subsequent death, which occurred not long after the loss of my father. After a break from my studies for six months, I now embark upon this project of learning and discovery.

Living in the Middle East has, I believe, significantly changed me personally and developmentally, yet, paradoxically, I remain the same. This contradiction can best be explained by the plurality of 'roles' I occupy as a New Zealander living as an expatriate in Dubai. Arguably, any changes are due to the abundance of new and varied multi-cultural influences upon my identity, predominantly contextually, culturally and inter-relationally cued, which were principally welcomed yet at times seemed 'imposed'. My 'sameness' results from the flexibility and stability of my identity or self, and continued interaction with friends and family at 'home' in New Zealand and fellow expatriates residing in Dubai.

It is thus inevitable that my words and thoughts, and indeed even my choice of research topic and avenue, are somewhat affected by my own developing identity.

PART ONE
THE STUDY

Chapter I

Introduction

> The most basic questions about identity call for a more general reexamination of the relation between personal experience and public meanings – subjective choices and evaluations, on the one hand, and objective social location, on the other.
>
> (Satya Mohanty, 2004, p. 392)

An "identity" emerges as a conceptual tool for explaining the world and experiences, and is often taken for granted or used ubiquitously with no clear definition or analysis (Gibson, 1994; Wiley, 1994; and Zaretsky, 1994; cited in Stryker, Owens & White, 2000). Indeed, "these authors … hold a cultural conception of identity – they are concerned with ideas, beliefs, practices, [and] characterizing entire peoples" (Stryker, et al., 2000, p. 22). Arguably, identity can be located in social terms, category-based concepts, in the roles a person occupies, or, in collective terms, wherein identities are debatably shaped by commonalities and thus located in the "core of individuals *and* the core of communal culture" (Stryker et al., 2000, p. 23, original italics). Therefore, social identities and how they have arisen, how 'we' live, how 'we' are "transformed or might be transformed and how they should be transformed" are ideas of emerging importance (Alcoff & Mendieta, 2003, p.1).

Social psychology has typically anchored its focus in exploring identity by examining social identities from major frameworks such as Identity Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Self Categorization Theory. Investigation into identity and sojourners[1], people who have relocated to foreign countries (but not of immigrant status), typically fell within the

[1] Those who live in a foreign country temporarily and on a volunteer basis (see the section titled Sojourners, page 18, for further discussion).

psychological or sociological realms, of particular interest were issues directed at examining personality traits such as extraversion, neuroticism (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004) or socio-cultural knowledge or social difficulty and how this affects adjustment rather than identity (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Thus, previous studies on sojourners generally explored how aforementioned psychological or socio-cultural entities impact sojourners' ability to effectively adapt, particularly by addressing issues related to culture shock (Oberg, 1960, cited in Ward & Kennedy, 1993), psychological adjustment and sociocultural competence during cross-cultural transitions (Ward & Kennedy, 1994), strong cultural identity with host culture (Feinstein & Ward, 1990, cited in Ward & Kennedy, 1993), or personalities' dimensions and adjustment (Ward, et al, 2004). Arguably, previous researchers have veiled sojourner's identity investigation by concerning themselves with adjustment, culture shock, cross-cultural adaptation, psychological well-being, stress and coping or social skills, and how these affect productivity and successful cross-cultural relocation (Ward & Kennedy, 1993, p. 222), while ignoring other social identity issues.

Identity from a social perspective is first documented as beginning with the symbolic integrationists' perspectives of Charles H Cooley and George H Mead around the early 1900s, in reaction to the Cartesian separation of individual and society. Indeed, Cooley posited that "[a] separate individual is an abstraction unknown to experience, and so likewise is society when regarded as something apart from individuals ... 'Society' and 'individuals' do not denote separable phenomena, but are simply collective and distributive aspects of the same thing" (Cooley, 1964, cited in Carbaugh, 1996, p.5). Thus, according to Cooley, society certainly impacts one's personal thoughts and ideas. Mead also refuted Descartes by focusing on the integration of the self and natural environment (Clayton & Opotow, 2003). Thus, both Cooley and Mead situated the self by introducing the notion of self as more than a biopsychological agent but rather as an entity invested in an intersection of social and symbolic interaction.

With the above for focus, the following section will first review some of the pertinent literature and research investigating identity, and explain how these views have influenced my perspectives on the concept of 'identity' by examining the process of the

formation of an identity. The content will then move to the view of a national identity or the concept of nationality, and then direct attention to the identity of people living temporarily in a foreign country, sojourners. This subject will form the basis of my central investigation into how the identity of sojourners is affected when not living or continually surrounded by what they identify as their own traditions or customs.

Prominent but parallel theories in the concept of identity are a) Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Hogg & Abrams, 1988) and b) Identity Theory (Stryker, 1980; Burke 1991; Burke & Tully 1977). Despite their differences, both argue that identities are based ultimately on the "self as reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p.224). Social identity theory and identity theory explain identity as rooted in discourse and communication practice in which "discourse allows for an analysis of 'when' and 'how' identities are invoked and constructed in conversation" (Carbaugh, 1996, cited in Stets & Burke, 2000). Additionally, both are in agreement that identity is predicated on a "multifaceted self that mediates between social structure and individual behavior" (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995, p. 255). Additionally, both theories embrace social constructionist views, which state that identities are socially constructed, not biologically determined. However, despite constructionist roots, these two perspectives have differences in how identity becomes salient. Specifically, identity theory is "principally a microsociological theory ... [that] sets out to explain individuals' role-related behaviors, while social identity theory is a social psychological theory that sets out to explain group processes and intergroup relations" (Hogg, et al., 1995, p. 255)[2].

Throughout the literature, the terms identity and subjectivity are frequently used interchangeably. Woodward (1997) distinguishes between the two in the following way:

> Subjectivity includes our sense of self. It involves the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions, which constitute our sense, of who we are and the feelings, which are brought to different positions within, culture.... Yet we experience our subjectivity in a social context where language and culture give meaning to our experience of ourselves and where we adopt an identity.

[2] For elaboration see section Social Constructionist Epistemology (Pages 25-27).

> Discourses, whatever sets of meaning they construct, can only be effective if they recruit subjects. Subjects are thus subjected to the discourse and must themselves take it up as individuals who so position themselves. The positions which we take up and identify with constitute our identities. (p. 39; emphasis in original)

This sentiment is repeated by Hall (1996), who contends that identity is the meeting point between the discourses and practices that call us to be subjects of particular discourses and the processes that produce subjectivities that construct us as subjects that can be spoken. A further echo of this definition comes from Alcoff and Mendieta (2004, p.3), who state "identity is not in the main an individual affair… [i]ndividuals make their own identity, but not under conditions of their own choosing". Plainly, you cannot separate the interaction of discourse and identity or vice versa, since arguably one does not exist without the other. Therefore, in order to fully explore questions on or related to self and identity, entities such as cultural and linguistic bodies that border and infiltrate identity must be addressed.

As such, identity is a combination of subjective positions and sociocultural situations in which discourse is produced, exchanged, sustained, and operated through a representational system which suggests that it is 'us' that give meaning to identity within a cultural frame of reference and 'shared values' of a particular group, which are, in turn, influenced by particular historical circumstances and geographical space (Hall, 1997). Indeed, identity is not about people telling us what their identity is nor them interpreting what they think their identity is but rather identity is revealed in what people say and do, that is, it is "something used in everyday talk: something part and parcel of the routines of everyday life, brought off in the fine detail of everyday interaction" (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998, p.1). Thus, contrary to the idea posited by humanistic traditions that identity is somehow fixed and/or essential, a person's identity can in fact be regarded as relational, whereby individuals can display a changing host of identities under a multitude of categories. Hall (1996) points out that, currently, identities are becoming increasingly fragmented and fractured as a result of voluntary and forced migration, travel and globalization, thus rejecting the notion that identity is solely biological. Rather, the suggestion is that identity is subject to changes and transformations according to historical time, institutional site and various other contexts.

Similarly, ethnic, national or cultural identities are subject to change according to geopolitical and historical necessities and realities, thus contesting the claim of unchanging, transhistorical, cultural belongingness. Billig (1995) states that political discourse also impacts identity:

> [p]oliticans not only live in the eye of the country, but they represent the nation to itself. In addressing the imagined national audience, they dress it in rhetorical finery and, then, these speakers-as-outfitters hold a mirror so the nation can admire itself (p.98).

According to Collier (1998) "cultural identities are historical, contextual and relational constructions ... [they] emerge in everyday discourse and in social practices, rituals, norms and myths that are handed down to new members" (p.131). Thus, everyday speech and cultural and historical meanings are crucial for reaching an understanding of human interactions and identities, for they provide representations that exist outside of nature. Also, Hall (1996) suggests that although they invoke an origin in a historical past, "identities are about using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from' so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (p.4). Therefore, who 'we are' is learned and constructed through external resources, such as language and social conventions, which influence how we view and communicate in the real world. Connor (1966, cited in Oommen, 1997) agrees, stating that cultural identity is also "increased [by] transportation and communication [which] add to the cultural awareness of nations and individuals, thereby reinforcing their cultural identity" (p.10).

This emphasis on cultural practices is important, for culture permeates all society, and, according to Woodward (1997, cited in Hall, 1997), "culture gives us a sense of our own identity, of who we are and with whom we 'belong' ... [so that] meaning is constantly being produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction in which we take part" (p.3). These social interactions and enactments influence identity and, through association and use of symbols and codes, create cultural identity of belongingness or

shared values. Thus, "cultural spaces influence how we think about ourselves and others" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p.247).

Identity from a communication theory perspective is both an individual and social event that is formed and enacted in social interaction and conditions of interaction, which, in their turn, influence identity enactments (Hecht, Collier & Ribeau, 1993). Through television and increasingly through the internet, 'we' share simultaneous experiences with millions of others, which communicates identity and sends messages and 'helps' in negotiating how we feel or think about ourselves, how we act and how we express our identity (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001, p.15). Thus, both "our private and personal domains" are affected by influences that are of more than our own choosing (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Clearly, "[t]he relationship between culture and communication is complex [because] culture influences communication, and vice versa" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p.86). For example, those from more individualist societies have a tendency to value individualism while those from collectivist societies usually favour more group-oriented activities. Also, communication theorists note that individualism-collectivism societies influence cross-cultural communication styles so that some cultures experience direct communications while others rely on more reserved forms of communication (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004).

Identity formation can also be impacted by means of social categorization into groups, such as minorities and majorities, which impacts issues such as identity salience. For example, when minority-majority identity relational groups were manipulated in an experiment, it was found that the collective self was "significantly stronger for minority members, but only when the social categorization was meaningful ... [o]therwise minority and majority members did not differ from each other" (Simon, Aufderheide & Kampmeier, 1997, cited in Brewer & Hewstone, 2004, p.281). Furthermore, minorities seemingly have more in-group identity homogeneity while majorities have more out-group homogeneity, which in turn affects one's identity to the group (Simon et al, 1997, cited in Brewer & Hewstone, 2004). Thus, a minority/majority group phenomenon is significant because it arguably directly affects how we define ourselves, process social information, make social comparisons, and label self, our feelings and emotions.

Finally, "[w]hether we are speaking of the individual or the macro-structural forces that contribute to identity formation," Freud insisted "that the process does not follow apparent self-interest, since the self is not transparent to itself nor are identities the mere outward manifestations of inner selves" (Alcoff & Mendieta, 2003, p.5). Mead later argued the notion that instead of a self 'having' a perspective, the self is 'in' a perspective: and that perspective proceeds the individual, that is, "social consciousness is organized from the outside in" thus, identity can be viewed as something that is not fixed; there is no one "true" identity that can be found, so it follows that identity is constituted within representations and discourses (Alcoff & Mendieta, 2003, p.5). Since discourses construct identities for us and just as "it is impossible to determine the meaning of an object outside its context of use ... a stone thrown in a fight is a different thing ('a projectile') from a stone displayed in a museum ('a piece of sculpture')" so too is it impossible to position ourselves outside of contextual discourse (Hall, 1997, p.45). Cultural meaning often depends on larger units of analysis: narratives, statements, groups of images, whole discourses that operate across a variety of texts, areas of knowledge about a subject, which have acquired widespread authority (Hall, 1997, p.42). Thus, we become the subject of these discourses and we speak from them. In the construction process, signifying practices such as symbols, codes, images, clothing, gestures, performances as well as political, economic and social forces, shape what it means to be a member of a particular group. These constructed positions become prototypes for living, behaving and thinking (Halualani, 2000). At the same time, we are constrained by them, as the availability of discourses and the possibilities of the symbolic representations at that particular time and location restrict and set out limitations for us.

Nationality

Seemingly, there is agreement that one's nationality is never forgotten: "a man (sic) must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears" (Gellner, 1983, cited in Billig, 1995, p.37). Indeed, nations, nationalism and national identity are all around us (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001, p. vii). However, it is important to distinguish between and, as

Oommen (1997) states, "re-examine" the terms nationality, citizenship and ethnicity, all of which seem to get so often blurred especially since these terms are frequently used interchangeably, thus, it may be more meaningful to situate them in a relational and interactional context. Therefore, according to Oommen (1997)

> In multi-national and poly-ethnic states a variety of combinations emerges and exists. But persons or a collectivity cannot be nationals and ethnics at the same time in the same locale, in that these are mutually exclusive identities. The case of citizenship is different. One can either be a citizen and a national, a citizen and an ethnic, or an ethnic and a non-citizen in such societies. What I am suggesting is that three identities are of different types and the possibilities of different permutations and combinations exists depending upon the property of the situation and the attributes of the individuals. [Furthermore] re-examination of these concepts is the importance of another dimension of what I have called the property of the situation. Categorization of social phenomena is purposive; one categorization may not be suited for all purposes (p.6).

Additionally, while categorisation of social phenomena can be purposeful, it may also be problematic and lead to serious limitations or wrongful generalisations or stereotypes.

Thus, according to Oommen, "ethnicity, nationality and citizenship are all identities, but the bases of them differ" (p.38). Broadly and simply speaking, ethnicity, as generally thought of in sociology and social psychology, refers to a group of people who are usually seen as being "culturally rather than physically distinctive" (Haralambos & Holborn, 1995, P.674). According to Giddens (1997), ethnicity is "*wholly learned*", and what sets ethnic groups apart is generally language, dress, history and religion, whereby differing ethnic groups view themselves as culturally distinct from other ethnic groups (p. 210, original italics). Additionally, ethnic identity can be viewed as a set of ideas that typically includes self-identification, knowledge about one's ethnic culture, and feelings about belonging to a particular ethnic group, which involves a sense of shared origin and history (Martin & Nakayama 2003). Therefore, I suggest that when considering entities such as ethnicity, nationality and citizenship, we must include rather than exclude the context they are in, just as it is important to recognize surrounding issues when investigating identity.

Technically, the concept of citizenship, refers to an individual belonging to a population living within the geographically-defined borders of a country, and having certain political rights provided by the governmental system, with certain obligations as a price for these rights (Giddens, 1997). Almost everyone in the world today belongs to or has an affinity with a definite national political order, with the exception of political refugees (Giddens, 1997). Thus, citizenship is generally an easily determined concept for most.

Nationality, however, is a term that has been largely unexamined in sociological discourse, according to Giddens (1985, cited in Billig 1995). As in the case of Haralambos and Holborn (1995), nationality gets entangled and embroiled into a discussion of race, ethnicity, migrations, and discussion of The Nationality Acts of 1914 and 1948, and immigration. Nationality is seemingly a taken-for-granted concept and merely lost in the section headed 'Race, Ethnicity and Nationality'. Thus, seemingly, the concept of nationality in many respects has been forgotten or is such a term that explains itself in an unproblematic and straightforward way.

According to Billig (1995), nationality is banal and feeble, and it remains dormant until called upon, yet at the same time "people in the contemporary world do not forget their nationality" (p.7). This notion of why people do not forget their nationality seems particularly germane to the sojourner[3], for even if the sojourn is lengthy or indeed if born in the foreign land where one's parents are temporally residing, the sojourner is never separated from his or her nationality. Billig further states that a national identity involves all the little taken for granted items and "forgotten reminders" that surround one's life in one's own national country that then join together to be embodied into the habits and social life of an individual's identity. For instance, it is through the use of language, the way of processing discourse, that the individual gains a sense of nationality. Moreover, according to Billig (1995), having a "national identity also involves being situated physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally: typically, it means being situated within a homeland which itself is situated within the world of nations" (p. 8). If this is so, why does having the label of a certain nationality, whether living in or out of one's

[3] See next section for definition of sojourners

national country, have such a strong reference on one's identity? Seemingly, there is an emotional attachment to the territorial entity that is one's homeland, ancestral or adopted, that carries a tremendous, rarely eclipsed sense of security in having a national identity (Oommen, 1997). Thus, it is important to address the issue of how identity of the sojourner is affected when living without constant cultural references or reminders of who and what they are supposed to be.

Sojourners

Expatriates[4] are individuals who move to a foreign country voluntarily on a temporary or limited basis and for clear, generally economic or lifestyle, purposes; yet they are distinct from tourists or immigrants (Shaffer & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004). Tourists and immigrants travel to foreign countries for entirely different purposes, the former spending a short amount of time, most notably for leisure, while the latter intend their move to be permanent[5]. Specifically, according to Ward and Kennedy (1994), sojourners are "individuals who travel voluntarily to a new culture, usually for specific objectives such as educational and occupational opportunities, who view their residence in the new culture as fixed and finite, and who usually have expectations of returning to their country of origin" (p331).

With the growing spread of economic and corporate globalization, there are now many different 'types' of sojourners[6], and thus increased reasons for relocating. Relocating employees can generally be classified in several ways. Parent country nationals (PNCs) are those "employees whose national origins are the same as that of [the] country in which the MNC is headquartered, such as an American expatriate manager from Federal Express deployed to Hong Kong" (Harrison, et al, 2004, p.203). Inpatriates are foreign

[4] While this is the term most commonly used by sojourners and their hosts, the word 'sojourners' is most frequently used in academic literature.
[5] For those moving to the UAE, permanency is not an option. Sojourners to the UAE rarely view this territory as their new homeland in which they will ultimately settle and thus are always to be considered 'outsiders' by 'insiders' (Oommen, 1997).
[6] This study will involve several 'types' of sojourners, thus may confound comparisons to other sojourner situations.

nationals who live and work in the parent country. Third country national (TCN) employees are those whose national origin and country of assignment are outside the parent country of the MNC. Self-initiated foreign workers are those who are "personally motivated to live and work abroad, these individuals may even resign from their current jobs and self-sponsor their overseas move ... [o]ften, there may not be a pre-arranged job set up in the host country" (Harrison et al, 2004, p.204). Another category is the spouses (and immediate family members) who previously received little attention, but are now seen as important due to the direct impact they have on the employee's well-being and longevity as an overseas staff member. Additionally, spouses and dependants who also relocate with the employee may or may not seek employment in the host nation.

Sojourners are a crucial link in cross-cultural research, providing effective information on intercultural communication. Also, sojourners are of interest because they are different from domestic employees in terms of (mal)adjustment, stressors and associated strains (Harrison, Shaffer & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004). International relocations not only involve work transitions but also changes in entire support systems, social networks, and economic, political, cultural and religious terrain, which is often unfamiliar to the expatriate (Harrison, et al, 2004). Additionally, there is much to be gained in understanding the effects and influences of the sojourner on his/ her hosts (Brein and David, 1971). Thus, by specifically researching sojourners, we can gain better access to the process of understanding cultural encounters, cross-cultural communications and transitions, and issues of adaptation, adjustment, maintenance or management of identity, as well as of identity patterns.

Sojourner Adjustment

An assumption is often made that successful adjustment to another country's culture requires the sojourner to have effective interpersonal relations with the host (Brein & David, 1971). Brein and David (1971) state that a "necessary prerequisite to establishing effective social relationships... is the development of understanding between the host and visitor ... [requiring] effective exchange of information, ... communication, on both

verbal and nonverbal levels of behaviour [which is] ... crucial to the development of such understanding" (p.216). Despite such conditions being somewhat optimized however, often, the one place that the sojourner finds complete acceptance is in the company of other sojourners of similar nationality. This mini-group can then "concentrate on ... [their] similarities, not their differences because their differences [from their host] are ... [their] similarities [amongst each other]" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p.268). Moreover, significantly, sojourners' characteristics are no longer 'themselves'; they are their hyphen, their identities frequently classified as New Zealander, American or European.

According to Martin and Nakayama (2003), there are four primary methods by which sojourners can come to adapt and relate to their chosen environment: (1) assimilate, (2) remain separate, (3) integrate or (4) become marginalized. However, arguably, the length of the sojourn also regulates these, as too does the context. Some cultural contexts are more easily adapted to than others. For example, "Muslim societies tend to be fairly closed to outsiders ... [I]n these societies, the distinction between ingroup (family and close friends) and outgroup (everyone else) is very strong" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 288). Whereas in other countries, sojourners are generally received more openly, like in the United Sates of America. Thus, in some societies, there is less frequency in significant association with host nationals, which means a reduction in the quality of that interaction with members of the host culture.

Given this knowledge and characteristic of sojourners, adjustment of the sojourner is "neither simple nor straightforward" (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000 p. 293). Developing a relationship between identity and context involves many issues such as learning to adapt, assimilate or transition within new and foreign contextual and intercultural relationships. This interactionable process has the potential result of the sojourner becoming an intercultural identity or developing multi-cultural identities (Martin & Nakayama, 2003). According to Adler (1975, cited in Martin & Nakayama, 2003), "the multicultural individual is significantly different from the person who is more culturally restricted" (p. 291). The multicultural identity is "neither part of nor apart from the host culture; rather, this person acts situationally" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 291). Problems arise within these individuals, since they are somewhat betwixed-and-between regarding who or what

their affiliations are or are supposed to be, for without their own basic cultural groundings or identities being installed and reinforced, they become unsure of their identities. Moreover, according to Leong and Ward (2000), sojourners can experience identity difficulties or identity conflict due to the need to adapt to new cultural circumstances which

> demand the individual to incorporate a new component of identity, which is in conflict with an existing one. The experience of many sojourners ... is thought to be prototypical of the latter (Baumeister, 1996). Individuals who make cross-cultural transitions are generally expected to conform to the normative values, attitudes and behaviors of their host countries. If these prescribed commitments are inconsistent or incompatible with those of their cultures of origin, conflict may ensue. (p.765).

Also, the prediction of intercultural identity conflict calls into question issues related to "tolerance of ambiguity, attributional complexity, host and co-national identification, quality and quantity of host and co-national contact, perceived discrimination, cultural distance and length of residence abroad", with findings suggesting that lower levels of identity conflict occur in those individuals with greater tolerance and less contact with the host while "increased quantity of contact with host nationals was associated with greater identity conflict" (Leong & Ward, 2000, p. 763).

On the other hand, contact with host nationals is not always viewed as the important variable in understanding sojourner adjustment. According to Sewell and Davidson's research (1961), factors such as background, socioeconomic status and previous contact is important, although this study had limits as it involved only students entering America. In a study with New Zealand sojourners, Ward and Kennedy (1994) revealed that those who strongly identified with co-nationals experienced less depression while on overseas assignment, and those who strongly identified with host nationals experienced less social difficulty in their new surroundings.

So, in order to cope with identity conflict or multiple identities, Gloria Anzaldua (1999) states that we need to maintain flexibility and fluidity so that all our identities can interact with each other. However, this may be easier said than achieved. Society and social interaction invariably means that, under certain situations or cultural contexts, individuals

are required to demonstrate only specific facets of their identity while (subconsciously or consciously) suppressing others; if suppression continues long-term, intrapersonal identity conflicts will surely arise, eventually causing identity crises. Such crises further make the "maintenance of original cultural identity difficult" (Berry, 1984; 1994, cited in Leong & Ward, 2000, p. 766).

Sojourners face many other challenges in relocating to new cultural contexts. Culture shock, a term first introduced by anthropologist Oberg (1960), is an "occupational disease of people who have been suddenly transplanted abroad" whereby individuals feel disorientated living in new and unfamiliar environmental surroundings and the only way to overcome this unfamiliarity is for the individual to learn to adapt to the new cultural situation and make friends (Ward, Okura, Kennedy & Kojima, 1998, p. 278). Although most 'suffer' from culture shock when relocating to a new environment, it can be reduced if there is little need to integrate with host nationals, as is often the case for military personnel (Martin & Nakayama, 2003). However, interestingly, De Verthelyi (1995) questioned the problem of culture shock on spouses of international graduate students traveling to America. In this study, it was interesting to note the negative effects of culture shock on spouses' identity. The author notes that the one with the least amount of contact with the host nation had the most problems in adjusting to the new culture and indeed felt he or she had lost personal identity due to feeling unvalued.

Cross-cultural transition has been described by the theory of the U-Curve. This theory by Norwegian sociologist Sverre Lysgaard (1995) on a study on Scandinavian Fullbright Scholars studying in the United States describes a curvilinear relationship between adjustment and time sequence, which is referred to as the U-curve occurrence. Lysgaard stated that sojourners transition through predictable phases of adjustment, in particular patterns, when entering a new cultural environment. The first phase is initial excitement and apprehension with the relocation and host culture, then shock, depression and disorientation, finally followed by a sense of adaption. Primarily, Lysgaard noted that:

> Adjustment as a process over time seems to follow a U-shaped curve: adjustment is felt to be easy and successful to begin with; then follows a "crisis" in which one

> feels less well-adjusted, somewhat lonely and unhappy; finally one begins to feel better adjusted again, becoming more integrated into the foreign community.
> (Lysgaard, 1955, cited in Ward, et al, 1998, p. 278)

However, despite its popularity, the U-curve theory is not without its critics. According to Furnham & Bochner (1986, cited in Ward et al, 1998), empirical support is limited due to the majority of studies on the U-curve having been cross-sectional rather than longitudinal and because there is controversy over the operational definition of sojourner adjustment and measures (Church, 1982, cited in Ward et al, 1998). The approach that seems most reasonable is the notion that the U-curve is a good representation for short-term sojourners, while "a more accurate model represents long-term adaptation as a series of U-curves" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 285). This process of adaptation has been furthered to involve the sojourners' inevitable return "home" to their original cultural context, referred to as re-entry shock (W-curve) (Martin & Nakayama, 2003). This phenomenon is often unexpected and soon the sojourner realises that they are different from when they left and must again learn to gradually adapt.

The purpose of my dissertation is to probe further the arena of social psychology and identity, and scrutinize social and semantic boundaries and their influence on identity. Exclusively, I will research how context and conversation impact on or contribute to sojourners' management or construction of identity (irrespective of whether this 'manipulation' of identity may be conscious or unconscious) when family or customary cultural traditions do not surround the sojourner as well as how they are influenced by a multitude of customs when living in the cosmopolitan yet Islamic city of Dubai. Specifically, my intent is to part with previous research focusing on sojourners and adjustment and instead "locate identity within the social [while at the same time giving] attention to the occasioning of identity in everyday talk", by combining social constructionist epistemology with conversational analytical approaches (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p. 417). Precisely, this thesis embraces the question of how sojourners identities are influenced by living in a different culture.

With what has preceded for focus, there are some basic premises that need to be made explicit. Firstly, arguably, expatriates' identities are entwined with their nationality at a multitude of levels and yet at the same time not bound by them (Bauman, 1992, cited in Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Whether sojourners are conscious and "self-aware ... mak[ing] conscious choices about their interactions with others" or whether one's nationalism operates at an unconscious level, its underpinnings, such as norms and values, arguably have an impact on social discourse directions (Sparrow, 2000, p.174). Furthermore, identities are highly variable when interacting with new social, political religious and economic situations and these contextual changes further impact one's identity (Bennett, 1993, cited in Sparrow, 2000, p.176). The assumption is that identities are reconstructed or reshaped within one's own parameters and variables depending on "social realities [and] one's capacity to self-define and negotiate identity", thus directly impacting the identity of the sojourners via social interaction and everyday speech (Sparrow, 2000, p. 181).

Secondly, it is importance to consider the contextual and discursive matters and *"how... talk is interactionally accomplished in context"* (Buttny, 1993, p.9, original italics). Of specific importance, then, is the uniqueness of Dubai, the context in which this research operates[7]. The need is to be attentive to various contexts and be aware of individual places and how their richness, diversity and limitations play an important role on meanings (Hall, 1997). Context is vital in accessing identities, gaining understanding and interpreting individuals' knowledge. Failing to recognize contextual influences could lead to false generalizations, such as believing that these results could be general to other places, which is not likely under different circumstances or situations.

[7] See the section 'The Environment – Dubai, The United Arab Emirates' (Pages 41-46)

PART TWO
METHODOLOGIES, METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Chapter II
Epistemology and Methodology

Social Constructionism

> Social constructionism views discourse about the world not as a reflection or map of the world but as an artifact of communal interchange ... and place[s] knowledge within the process of social interchange.
>
> (Gergen, 1985, P.266)

> Meaningful language is the product of social interdependence. It requires the coordinated actions of at least two persons, and until there is mutual agreement on the meaningful character of words, they fail to constitute language. ... Regardless of our methods of procedure, what we call knowledgeable account of the world (including ourselves) are essentially discursive. ... In the end, all that is meaningful grows from relationships, and it is from within this vortex that the future will be forged.
>
> (Gergen, 1994, p. x)

In the section that follows, there will be a brief review and discussion of Social Constructionism, Social Identity Theory, Identity Theory and Conversation Analysis paradigms that form the basis of my theoretical assumptions and the core of my research methodologies. The following in not intended to be extensive or critical but serves to demonstrate how these epistemologies, methodologies and perspectives have influenced and guided my research.

Social constructionism questions traditional empirical ways of knowing and challenges conventional knowledge. It questions prior thoughts that knowledge is an individual possession or that knowledge should be a taken-for-granted concept. In other words, individual knowledge of "the traditional Western conception of objective, individualistic ahistoric knowledge" should be challenged and placed into the sphere of social relationships (Gergen, 1985, p.139). Social constructionists further argue that our orientation to scientific knowledge based on isolation should be abandoned and also

replaced with investigations at a social or communal level (Gergen, 1985). However, purely questioning or having a pledge to the truth does not render something as true or untrue (Gergen, 1994). Indeed, it may be "argued that there is no theory of knowledge – whether empiricist, realist, rationalist, phenomenological, or otherwise – that can furnish warrants for its own truth or validity" (Gergen, 1994, p. 77). Social constructionism thus questions what was empirically presumed knowable 'truths'.

Social constructionist ideology is premised on the belief that knowledge and meaning are constructed through social processes and action and interaction (Young & Collin, 2004, p.373). Specifically, social constructionist inquiry into knowing or ways of knowing about the world is "principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live" taken from a social rather than an individual stance (Gergen, 1985, p.266). Therefore, in order to understand the experiences, thoughts and concepts of the world, there needs to be an understanding of the general historical, cultural and biographical context in which interaction or concept took place, since changes in conception are historically and socially situated in social interchange. Furthermore, according to Gasper (1999, cited in Young & Collin, 2003, p.376), social constructionism takes the "view that knowledge in some area is the product of our social practices and institutions, or of the interactions and negotiations between relevant social groups". Thus, social patterns support social patterns. Consequently, what is also important is that a narrative should not be "read" or interpreted outside of the context in which it took place. Therefore, familiarity and understanding of the context constitutes an important element in the interpretation of any situation, whereby one's interpretation of the context is done so within personal limits and constraints. Thus "social constructionism acknowledges how social factors shape interpretations to how the social world is constructed by social processes and relational practices" (Young & Collin, 2003, p.376).

Understanding discourse means more than paying attention to verbal communications. Attention to non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, gestures and bodily posture are as important to attend to, as is attending to what is 'said', or what is 'not said'; thus, particular non-verbal cues expand social interaction or construction (Giddens,

1997). Consequently, for the social constructionist, isolation is irrational. What is the logic in observation without context? Indeed, how can you remove cultural, upbringing, familial or societal influences from those being observed, especially if it is the culture of a society that exerts the most influence in the creation of human identities (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995). Also implicit in constructing self is how the individual is constructing society (Young & Collin, 2003). Interestingly, the simplest way of knowing may be by way of marking differences:

> Language, and thus meaning, depends on a system of differences. For most structural semiotics, these differences have been cast in terms of binaries. The word man gains its communicative capacity by virtue of its contrast with women, up as it contrasts with down, emotion with reason. To extend the implications of these various arguments, let me propose that any system of intelligibility rests on what is typically an implicit negation- an alternative intelligibility that stands as a rival to itself. Whether relig[ious] ... or scientific perspective, all are distinguished by virtue of what they are not.
>
> (Gergen, 1994, p. 9)

That said, it is important to note that constructionism is not in the pursuit of abandoning traditional pursuits, rather to reframe them and alter the emphasis and "invite new forms of inquiry" (Gergen, 1994, p.30). However, the specifics to these new forms of inquiry are sometimes vague. Therefore, in acknowledging the role of social constructionism, it is entirely logical that 'our' identities are socially constructed and malleable within changing and pluralistic communities; dualist or indeed multiple identities (including those that are divisive or pathological) all seemingly stem from social interaction and construction, allowing for evolution in identities. Thus, according to Carbaugh (1996, p.29), "within any cultural communication system, ... there will be available a variety of social identities."

Social Identity Theory and Identity Theory

As discussed, social constructionists locate identity in social interchange or relationships, and two prominent theories on identity acknowledging social constructionist paradigm are Social Identity Theory and Identity Theory. Despite the two theories having differences – in Social Identity Theory, the focus is placed on groups or categories while

in Identity Theory, roles are paramount and further differences describe how identity is activated – there are also some important similarities and parallels. For example, both theories shift the focus of identity from being purely cognitive to the idea that identity is shaped via social interchange and communal processes.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory's main principles are that identity is socially constructed, which depends on the group or collective frame of references that people have, that people need to maintain a positive self-concept, that this self-concept is achieved via group identification and thus that "people establish positive identities by comparing the in-group favorably against outgroups" (Abrams & Hogg, 1999, p.42). Moreover, individuals' identities are described at a contextual macro-level of analysis, which is at a social level rather than a cognitive one.

Indeed, Tajfels (1972, 1978), founder of the theory, insisted that the

> concept of social identity is related to a process of social comparison ... the positive or negative character of social identity derives from comparison with relevant groups in the social context.
>
> (Capozza & Brown, 2000, p.81)

The concept of social identity approach "stress[es] the fluidity between individuals and groups" (Abrams & Hogg, 1999, p. 29). Additionally, the self is reflexive, that is, the individual adapts to various groups and they classify or view themselves in relation to certain social categories, and this process is known as self-categorization (Stets & Burke, 2000). This being the case, according to social identity theorists, identity develops from group relationships through the process of self-categorization. Specifically,

> social identity approaches emphasize the importance of people's group membership for their own self-conceptions of who they are, what they are like, and how they differ from others. Thus, an individual's self concept and self-understanding are not simply a function of his or her own experiences and accomplishments, but are also a function of the groups to which that individual belongs.
>
> (Abrams & Hogg, 1999, p.86)

Thus, group relations and inter-group processes impact identity or the social self, which in turn helps provide parameters or definition to their character. These 'definitions' can

come from a variety of group relationships, including broad categories such as nationality, culture, religious or political affiliation, or narrow categories such as sports teams or family, all of which help provide self defining characteristics to which individuals subscribe to and which, in turn, become a part of their self-concept (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995).

Basically, those that ascribe to similar beliefs or views form groups/ categories and view their group as an in-group while at the same time in-groups view those groups/ categories with alternative views or beliefs as out-group members. Simply put, people are members of groups which they come to recognize as being an in-group, and this in-group affiliation gives rise to normative behaviours such as ways of speaking, terminology to be used, and values or beliefs that are associated with being part of that group. Members also learn to focus on who they are, how they should think, feel and behave, and how they are different from others (Abrams & Hogg, 1999). In turn, this gives rise to comparisons with other out-groups. Moreover, in order to retain a positive self-concept and affiliation with the in-group members, there is high motivation to perceive in-group behaviours in favourable terms.

In social identity theory, individuals can be categorized in several ways according to the groups they are affiliated with; thus, categorization occurs. This is important to consider, for individuals can frequently belong to some shared in-group status while simultaneously not sharing other in-group categories (Abrams & Hogg, 1999). Arguably, categorization sharpens intergroup boundaries. For example, concerning dimensions of race and gender, black women share an in-group with regards to white women (gender) but not with regards to race; alternatively, they share groupings on a racial dimension with black males but not with respect to gender (see next page):

GENDER ↓ RACE→	Black	White
Female	Black females	White females
Male	Black males	White males

Figure: 1.1 The crossed-categorization design (Abrams & Hogg, 1999, p.112).

Also important to consider in the identity process is activation, that is, which identity becomes more salient when there are multiple dimensions that can be imposed. Social identity theory places emphasis on "sociocognitive processes that cause self to be highly responsive to immediate contextual cues" (Hogg et al, 1995, p.265). So, despite having an enduring identity, contextual cues alter what is salient, that is, what behaviours or responses are expected; thus, identity salience is transitory. For example, being a New Zealander, living in Dubai, mixing with other New Zealanders in informal situations is certainly likely to produce different behaviours than when mingling with locals in a more formal setting.

Interestingly, when an individual's identity becomes salient in a particular group context, evaluations generally occur with others not of their group prototype, but with out-groups; thus, "perception of relevant out-group members become out-group stereotypical" (Hogg et al, 1995, p.260). This happens due to the process of depersonalization. Depersonalization is the notion that the self becomes part of the group cohesion and effectively means that the individual's views are in line with relevant prototypical behaviour (Hogg et al, 1995). However, Feather and McKee (1993, cited in Capozza & Brown, 2000) state that culture can play an interesting role: within collective societies where they tend to value the group, the emphasis is on in-group rather than out-group, and an intergroup identity focus; in more individualist societies in which greater value is placed on individuality, there is more adherence toward comparing the individual with the in-group, meaning that an intragroup identity salience is more likely. Thus, it makes sense to conclude that since "social categories precede individuals [and] individuals are

born into an already structured society ... [o]nce in society, people derive their identity or sense of self largely from the social categories to which they belong" (Hogg and Abrams, 1998).

Identity Theory

In identity theory, the focus shifts from groups and categories to the impact of the individual and roles, whereby an individual's identity is seen to be located within multiply occupied roles. Specifically, role identities help us understand the nature of multiple identities, or the character of identity differences as they are invested in differing roles in society. Paramount is the notion that individuals display various yet specific behaviours or attitudes when associated with differing roles (Lobel, 1991). Also important in identity is the changing environments or variations in cultural or communal contexts of the roles individuals inhabit. Thus, according to Hogg et al (1995), "society forms the basis for the central proposition on which identity theory is predicated: that as a reflection of society, the self should be regarded as a multifaceted and organized construct" (p.256). Basically, people interact in groups, and within each group, a person may act differently according to expectations of others or self, resulting in people having distinct yet multiple 'selves' that emerge because of the differing 'roles' they occupy in society. For example, one can occupy the role of wife, mother, daughter, sister, and psychologist. These roles are not only self-imposed through the process of labeling but also relevant in regard to counter roles, such as binary comparisons of black/ white or mother/ father. Thus, people learn to respond to others in terms of their role identities (Hogg et al, 1995). Furthermore, as in social identity theory, role identities are viewed as reflexive. Additionally, individuals may also negotiate their identity within their emerging roles within existing constraints and difficulties of society (Dawson & Gifford, 2001). These processes of identity are located in the development of identification, identity salience and commitment within the roles people occupy.

"A person's identification with a group has been linked with attitudes and behaviors characterizing role investment" (Leary, Wheeler, & Jenkins, 1986; Stryker & Serpe, 1982). According to Super (1981) and Stryker (1968, cited in Lobel, 1991), an individuals' investment in a role is the "outcome of the implementation of the self-

concept and identity salience respectively" (p.199). Basically, society provides roles that form the basis of identity and self; by 'taking on' particular roles, we acquire a concept of self (or self-meaning), and those around us then react to these social roles, further defining our self concept (Hogg, et al, 1995). Thus, self-concept involves prescribing to certain roles, which in turn has the effect of increasing peoples' self worth; however, if there is cognitive dissonance between self and occupied roles, this can lead to psychological distress.

Next is the issue of identity salience, specifically why some identities have more prominence than others. Role identities involve the notion that certain roles are more activated than others due to how important they are to the self-concept, thus,

> identity salience rests on the notion that the individual's identities fall into a hierarchy from most to least salient, based on the individual's readiness to enact a role identity. The salience of a role identity is a function of commitment to that role.
>
> (Stryker & Serpe, 1994, cited in Shibly-Hyde & Delamater, 2001, p. 12)

Those roles that have a higher commitment are more significant and are more self-defining to a person's identity. Furthermore, salience and commitment promote differing identities to be "switched on" or activated in certain situations, or contextual cues, which in turn means an individual's actions or roles are socially constructed and defined (Lobel, 1991).

The concept of commitment is defined as "the degree to which the individual's relationships to particular others are dependent on being a given kind of person" (Stryker & Stratham, 1985, p.345). Commitment also "reflects the social and personal costs that would result if the person no longer fulfilled the role" (Stryker & Serpe, 1994, cited in Shibly-Hyde & Delamater, 2001, p. 12). Commitment is dependant upon a person's social network surrounding that particular role identity, that is, the more a person's social connections are dependant upon a person occupying a certain role or roles and the larger the numbers who ascribe to an individual's identity, the more important that role becomes

in an individual's identity because not to act in the predicted manner is to risk loss of social connections, self-concept and self-esteem (Hoelter, 1983, cited in Hogg, et al, 1995).

Social identity theory and identity theory offer significant insights into social behaviour. Moreover, these theories offer important contributions in the understanding of individuals' identities with regards to development, formation, management and maintenance. Thus, I feel a merger of the two theories will yield a more complete investigation of identity[8]. After all, roles are enacted generally within group processes (inter or intra group), which in turn impact the individuals' role salience and commitment, which address issues of self concept, self-esteem and self meaning. Furthermore, both stress the issues of situational contextual cues on identity formation. In other words, there is significant overlap and opportunity to address the two, if not in combination then in parallel. However, despite their significant contribution to identity construction, both theories are at an abstract level, which makes empirical qualification of identity difficult. Therefore, it is important to import other means of discovery. Conversational analysis offers such an avenue by providing a more explicit way of examining identity through everyday talk.

Conversation Analysis

> The study of identity has been relocated from its treatment as a 'mentalist notion' – something that underpins human action – to its constitution in 'communication practice.'
>
> (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p.417)

Conversation analysis (CA), the study of talk-in-interaction, originated with the works of Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson in the late 1950s and early 1960s amongst other approaches, such as preformulated or prescribed category systems (Bales, 1950), ecological distribution and field observations (Barker & Wright), and ethnographic

[8] Merging of the two theories is not within the scope of this thesis.

studies in communication (Gumperz & Hymes, 1964). Pioneers of CA (Sacks, Schelgloff & Jefferson), developed their methodology because of a requirement to have a method to study social interaction and mundane talk, which would provide reproducible results and hold up to the rigors of empirical investigation (Psathas, 1995). Thus, essential in conversation analysis is the use of electronic recordings, so that participant interaction can be accurately transcribed and allow for repeated listening, which provides 'evidence' to allow the data to be re-addressed, reanalyzed and therefore, allows for reproducible results.

Conversation analysis studies the "order/ organization/ orderliness of social action, particularly those social actions that are located in everyday interaction, in discursive practices, in the sayings/ tellings/ doings of members of society" (Psathas, 1995, p.2). Thus, the basic premise of CA is that social actions are constructed and reconstructed, are meaningful to those who construct them, and that there is a natural order that can be analysed at the micro level.

Analysis at this micro level focuses concrete social (identity) interaction and the orderly development of language, by addressing issues such as turn taking (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974), sequence organization (Schegloff, 1968, 1971, 1995, Schegloff and Sacks 1973), repair (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks 1977), overall structural organization of conversation (Schegloff 1968, Schegloff & Sacks 1973), word selection (Schegloff 1996), and turn organization (Schegloff, 1996, cited in Prevignano & Tibault). This is sometimes crudely referred to as the rules of turn taking (Potter, 1996). However, the "point of CA is to explicate the fundamental sense that interactions have for their participants" (Potter, 1996, p. 132). Therefore, by addressing conversations between individuals, analysts can then study how identity is constructed in talk. However, that said, conversational analysts do not go beyond the data presented to draw conclusions, that is, "culture is surplus to an understanding of how people make themselves understood in mundane talk" (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p.420). What is studied is only what the interactants say and do. Thus, "identity is … treated as a locally managed participant's concern; a dynamic and flexible resource whereby people ascribe and resist identities during everyday conversation" (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p. 420).

According to conversational analyses, researchers must be vigilant to be accurate to the order of the conversation, that is, the sequential organization of the interaction. Thus, in order to stay true to conversation analysis, it is important to not use knowledge of what happens subsequently to interpret what preceded. So, knowledge availability arguably comes to individuals in mundane talk by that which has immediately proceeded, which in turn produces their action (Psathas, 1995). Thus, imperative for pure conversational analysis, researchers must not make conclusions based upon knowledge of where the conversation finishes.

The issue of context is interesting. According to CA, context is built up by the social actions of participants, and thus there is little interest generated towards broader cultural or contextual meanings of participants beyond what is supplied by the interaction (Abell & Stokoe, 2001). There is, however, debate regarding "how much extra-textual material is necessary to the carrying on of analysis at the level of concreteness common to ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and contemporary language-orientated social constructionism" (Abell & Stoke, 2001, p. 420). According to the CA culture, knowledge and contextual meanings are all unveiled during social interaction, and, if not, then the meanings are not important, and to include inferences to knowledge or contextual meanings is going beyond the data; thus, wider cultural or social significance is not considered.

Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discourse Analysis (DA)

Since Schelgloff's "Sequencing in Conversational Openings" (1968) "the field has developed substantially" to now encompass other domains (Prevignoan & Thibault, 2003, p.1). CA now expands its view to include social interactions in the educational, medical and legal environments and in other instances. Additionally, CA is also open to combining views with methods originally believed incompatible, in particular, discourse analysis and constructionist frameworks to address social significance in interaction (Prevignoan & Thibault, 2003). Thus, methods that were generally treated as self-sufficient are being united to offer a "genuinely cumulative empirical research

programme" (Hammersley, 2003, p. 751). Indeed, to understand identity, Carbaugh (1996, p. 12) emphasizes that it is important to integrate "the pragmatics of everyday communication with the cultural meanings that are presupposed for and implicated by those very practices". In other words, the synthesis of CA and DA methods has resulted in a way forward that positions qualitative research ability to more adequately define issues while simultaneously encouraging a wider range of resources during the analysis and exploration of a text.

Additionally, conversational analysis and discourse analysis methods have other relevancies, such as that CA provides a "powerful and general understanding of interaction that has the potential to illuminate a wide range of research questions" (Potter, 1996, p. 132). Basically, since "most human interaction is performed through conversation and in order to understand many of the more psychological and social phenomena in which discourse analysts are interested, it is necessary to understand how they emerge out of the general pragmatics of conversation" (Potter, 1996, p.132). Thus, qualitative research methodologies, such as CA and DA offer an insight and understanding, at a micro and macro level, investigating how individuals perceive their world and other social phenomena with new insights and strengths previously ignored or perhaps considered irrelevant.

Another important interaction between CA and DA is that they both see the importance in not only the general but the particulars of talk, such as the word choice, hesitations and repairs, indeed both methods are highly critical of cognitive approaches to interaction (Potter, 1996).

Theoretical Assumptions

> Within the constructionist framework, identity is theorized as a socially constituted phenomenon but rarely investigated empirically; alternatively, identity in interaction can be analyzed at the micro-level of conversation but at the expense of acknowledging culture as the speaker and analysts' resource in the production and explication of everyday interaction. Thus ... a useful analytic

> frame may be developed by integrating these two stances to produce 'conversation analytic constructionism' (Buttny, 1993)
>
> (Abell & Stokoe, 2001 p.421)

With the preceding section for focus, I will make explicit the theoretical assumptions that I am embracing for this research. This research will be guided by the root assumptions of social constructionism that identity lies within the social context and is socially constructed. I also accept that meaning is attributed to the individual reader and this forms significance in the understanding of text from different historical, cultural or social perspectives.

Additionally, I agree that social identity and identity theories have real importance and consequences in the formation, maintenance and management of individuals' identities, self-concept and self-esteem. Furthermore, social meaning is not fixed but reflects social reality, and is clearly influenced by historical, cultural and political change. Furthermore, I believe that "language becomes a resource for '*uncovering* culture, knowledge [and] meanings'" (Hester & Eglin, 1997, cited in Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p. 420).

I further recognize that the use of interactional sequential order and conversational analysis when combined with discourse analysis offers an empirical way forward to uncovering identity issues in social surroundings.

Additionally, it is imperative to embrace electronic recordings and stringent methods for data collection to allow for transparency and actual empirical occurrences of situ interactions, which leads to effective analysis. Furthermore, I prescribe to the notion that category systems or preformulated systems are reductionist, ignore local context and result in biased reporting (Psathas, 1995).

Thus, I believe the methodology necessary to gain thoughtful information into sojourners' identity is binary in nature, involving a bridging of the social constructionist epistemology with the paradigm of conversation analysis. Using this combination to explore sojourners' social context and their prevailing discourse and how each influences

the other will, I believe, assist the field of identity. Furthermore, in investigating the social identity through communication, Carbaugh (1994) posits that

> [w]ithin any cultural communication system ... there will be a variety of social identities... [and] a variety of discourses available for communicating specific social identities ... [e]ach discourse of identity will play upon certain presumed (i.e., cultural) premises about what a person is (and should be), can (and should) do, feel (and should feel), and how that person dwells within nature. Other people, with other cultural premises, will make available their own discourses of social identities, erected upon their cultural premises of the person.
>
> (cited in Carbaugh, 1996, p.29)

Therefore, to access fruitful information regarding identity, it is critical to explore identity by attending to both "micro-level organization of identities but also engage in a wider understanding of the cultural framework within which they are located" (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p.417). Thus, while previous research has tended to keep these seemingly conflicting approaches separate, the synthesis of the social constructionist approach and conversation analysis can seemingly "produce a comprehensive framework for analyzing identity" (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p. 418; Buttny, 1993).

Finally, it is identity rather than compartmentalization of particular components or variables that may impact sojourner identity, which is of interest, since to examine variables such as cultural knowledge or extraversion is likely to lead to discussions on sojourners and adjustment (Ward, Kennedy, Okura & Kojima, 1998), which is not the primary goal. Additionally, issues related to racism, gender, productivity, or historical considerations (Phinney, 2000) are not the goals of this research either, although these may be considered when involved in sojourners' own discourse on identity. What is of key significance is not issues of how sojourners adjust (Brien & David, 1971), cope (De Verthelyi, 1995) or transition (Ward & Kennedy, 1993) into expatriate circumstances but rather sojourner identity via social context and conversational discourse.

Chapter III
Methods and Procedures

> [The] qualitative approach is infused with what is called epistemology, a theory of knowledge. Epistemologies ask questions about knowledge itself: How can we know what we know? This encompasses questions such as the following: Who can be a knower? What things can be known? How is knowledge created? The research process begins with conscious and unconscious questions and assumptions that serve as the foundation for an epistemological position. What researchers know or assume to be true about [issues] ... and what they want to know as a result of the research process are the basis of an epistemology. Researchers' epistemological stances impact every phase of the research process, including subsequent theoretical and methodological decisions.
>
> Hesse- Biber and Leavy, (2004, p. 2)

Introduction

The approach used to unravel the issue of sojourner's identity originally consisted of two types of data collection: a) semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews and b) focus groups depending upon the preference of the participant. The reasons for "combining individual and group interviews typically point[s] to the greater depth of the former and the greater breadth of the latter" (Crabtree, Yanoshik, Miller & O'Connor, 1993, cited in Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p.267). The purpose of the focus group was not to reproduce the results of the interviews – thus, the projected use of focus group was not viewed as supplementary to the individual interviews; rather, the wished for objective of the focus group was to offer a different forum and provide additional data, not simply to confirm data acquired from the semi-structured in depth interview; if, however, this convergence occurred, then it was unplanned but welcomed. Interestingly,

> one reason for comparing focus groups to more familiar methods has been to determine whether the two methods produce equivalent data, according to this view, focus groups are most useful when they reproduce the results of the standard methods in a particular field. ... [An alternative perspective is that] focus groups are most useful when they produce new results that would not be possible with the standard methods in a particular field. There is an obvious

> paradox here, as focus groups cannot produce results that are simultaneously the same as and different from results of familiar techniques.
>
> (Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p.269)

Moreover, there can be trade off in which individual interviews cover more areas than the focus group thus a difference in depth and breadth of data collected differences can often be witnessed in how informants talk in individual versus group settings (Kitzinger, 1994b, cited in Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004).

Interview questions were structured but used flexibly, to allow the participant maximum opportunity to express their feelings. This method of interaction allowed for and acknowledged the significance of sojourners' opinions, wherein information could be freely emphasized and expressed. Moreover, this approach allowed the researcher to "address aspects of social life that [may have] ... otherwise remain[ed] hidden" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p.2). Also, all questions presented were standardised and embraced the same area but allowed for further exploration depending upon participant responses (De Verthelyi, 1995)[9].

Additionally, data was supplemented with my own field notes that were taken at the end of each interview, which embodied issues such as the surroundings, for example temperature, noise or distractions, "field jottings" (Bernard, 1988) about the respondents disposition (enthusiastic, nervous) and notes about the interview itself, such as general interruptions and the 'flow' of the process (Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004). Generally the contribution of the additional data collected has been kept to a minimum, as contribution of my impressions, thoughts and feelings was not the focus.

Finally, formal ethical approval was received from Massey University Human Ethics committee before data was generated for this study.

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[9] Unfortunately, only one person chose to participate in a focus group, thus all data collection was via semi-structured in depth interviews only (See method/procedure section pages 46-56).

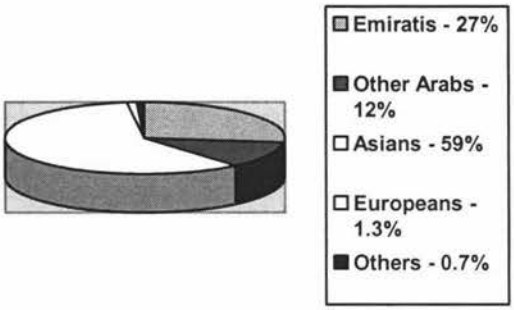
Location

The Environment: Dubai, The United Arab Emirates

In order to understand the unique environment of The United Arab Emirates, it is important to look briefly at its location, geography, history, and development, before focusing on the Islamic and cosmopolitan nature of the country. What follows will focus mainly on the city of Dubai, as this is where I will be conducting my research.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is situated in the Middle East, along the Arabian Gulf in the Arabian Peninsular "bordered by The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the south and west and the Sultan of Oman to the east and north" (Dubai Explorer, 2001). The UAE was formerly known as the Trucial States due to peace agreements with Britain and for protection for the UAE shipping trade. Essentially, the region was tribal, in which the nationals, namely Bedouins, relied on fishing, herding sheep and goats, harvesting dates or pearls from the ocean and trading with neighboring countries. The UAE was undeveloped until 1958, when oil was first discovered (Dubai, Gateway to the Gulf, 1994). In 1968, Britain announced its withdrawal and, in 1971, the UAE was officially formed when the Sheikhs of each Emirate joined forces to form a federation, thus uniting the seven emirates, Abu Dhabi (the capital), Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain in 1972 (Dubai Explorer, 2001).

With the opening of free trade and the extraction of oil in the 1960s, it has taken less than a generation to literally transform the UAE, in essence rising from the sands of a tribal existence to a modern, thriving and truly international cosmopolitan society. Due to this sudden wealth and rapid expansion, and the country's need for swift expertise coupled with the national qualification not matching required skills, as well as the 'need' for domestic and manual labour, the country's population is largely comprised of foreigners (Dubai Explorer, 2001). Census figures (1995) list population distribution as follows (Dubai Explorer, 2001):



From a personal perspective, I can attest to witnessing some of this rapid expansion. When I came to Dubai in 1993, it was a relatively small city with few large buildings, a mix of sandy and paved roads, with a single two-lane main highway connecting Dubai to the capital city of Abu Dhabi 150 kilometers away. Where I currently live was situated on the edge of the city parameters with no other buildings close by. The tallest building then was the World Trade Centre, standing at 33 floors. Now the 8-storey apartment building where I live and the World Trade Centre building have been completely surrounded and dwarfed by towering buildings along the Sheikh Zayed highway that leads to Abu Dhabi and is now 8 lanes. Furthermore, the city has progressed down the road 40 kilometers, with modern buildings all the way. The city parameters have grown unimaginably and my place is now located in the heart of the city.

Contextually, Dubai is a city filled with paradoxes, such as ancient and modern, traditional values and new norms, and poor and rich all existing side-by-side; plus Dubai is unique compared with the some of the other Emirates or comparable modern cities of the world in that its population is primarily expatriate, creating an interesting and varied cultural milieu.

The UAE is an Islamic country and as such the country's traditions and cultures are tied to its religion. Islam governs how life should be lived, which means that there are certain moral ways of living, which are considered good. However, there are also some norms that arguably impose restriction on free will, such as having a defacto relationship or having children out of wedlock are both considered bad and are in fact deemed illegal.

However, that said, Dubai's culture is very broadminded and tolerant of foreigners, allowing (unlike some other Middle Eastern cities) everyone including women to drive, dress as they wish, drink alcohol in their home or in clubs and hotel establishments[10]. Locals generally still wear their traditional dress,

> for men the 'dishdash(a)' or 'khandura' a white full length shirt-dress with a white... headdress known as a 'gutra' [that] is secured with a black cord called an 'agal' ... [i]n public women wear the black 'abaya' a long, loose black robe that covers their normal clothes, plus a headscarf. Some women also wear a thin [in some cases thick] black veil hiding their face and /or gloves, while older women sometimes still wear a mask known as a 'burkha' which covers the nose, brow and cheekbones.
>
> (Dubai Explorer, 2001, p.12).

This traditional dress is worn side-by-side with other Emiratis, generally the younger generation, who enjoy following the latest Western fashions and wearing makeup while at the same time choosing to 'cover' but with a diaphanous abaya. Thus, there is a challenge to local culture from the extremely rapid escalation of this country, the number of foreigners living here and the wealth, all of which make retaining important customs and traditions, or traditional ways of life, difficult. These traditions still exist but are seemingly less representative of a culture interested in material goods, whereby traditional or 'cultural interests' of only 40 years ago are predominately marginalized or can be viewed in museums, as the young appear to partake in a global pop culture.

However, Dubai's mix of rich and poor is of interest. It would be wrong to assume that all Emiratis are wealthy or all expatriates are earning huge salaries (Dubai Explorer, 2001). Despite the UAE being a tax-exempt free trade environment, the wealth is not spread evenly. Indeed, the discrepancy between the wealthy and poor is large. The employment of domestic servants, maids or manual labour force is common; many frequently work long hours with half a day off per week for very little monetary compensation. Weekends vary according to companies. There is no standard weekend; however, Friday is the Islamic holy day. It is also worth noting that in order for sojourners to reside in the UAE, there are specific visa requirements for entering which vary among differing nationalities. Currently, in order to enter, you can obtain a visit visa

[10] However to purchase alcohol you need a permit.

on arrival [11], which is valid for three months; however, you are not permitted to work in the UAE. To work in the UAE, either a national citizen or a company for which you work must sponsor you, and you must abide by the specific visa permit instructions applicable to you. Additionally, you are allowed to reside here without employment if your spouse or parent sponsors you if they have the 'appropriate' job description and earn over a certain wage as required by the government of Dubai and the UAE.

Dubai's royal family, the Al Maktoums, rule by decree, in a monarchical form of government where law and governance are completely intertwined. Due to the UK's previous interest in the UAE, there are still close historical ties with the United Kingdom and their political and legal advisors. Moreover, there is little departure from government and hereditary rule (Dubai Explorer, 2001). As such, the royal family are in charge of the well being of the country and its people and responsible for all general policies, such as education, defence, foreign affairs, and development (Dubai Explorer, 2001).

Politically, the UAE is in a hotbed of a developing and controversial area in the world. With war being led against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq and a stagnant Middle East peace process, peaceful and overwhelmingly neutral Dubai is seemingly an oasis in the desert; yet it too must be politically mindful of what is happening around its near neighbourhoods and at its borders and therefore must be mindful not to appear too secular a country, since it is surrounded by more religious states. With immediate neighbour Saudi Arabia consistently being touted as one of America's strongest allies in the Middle East now beginning to be attacked and plagued with militant clashes, there is perhaps unease in Saudi Arabia and among Gulf countries in general (Gulf News, 2005, April 23).

Despite Dubai seeming to be politically low key in the region, the UAE is situated in a political vacuum. According to Abdul Hamid Ahmad (Gulf News, 2005) "progress, security and peace require transparency and accountability ... [however, despite this] the UAE press is among many Arab nations where the press does not enjoy such freedom,

[11] This is only the case for "approved" nationalities.

Kuwait is the only exception among Arab states, with a "semi-free" press" (p 1). Furthermore, Ahmad states that "self-censorship plagues media" so that journalists often merely report instead of investigating stories with little effort to understand or analyse (Gulf News, 2005, p.9). This self-censorship may also spill over to those in the general public who are wary to criticise the country for fear of possible repercussions. Although the UAE journalists have more latitude than those in some Arab countries, there is still no legislation to protect them; thus, they remain mindful and hence subject to censorship due to social, religious and cultural restrictions of the UAE.

A possibly surprising influence upon those living in Dubai is the weather, which exerts an enormous impact on the contextual climate, creating fluctuations and adding to the transient nature of Dubai and the UAE. Dubai boasts 9 hours of sunshine per day, 365 days per year. The UAE receives only a scarce amount of rainfall, about 13 cm per year occurring only in the winter months (Dubai Explorer, 2001). Temperatures range from 10-24 degrees Celsius in the winter to over 48 degrees Celsius with a humidity of approximately 100% in the summer. These high temperatures are not merely interesting because of their extremes but because they have a direct effect on the lifestyle of those living here, as many 'dependants' (spouses and children of the expatriate workforce) choose to leave Dubai for the worst of the summer months June, July and August, further adding to the transient texture and context of the UAE culture.

Arguably, Dubai is truly a cosmopolitan city. Indeed, it is multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-national. However, how much differing nationalities actually have meaningful social interaction or significantly intermingle with host nationals as opposed to co-existing in a city with a multitude of nationalities is highly variable and probably debatable. Dubai has a host of world-class international hotels, shopping malls, restaurants, and clubs, which expatriates and host nationals (locals) frequent. However, interaction in these settings is minimal or based on current friendships; networking is generally via work relations or partaking in social activities or hobbies that people have in common with others, which often results in expatriates generally mixing with those nationalities that share similarities to their own values and norms. As such, sojourners in Dubai could be described as inhabiting an "expatriate bubble" (Ward et al, 1998). Thus,

close intercultural relations may be limited due to the extreme number of cultural and ethnic identities located in Dubai and the perceived cultural distance between host nationals and some expatriates (Leong & Ward, 2000). Effectively, the varied nature of ethnicities and nationalities, values and norms, and their effects on identity would be worthy of attention and also serve as a reminder that there are some limitations to my research.

Method - Procedure

The in-depth semi-structured interview method was employed, since it is a well-recognised qualitative technique.

Interviews were conducted by the researcher at my residence, a mutually agreed café, or the participant's home or office. Individual interviews lasted approximately one to one and a half hours.

All individual interview questions were given in the same order and standardized; however, depending on previous answers, directions often varied. Additionally, primarily due to time constraints or applicability, not all listed interview questions were asked. For example, the question specific to the raising of children, such as "Do you think it is important to instill a sense of identity to their home land, and if yes, how do you go about achieving this?" was sometimes omitted if the informant had no children.

Following the interview, participants who wished to review and discuss the interview did so, and one participant requested the transcript. Additionally, any post-interview details or concerns were discussed with the informants as "[p]articipants have the right to be protected against ... vulnerability" (Kelman, 1977, cited in Seidman, 1998, p. 40). At a later stage, the researcher transcribed all recordings.

After repeated listening to the recordings and reading of the transcripts, a qualitative analysis was conducted, coding and interpreting the raw data into groups of

"commonalities and differences, searching for emerging themes" (Patton, 1980, cited in De Verthelyi, 1995).

The Semi-structured in-depth interview

Interviews began with 'thoughtful structure,' which is essential according to Hyman, Cobb, Fledman, Hart & Stember, (1954, cited in Seidman, 1998), as "without thoughtful structure for work, ... [researchers] increase the chance of distorting what they learn from their participants and imposing their own sense of the world on their participants rather than eliciting theirs" (p. 33). Thus, I used a semi-structured, in-depth interview technique especially as Seidman (1998) writes

> [t]he purpose of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheseses, and not to "evaluate" as the term is normally used. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. (p.3)

With this in mind, using the semi-structured interview process allowed me to explore and build upon participant's responses, while at the same time providing adaptability yet consistency to the research process. During the interviews, I encouraged the participants to inform me as much as they could on several topics and frequently requested for reconstructions or reflections of their experiences within the research topic (Seidman, 1998). Such a philosophical stance is also advocated by Rubin and Rubin, who emphasize, "[q]ualitative interviewing is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds. Through qualitative interviews you can understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you did not participate" (1995, p.1). Additionally, interviewing, according to Seidman (1998),

> provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior. A basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience. ... Interviewing allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action. (p.4).

Thus, when interviewing, it is important to listen actively and comprehend the meaning of the interviewee by asking questions that follow up as much as possible from what the participant is saying while also being mindful of the area of research and data generation required (Seidman, 1998). Also, in order to gain an understanding, the listener must, according to Seidman (1998), explore not "probe", tolerate silence, not interrupt, follow up on areas not understood, examine laughter, and ask open not leading questions.

Interviewing, however, is not without its problems. As Briggs (1986) cautions, researchers must be mindful of some key troublesome areas. First, interviewing implicitly means abiding to certain communicative norms, which "moves the roles that each normally occupies in life into the background ... in which attention is concentrated on the topics introduced by the researcher's questions" (Briggs, 1986, p. 2). This can result in researchers removing the interview process and focusing on what is said rather than viewing the interaction as an interpretation that has been jointly produced by the interviewer and respondent.

Secondly, "difficulty arises because of suppression of the norms that guide other types of communicative events is not always complete ... some potential respondents are drawn from communities whose sociolinguistic norms stand in opposition to those embedded in the interview. ... lack [of] experience means lack of relating" (Briggs, 1986, p.2). Thus, difficulties and differences in communication styles or understandings can create problems; thus, researchers must take this into account and if it is perceived to be problematic, researchers must educate themselves so that they are culturally and linguistically aware.

However, rather than view interviewing as problematic, qualitative interviewing is an imperative and essential tool in comprehending, understanding and interpreting meaning. Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that

> [q]ualitative research is not looking for principles that are true all the time and in all conditions, like laws of physics; rather, the goal is understanding of specific circumstances, how and why things actually happen in a complex world. Knowledge in qualitative interviewing is situational and conditional. (1995, pp.38-39).

Thus, comprehension and understanding are key components of qualitative research that are necessarily individualistic (Dilley, 2004).

The interviewer as having insider knowledge

> The research process began with personal "insider knowledge" essential for a qualitative approach.
>
> Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, (cited in De Verthelyi, 1995, p391)

Generally, researchers entering a 'foreign' environment must ensure that they have sufficient knowledge regarding the informants and have an understanding of the cultural categories (McCracken, 1988), and they ought to conduct a cultural review of the area and participants under study, commonly via newspapers, internet, local media or entering the atmosphere. However, in this instance, as an insider to the cultural groups and settings required, and as the only researcher, I had an immense advantage as I already had the appropriate cultural understanding and was already acculturated into the surroundings that the research topic was investigating.

Familiarity with the setting also assisted in rapport building with informants; however, there are inherent dangers with respect to researchers having a close rapport with participants in that interviewers run the risk, according to Seidman (1998), of being

> so intimately connected to the subject of inquiry that they really do not feel perplexed, and what they are really hoping to do is corroborate their own experience, they [might] not have enough distance from the subject to interview effectively. The questions will not be real; that is, they will not be questions to which the interviewers do not already have the answers (p. 26).

Paradoxically, it is important to select a topic one is close to in order to sustain interest and maintain motivation. However, as Seidman outlines, this researcher interest can also be disadvantageous, problematic, and involve a delicate balancing act

> [in which researchers] need to be open to the process of listening and careful exploration that is crucial in an interviewing study, they must approach their research interests with a certain sense of naiveté, innocence, and absence of prejudgments ... Researchers who can negotiate that complex tension will be able to listen intently, ask real questions, and set the stage for working well with the material they gather (p.26)

Thus, as a researcher, it was required of me to identify and pay attention to particular issues, such as my preconceptions, assumptions or biases; as an insider observer, I needed to be self aware to ensure the process proceeded free of unintended influences or interpretation of the collected data (Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004). Thus, researcher's knowledge must be used appropriately in order to minimize the distortions in interviewing (Maxwell, 1996).

Being mindful of self-assumptions related to the study area, I believe assisted me in the construction of an enhanced interview, making me an improved explorer and listener, consequently allowing for better follow up questions on particular participants' experiences.

Recording the interviews

> The primary method of creating text from interviews is to tape-record the interviews and to transcribe them. Each word a participant speaks reflects his or her consciousness (Vygotsky, 1987). The participants' thoughts become embodied in their words. To substitute the researcher's paraphrasing or summaries of what the participants say for their actual words is to substitute the researcher's consciousness for that of the participant.
>
> (Seidman, 1998, p.97)

Apart from the above, electronic recordings have other advantages as well. Recordings allow for repeated replaying, enabling the researcher to hear "many previously unnoticed aspects of the interaction that may be noticed and focused upon" (Psathas, 1995, p.45).

Furthermore, by tape-recording interviews, one is able to gain "richness beyond the words ... variations in tone, duration and volume that accompany words [and] ... phenomena such as laughter and silence so integral to what one expresses," all of which are missing or difficult to represent in transcription (Hill, 1993, p. 113). However, with

repeated listening and diligent work, most participant idiosyncrasy can be transported into the transcriptions, although it is important to be mindful of participant's dignity or additional requests for confidentiality when presenting the interview as a written document (Seidman, 1998).

Other advantages are that the medium allows the researcher to focus on surrounding details and nuances of the interview, for example maintaining appropriate eye contact or other non-verbal communications, such as facial cues and the body language of the participants, while reducing the researcher's conscious need to focus entirely on data generation.

Another reason for recording interviews is that it provides an opportunity for reexamination of the data at a later date when the researcher can "cast a wider net" and investigate matters that have remained unstudied (Psathas, 1995, p. 46).

However, some feel that a tape recording may interfere with the process, if the participants feel uncomfortable, as was the initial case with one of my interviewees, Sharon, who described how she "never leaves messages on answer machines because [she] stuttered when talking into the [telephone answering] machines." However, she was "willing to see how the recording worked out." During the interview, it was apparent that after her initial worry and feelings of discomfort, she soon forgot that she was being recorded.

Reaching the Participants

Access to the informants was through personal friendships and informal contacts.

Prospective participants expressing an interest were sent an information letter using e-mail or hand delivery; then, based on the initiative of either the prospective informant or myself, follow-up contact was made generally by making a telephone call, e-mail or occasionally a face-to-face conversation. Issues such as identification of my role and research, supervising university, purpose, recording and as well as confidentiality and

participant rights were addressed during this pre-interview phase for those who required more information prior to meeting. Also, this pre-interview phase often "involves a negotiation type of discourse that is quite different form the actual interview" (Hesser-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p. 194). This discussion was by and large brief; however, the prospective informant was given the time required to address concerns. At the interview, informants were again assured confidentiality and asked if they had any questions prior to commencing the interview; they then signed a consent form agreeing to participate in an electronically recorded interview (De Verthelyi, 1995).

Participants were chosen based on those who responded first. In one instance, an informant expressed an intense interest in participating in both interview and focus group. This request would have been granted, as it may have provided an opportunity to see if there were any carry over effects from initial interview to focus group contributions. However, due to only one participant selecting to be involved in focus group discussion, this process was discarded as a means of interrogation.

Of the prospective informants approached, all but three expressed an interest in participating. Additionally, it is important to note that the research involved purposeful sampling, self-selection and non-random selection of participants (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2001). Ideally, a sample should be random and present an adequate cross section of the target population; however, due to factors such as the method, the environment and convenience, randomness was not an option. Additionally, the matter of social desirability (particularly in the focus groups) could have been problematic when questioning identity, nationality and customs. However, it appears that participants did not feel the need to provide socially acceptable responses (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2001).

Finally, informant attention focused entirely on Western or Western educated sojourners, primarily due to factors such as accessibility, convenience and the ability to rely on an informal network, which allowed for a roll on effect.

The Participants

The researcher was a white female graduate student (Postgraduate Diploma), 38 years old originally from New Zealand, currently living in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.

The research participants were recruited from personal contacts or informal contacts known to the researcher. Participants were all residing in Dubai, with the minimum length of stay ranging from 3 years through to 13 years; however, one participant had been raised in Dubai but her university education was conducted overseas in America and the United Kingdom.

Demographic information along with nationality distribution information is summarized in Table 1. The ages of the participants ranged from 27 to 60, with a mean age of 42. The study involved six females and four males. All of the participants were married, except one who was engaged. Qualifications were diverse, ranging from minimum level, ACS School certificate (UK system) to PhD in Industrial Organisational Psychology. See Table 2 for the educational distribution information.

All participants were employed, with the exception of two, one male and one female, who were working part-time as they were both the primary caretakers of their children. All others were employed full-time.

All participant females came to the Middle East as dependant spouses, excluding one, who came on her own employment contract, every one of the male participants came on secured employment contracts, bar one who came as a dependant spouse.

Table 1.

A Frequency Distribution of the Participants by Nationality, Gender, Age, Marital status and Number of Children

Category	*n*
Nationality	
American	1
Australian	2
English (British)	3
Malaysian	1
Pakistani	1
Singaporean	1
Welsh	1
Gender	
Female	6
Male	4
Age	
21-30	1
31-39	4
41-49	3
51-60	2
Marital Status	
Single	1
Married	9
Number of children	
0	3
1	2
2	5*

*In two situations, due to divorce children/young adults are living outside of the UAE.

Table 2.

Distribution of Participant Educational Qualifications

Category	*n*
ACS School certificate (UK)	1
O Levels	1
A Levels	1
High School	1
Higher Nat. Dip Computer Science	1
Bachelors of Architecture	1
Masters in Education	2
MBA	1
PhD	1

Transcribing the interviews

The method in which conversations and interviews become workable data is through the process of transcription, writing down what people have said. Although time consuming, I found this process arguably most beneficial and satisfying; additionally this method allowed me to become immersed in the material, making me extremely familiar with the nuances of the participants and gaining insights into their perspectives and *how* they talked and didn't talk, since pauses can frequently be valuable information.

Another advantage of transcription is that it offered detail and convenience, as I found it far easier to work from transcripts than repeated listening of electronic recordings, although I did find that when reading transcripts after repeated listening to the recordings, I *heard* the participants' transcripts as well as read them.

It is worth mentioning that transcription is different from standard written text in that it does not usually involve standard sentences with punctuation, such as commas and full

stops, for the simple reason that people often don't speak in formally constructed sentences (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). Additionally, because all material cannot feasibly be used, transcription allows for a further process of selection, more focused investigation and analysis (Wetherell, et al, 2001). Since working with transcripts involves selection, it is essential that what is selected be based on your theoretical framework, theory, aims and research project and this be emphasized prior to analysis. For example, my theoretical framework was social constructionist, that is, I believe that roles are socially constructed and not biologically determined, while my method for analysis involved combing CA with DA (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Despite the various advantages of transcription, there are some disadvantages. For example, it is often difficult to demonstrate on the written page *how* words were spoken. Frequently, italics, bold or underlining serve to provide accentuation, or spelling anomalies, such as coz or y-e-a-hhh, but this "attempt to indicate how participants speak is always partial and therefore selective" according to Wetherell et al (2001, p. 33).

In conclusion, transcripts construct a reality of talk that is then analyzed. Thus, the researcher decides upon what is considered real and relevant. However, with transparency, this is unproblematic.

Analysis

The next section analysis looks at ten (10) 'conversations' between sojourners and the researcher. I bring together a coherent narration of how sojourner identities are affected or changed, illustrating what is important to some sojourners' identities. The narration forms themes for the most; however, as is expected with qualitative work, there are experiences relevant to only a few or a single individual. This does not make the information gained less informative or valid but rather allows for further learning and insight into the differences experienced by the sojourner. I analyse all interviews with the view to situate identities and explicate shifting identities of sojourners living in Dubai. In order to cover vast amounts of textual material gained from the 'conversational

interviews,' unfortunately, there are moments where each one cannot always be analysed in detail.

Sojourners Nationality: is it a detail or an identity?

The first theme formed around sojourners' nationality. What is of analytical interest is how sojourners construct their identity in terms of their nationality and their individual 'selves'.

In the following extracts, you get a sense of how a sojourner's nationality is perceived as an important detail and as having value to personal identification. Interestingly, the sojourner's conversation shows how national identity/ nationality permeates the entire identity and even how a sojourner identifies with others. For example, comments such as, *"cos I was born there, well, I identify with Australian ideas, I watch Australian cricket, I don't know what else I can feel"* and the following

Extract 1a Nationality: is it a detail or an identity:
N: *When you are in Dubai do you think of yourself as Singaporean?*
SG: *Yeah*
N: *Why do you think of yourself, how do you describe yourself as Singaporean?*
SG: *I'm from Singapore*
clearly illustrate nationalities are not forgotten, and nor could a sojourner feel anything else[12].

Additionally, nationality is frequently interrelated at several levels of interaction within the sojourner's social communication system, and they use a variety of discourses in their exchanges, making nationality identifiable in a range of social interchanges, without perhaps the sojourner being aware. Indeed, nationality or national identity "is apparent in cases where we take pride in our co-nationals, for example, in the sporting triumphs of athletes or the discoveries of scientists. This is not pride in what I as an individual achieved, nor even in what I imagine myself to have achieved. The emotion of "pride attests to the belief that I share an identity with the athlete or scientists, and their

[12] Participant initials have been changed to protect their confidentiality.

achievement belongs to all who share that identity" (Poole, 2003, p. 273). Particularly interesting in the following extracts is when the sojourner MK points out that she thinks of herself as *"more of a cosmopolitan, umm, kind of, for lack of a better word, like a citizen of the world"*, but even here although she thinks herself to be a citizen of the world, 'MK' displays obvious pride in her next comments regarding Malaysia, clearly demonstrating her affiliation and identification with Malaysia, her original homeland: *"I am becoming to see wonderful progress, in the last decade and I am witnessing this wonderful progress happening in Malaysia, and I'm very proud of it, and a lot of people have cottoned onto it and they are copying what Malaysia is doing, they are using for example as an economic model."*

Thereby, MK links her identity with her original homeland above and beyond how she feels about 'the world'. Other examples in my conversations also consider this connection between nationality and identity implicitly, for example:

Extracts 2a

N: *Do you follow a national sport?*

JV: *Not on a grand scale, usually by default, because my partner is a huge rugby fanatic, ahh, and when England is playing another country I will support England, but when England are playing Wales, I will sit and stand for Wales*

Or

Extract 2b

PL: *There is a lot of rivalry between umm your backgrounds and where you are certainly in sports, certainly in events that are occurring so you can if there is an event on, such as a rugby game between South Africa and England, there is always a bit of banter between the South Africans and Aussies, and the English, and then when you consider I mean such as recently with Bruce and the disaster that occurred in New Orleans you then get to realize who it effects and in that regard ... such as the bomb in London happened people actually called me to ask if any of your friends or family had been hurt*

As demonstrated in extract 2b, often the footing shifts from something that is unimportant to something that completely defines the sojourner and their fellow sojourner. Specifically, the sojourner PL links his friend Bruce with his home country, and himself with London during the recent bombings. Consequently, a hyphened identity is constructed, between the sojourner and their homeland.

Also, while we also may bask in the triumphs, having national identities also means that we can feel embarrassment at terrible behaviours and we may feel some responsibility to make amends or so, as with pride, embarrassment can attest to a shared identity to a homeland (Poole, 2003). One sojourner introduces this notion when she discusses how she feels about America:

Extract 3a

N: *How do you feel about your country when you are away from it?*

MZ: *Umm, humm, I'm embarrassed sometimes by it, I'm saddened and embarrassed by some of the policies, before I left America I was very republican conservative ahh true flag waver and now that I have been away, and start seeing the world, you start to see how some of the policies are unjust and unfair and some of the policies are just an embarrassment as an American.*

Clearly, the sojourner identifies with the "problems" her government policies have in relation to 'others'.

Furthermore, what is of particular interest is how sojourners feel about their nationality or other nationalities in social situations. Nationality may not be a big deal in their home country but, as a foreigner in a host country, it has relevance. For example, for SG nationality was a source distress:

Extracts 4a

SG: *I have been mistaken for the maid, or the waitress, whereas in Singapore, <u>no one</u> would ever*

N: *Because you are in a majority in Singapore?*

SG: *Everyone would work for a living, we would go out, people would respect everyone, whereas here, oh they are Asian, so they deserve to be treated, umm as lesser, you know, not as good as a European.*

What is of interest is that in SG's discourse, she does not give an indication of which nationalities treat her badly or mistake her for a maid, but it is clear that she views her nationality and (in later parts of the interview) her skin colour as being problematic here in the host country, an issue that is certainly not of relevance in her home country, Singapore.

Below, MZ constructs another dimension of nationality and identity, in which she explains how certain nationalities are more "work" than others:

Extract 4b

MZ: *Yes I think so, if there has ever been a time when I think someone didn't like me it was always with British individuals, always, even colleagues, even colleagues here, I felt they warmed up to me less, than the Indian colleagues we had instant connection but with the British people I felt I had to really work at making a connection.*

Thus, nationality of self as well of those around the self is never forgotten, and the sojourner is seemingly constantly aware of his or her own nationality and what it says about them, and others.

Furthermore, there is an underlying awareness perhaps not always recognized, which operates at an unconscious level, such as that nationalities can operate to separate differing nationalities from other communities. For example:

Extracts 5a

MK: *I think that the like nationality you can share humour experiences, and arrh, you can share your sufferings with, with like minded nationalities, umm there is an understanding with some of the trials and tribulations one may have adjusting to the environment.*

Or,

Extract 5b

MF: *Occasionally you find at parties, the reality is that I'm not that social, in that I don't go to lots of parties, but for example, on the weekend I went to a work function and it is quite obvious that you had the locals, ahh, sitting in one group, the Indians slash Pakistanis sitting in another and the Westerners more in another, umm by and large, apart from a few people that go around and umm actively mix it was umm left up to a few individuals yeah, so it tends to be segregated*

Or

Extract 5c

HD: *I do know that I'm not Katie Summers, or whatever, the name stuck out, everything stuck out, what we did on the weekend stuck out, arrh*

N: *For example*

HD: *Our parents didn't sit on the beach all day on a Friday whereas everybody else's did at that particular school,. Umm and other non white kids in school, there was one Indian family and there was actually one Arab family... She [my mother] would never let us forget that we were not British that we were not white, we were Pakistani, when we came home we would have to change out of our uniforms.*

Above extracts 5b and c in particular illustrate that, for the sojourner, certain situations suggest that there are indeed some cultural differences. Additionally, knowledge is inferred as to why some nationalities would feel more comfortable sitting together in social occasions, or in extract 5c, why 'our family' wouldn't sit on the beach whereas other families may have done. This import of cultural references is a way of comparing 'self' or 'selves' to 'others'; it can even take the form of stereotyping, as in the observation that certain nationalities will sit on the beach while others will not. However, that said, the construction of identity is shown by how identity and difference are represented symbolically, through representational systems and social inclusion and exclusion of certain groups of people (Woodward, 1997). Thus, nationality for the sojourner can result in formations or divisions toward certain relationships in certain social situations.

Additionally, nationalities often provide the sojourner with specific moral compasses, agendas, or specific obligations or responsibilities, specifically when raising children in Dubai (Poole, 203). Additionally, as Sacks (1992) points out, categories are "inference-rich", for example,

Extracts 6a

N: *Do you think that it is important to instill a sense of identity to their [children's] home country?*

JN: *... this is false* [environment - Dubai], *it's a safe place here, it's false it's basically a false life here for people, and this isn't reality and you have to get them back to reality, definitely and children should be taught that yeah*

Or SG, speaking on embracing respect issues from Singapore and the importance of teaching her children the importance of her culture

Extract 6b

SG: *I can only give the Singaporean, so I cook Singaporean food, I speak a bit of you know Chinese and Malay, and not a lot but umm my son you know holds some values Asian values, like my son doesn't call his older sister by her name, which is if you do that it is very disrespectful, umm, we call her Jie Jie, which means older sister, not allowed to call, even in this country when people call their older siblings by their name, I will not allow it.*

N: *Right so you are instilling some significant cultural information?*

SG: *Yeah, anyone older, like my age, they will have to call them auntie or uncle, never by by name.*

Arguably, there are some underlying insights that suggest that nationality and identity are importantly entwined. That is, perhaps for the sojourner their identity and the relationship with nationality are more closely hyphenated than often acknowledged, making nationality an important component to the sojourner's identity. Thus, for the sojourner, nationality warrants serious consideration when reflecting on issues of identity.

Boundaries on identity: how sojourners must change to fit the environment

The following extracts highlight how boundaries can govern relationships between host nationals and sojourners that, in turn, affect sojourner identity. Interestingly, sojourners felt their 'natural behaviour' was restricted if they were to compare it to how they could generally interact in their homelands. Sojourners were asked if they would in certain social situations be careful in offering their opinions. They describe this particular phenomenon:

Extract 7a Boundaries on identity:

PH: *Yes, definitely, especially if we are talking with local people, I am very careful not to offer any opinion that could cause offense, they can offend me if they like but and in that way I won't get back to them, because they umm it is very easy to give offense and to find yourself in prison*

N: *Right*

PH: *Just after a car accident, for example, people get out and shake hands! Whereas back in Europe people get out and swear and threaten each other, that behaviour here will land you in jail, even if it was not the accident was not your fault, any harsh criticism of the driver or swear or anything like that you will go to prison*

And

Extract 7b

PL: *I meant I think when you get to a local society, the Arab society, the women, the way the women are treated and all the rest of it, I would never interact with a local woman, she would never shake my hand and I understand that.*

N: *Why is that?*

PL: *Umm, I think that's because that's their culture. I mean even in business, I'm very wary if there is an Arab lady near me, I will wait for her to offer her hand before I shake here hand, because I'm aware that in their culture I think that an interaction with another man other than their husband is forbidden.*

Also, how different is life in Dubai compared to their homeland?

Extract 7c

MZ: *For example, if I'm in America I could walk into any bar by myself and immediately someone would strike up a conversation not in a way that is the least bit that is trying to get you to go home or anything like that, but say here, I mean, I don't know many women here that would walk into a bar just to have a beer by themselves*

N: *Right, no, I agree with you*

MZ: *You would be more or less almost be judged, thought to be a prostitute or something.*

N: *Yes, or loose morals, even waiting for my friends is difficult if they are going to be a long time*

MZ: *Yeah, you feel uncomfortable, it's uncomfortable, umm whereas you know when I am at home in America I feel that I could go anywhere at any time on my own and I would have a degree and someone would be friendly to me whereas here that is not the case.*

Although each of these extracts illustrates quite different situations, they highlight a) the cultural positioning of the sojourner and b) that fact that sojourners find their identities being altered and bordered to suit the environment.

Conversational analysis, as illustrated by Schegloff's (1991, 1992, 1997) methodology, discusses how conversation is relevant to the discovery and understanding of social life, but that it is "self-indulgent" to "import priori knowledge into our analysis" (Wetherell, 1998, p. 392). Despite the analyser having priori knowledge, it is clear from the above extracts 7a, b and c, which sojourners during their discourse bring to the foreground of certain social situations in Dubai. I now return to the material in extracts a, b and c, for there are several claims that need to be established.

First, within constructionist frameworks and appropriate conversational analysis and ethnomethodology, I want to emphasize the situated nature and boundaries upon the nature of the sojourner. This situating of 'selves' with whom the sojourner then compares to 'the other' demonstrates a difference, a set of restrictions on *their identity*, which contributes to making an account of what is authentic to the sojourner and what is particular to the surrounding society they are currently living in. Furthermore, this requires that the audience, the reader or at the very least the interviewer, have cultural knowledge as to why these differences would intrude on identity. The accounts they give of self in reporting past events or feelings in particular contexts demonstrate a

construction of how they seemingly must alter their identity when around relevant 'others' or situations.

Second, playing with forms of pronouns helps some shift the focus to various participant identities, or roles, or "selves" and thus expresses the situating of selves (Carbaugh, 1996). For example, MZ in extract 7c, shifts from 'I' when discussing how she feels at home to 'you' when constructing how you can be judged as a prostitute. This has the effect of maintaining distance from what is said, and indicating that she is aware that it is a sensitive topic. Additionally in extract 7a, PN states "I am very careful" but then changes to use the more generic term 'you' in which he claims that behaviour would "land you in jail" to distance himself from what is being said. Thus, the sojourner is aware that they must manage a public profile if not to be "*judged*" inappropriately to avoid being labeled or give offense.

Thus, it is clear that the sojourners approach host nationals and the environment with care, making sure their public identity is appropriate to avoid tension. However, do these asymmetries interfere with sojourner wanting to interact with locals as friends? That is, although the sojourner is aware of managing their identity publicly, is there also evidence that the sojourners in Dubai either go out of their way not to interact with host nationals at a personal level?

The subsequent extracts address this issue:

Extract 8a

N: *Do you have local friends here as you have local friends in Cyprus?*

JN: *Not local, NOT local*

N: *And is that unusual do you think?*

JN: *umm, I don't think so, the difference in cultures, that's probably why cos we deal with expats not locals cos our social life is in bars drinking in restaurants drinking and um the culture is different in a Muslim country, and we don't really go to the places where we would meet locals to socialize with I think because their culture is different that's why.*

Extract b

When asked about whether it is 'normal' to not socialize with locals PM replies

PL: *It seems normal because I think their cultures are so vastly different.*

Extract 8c

N: *Do you think it would be important to mix with local people here?*

PH: I s---u---p----p----ooooooooose, it depends on what sort of business you do, in some aspects it would be quite important to have local contacts, umm, in my line of work it doesn't really matter

N: What about as friends, so you think it is unusual and not

*PH: ...and not to have local friends [***finishing my sentence***].*

N: Right, what about the religion, do you think that would hamper being good friends with Muslims, locals, less inclined to drink and socialize with their wives and other men

PH: Yes definitely, yes, yes yes, it is one of the difficulties, the standard of dress code for the local people, the umm the religion itself that certain food and drinks are not permitted, it doesn't make it that easy to mix in a relaxing atmosphere.

Extract 8d

MF: No, friendships just sort of happen, I probably wouldn't meet them because the people that I am referring to I probably wouldn't even meet them if they were Westenised, and living in the compound I would never run into them, for that fact alone, but they still come from a perspective that umm is so incredibly different.

It appears that sojourners don't actively avoid host nationals; however, there is little incentive to socialize with 'them' due to cultural restrictions and having little in common to make the interaction occur comfortably. Thus, there are implications that whatever "distances, differences, and boundaries [which exist seemingly] cannot be transcended or broken down" (Radhakrishnan, 2003, p. 313). The response of the participants establishes that for the sojourner there are often a specific, and in a sense, a limited view, on how social organization or social order occurs in Dubai.

As conversation analysis reminds us, conversations need to be seen in context of the surrounding conversation activities; however, due to the sheer volume of material in this study this cannot be analyzed in such detail. However, there are some further comments that need to be made. In extract 8d the reference to 'them' signifies a further contrast between the sojourner and the local. MF constructs this difference between Western and the perspective that 'they' have is *"so incredibly different"*, or JN comment that *"I think their cultures are so vastly different"*. This construction of binary opposites makes certain contrasts between the locals and sojourners. Thus, paying close attention to the sojourner's discourse reveals an emerging pattern of dichotomies, such as, "I"/"they". 'I' refers to the sojourner while 'they or them' refers to the host nationals. Thus, frequently, the sojourner in discourse will present these dichotomies as qualifiers of their relationships or social interactions with locals. We are not told why this difference creates

boundaries to friendships, just that "they" are *"incredibly different"*, and thus, inferring that differences create boundaries to friendships. Also, the sojourner assumes some cultural knowledge by the reader as being a crucial factor to why locals and sojourners have certain boundaries. However, it is important to note that what the sojourner experiences is an 'ultimate truth', for this study is premised upon the sojourner as the expert of their situation; thus there is need to view what is significant for the sojourner, even if the 'we' disagree with their construction.

Shifting footing, not all sojourners reported or constructed negative accounts when interacting with locals. Indeed, one sojourner enjoyed her interactions; however, we need to contextualize her statements, as it appears she was the only sojourner to have such a relationship, that is her relationship developed due to living in close proximity to a local Emirati. Moreover, it was recognized by the sojourner as being a rather special or unusual relationship in this restrictive society when she was included in a local's family engagements, such as a family wedding.

Extract 9a

N: *Do you have any locals you consider friends?*
SG: *Oh yeah*
N: *And do you think they will be lasting friendships when you leave here?*
SG: *At least one*
N: *And you'll be friends for*
SG: *Forever <u>forever</u>, our kids grew up together, they play together, yeah umm we are really good friends for life, for sure.*
N: *And umm what kind of made that, you just err clicked?*
SG: *Well we lived right next door to each other for number one, umm just his character is so nice and they welcome me into his family, us into his family, I mean even into his extended family, his sisters', I have been to their wedding, umm*
N: *And that is quite unusual in the UAE? I mean to be introduced to a man's family*
SG: *Yeah, I think his sisters, like I said, I went to their wedding, umm they invite me over for meals, really really nice people*

This last extract in this segment is certainly an example of how 'reality' is constructed differently for this sojourner in a different contextual situation. This leaves open the possibility that instead of being controversial or a sensitive issue, there is a probability that identification with host nationals certainly depends entirely upon individual experience, actual interaction and one's construction of 'reality'. Thereby, there are

multiple constructions or versions that can exist for the sojourner in which 'reality' is occasioned, situationally constructed and contextual.

Sojourner's Identity of belonging and responsibility to Dubai

These following extracts generally come later in the interviews, in which sojourner discourse addresses their sense of belonging and feelings of responsibility to Dubai. Interestingly, Hall (1997) believes that "language of national identity creates a discourse of national belongingness". Arguably, cultural positioning discourse acts to exclude or excuse the sojourner from any feelings of responsibility or belonging to Dubai. Moreover, perhaps due to the cosmopolitan nature of Dubai, there is an increase in the feeling of lack of belonging, because the sojourner already has a homeland that is perhaps more important to them than a transient host country.

The next extracts, highlight the sojourner's discourse regarding having a sense of belonging and responsibility to Dubai.

Extract 10a: Sojourners sense of belonging:
MK: Yeah, umm, I feel very diluted, umm I do feel for them

Extract 10b
JN: No, no. I love Dubai but if I left Dubai tomorrow, I would have lots of good memories, after 12 years here, so, I can look back and say I love Dubai, which I do, but I can't say that I have any or feel a responsibility to Dubai or the people. If I move to Cyprus tomorrow it wouldn't bother me.

Extract 10c
*PL: No (very softly), [pause 2 seconds] no (again very softly). Umm, I think Dubai is influenced mainly by the royal family here, deciding what they want and when they want it, umm, so do I contribute to the Dubai life, no, I mean there was the occasional things I do like to take part in ummm the walk the charity walks, yeah, I think because that brings the whole again the community [*referring to the expat community*] together for a single purpose, or umm the charity balls or things like that. So yes, but as far as contributing back into Dubai's society no*
N: Because
PL: I think because it's umm cash rich it's self-maintaining, yeeeah. I think in an environment where it is so affluent, and they are deciding to do what they want there's nothing I could do to influence it, they just go on their own merit.

Extract 10d

MZ: *No not really*

N: *It's funny isn't it, err after being here for 9 years*

MZ: *Yeah, yeah half my entire adult life I've been here, but no I don't feel there is any connection emotionally. I do I love Dubai but I don't' have those feelings of nationalism or patriotism*

Again, there is a lot going on here and several points need to be addressed.

First, is it realistic that the sojourner should feel part of a foreign environment? Obviously, an important challenge to feeling part of a community is that either one group or different groups overcome powerful differences, but since the sojourner is here for a finite period, is it realistic to expect them to feel responsible to a nation that they will only occupy temporarily? (Capozza & Brown, 2000). Additionally, Capozza and Brown (2000) point out a " social identity and self-categorization tradition typically stresses the situational determinants of social identification and consequential behavior"(p. 6).

Thus, beliefs held by the sojourner, living in a restrictive society and generally having little interaction with host nationals seemingly shape the sojourner's sense of 'belonging' and feelings of responsibility to the host country; the sojourner is the 'out-group' while the host nationals are the 'in-group'. That is, membership or responsibility implies a sense of shared representations and shared meanings to assist identification to a group; however, there is little evidence of shared goals between the sojourner and the host nationals, which serve to keep the focus purely individual and distance. The result is that the 'foreigner' feels little need or motivation to identity with the host nationals.

Looking at the first extract, 10a, MK we are not really given any extra-contextual knowledge as to why the sojourner feels *diluted* in their sense of belonging; however, PL in extract 10c, does give some insight, and discusses how life here is run by a royal municipality and thus his influence or any efforts to help or influence would be negligible. It is also worth noting in PL's extract that, although he feels unable to be of help, he refreshes or 'repairs' his identity from someone not willing to help by making explicit claims that he is willing to assist in other charitable causes. This moment-to-

moment maneuvering of talk demonstrates how speakers can manage their talk and social identity. The same is seen in JN's extract in which she loves Dubai, but has little feelings of responsibility. This maneuvering demonstrates that the sojourner is aware that it is a sensitive issue and they may need to manage their identity or risk appearing as uncaring. This nicely illustrates how 'identities' can never be totally fixed but are subject to positions and constructed in discourse. The participants' positions, and thus their identities, in social life, are determined by discourses (Wetherell, 1998).

Below, HD extract 11 and MF extract 12 provide some additional contextual reasons for why the sojourner may not feel 'they' belong. Specifically, being a foreigner in Dubai can leave the sojourner with a sense of vulnerability that the sojourner expresses in the following extracts:

Extract 11

HD: *Well, I think it is political slash legal status, which is nil, has a very very big thing to do with it, there is such a difference in this sector of society where rules are different rules laws, umm, the standing, the standing is is different*

N: *Such as the the locals are*

HD: *the locals are favoured, and there is a marked difference in that and any expat and then Pakistani expatriate being one of the more lowered run one, but arr I think it might change over time since people are allowed to buy property here, and a lot of people are buying property and making a sense of belonging here, umm, and making, ah having a sense of ownership, otherwise the only things people own are their cars and their furniture and nothing else*

Thus, different political status is one of the issues related to belongingness of the sojourner, and it appears that this stems from the fact that, in Dubai, this status is not negotiated or agreed upon, it must just be accepted. Thus, certain restrictions or the hierarchical nature of Dubai, can result in the expatriate withdrawing from wanting to be part of the host country, thus disrupting feelings of belonging or responsibility to Dubai's local society or the host nation's country. It is obvious that there is a fundamental difference surrounding the sojourner in which the sojourner is viewed and indeed knows he or she is viewed differently from host nationals. This again places the 'foreigner' as separate from locals and results in ambivalence towards belongingness and responsibilities for a country the sojourner does not or cannot ever belong to.

Again, there is negotiation between 'them' and the 'expat', which is offered as a partial reason why sojourners generally do not have a sense of identity towards Dubai. The conflict between their rules, rules that are different and favour locals, demonstrates how there is a distinctive and real (not imagined) system of social practices of which the sojourner is not a part.

Another barrier to 'belongingness' to Dubai is the knowledge that your time here is generally finite. The sojourner is a transient as MG discusses in the next extract, and living here involves at some stage leaving, moving away from what has become familiar an 'identity' or self that is predictable, to go somewhere else. So, forming attachment to a foreign land and people when inevitably you must leave can make readiness to embrace another system unappealing:

Extract 12

N: *Do you think you have a sense of responsibility or belonging to the people or the life here in Dubai?*

MF: *No, no, absolutely not*

N: *After five years?*

MF: *I am a transient and they would discard me as soon as I am no longer economically useful to them [laughs]*

N: *So you see it as because they are taking from you*

MF: *Yeah*

N: *That that's a reason to not have any sense of belonging?*

MF: *No, no, I see it that they have their own set of responsibilities, they are their own country and their own, and you can give them information and tell them what they want what they perhaps they should hear, the environment is a classic example here, they are trashing it really severely, and they don't seem to have a concept of it, I am glad it is their environment and not my environment*

Thus, being a transient is a difficult position for some, and this lack of permanence affects relationships, both with fellow sojourners and with host nationals. Therefore, seemingly, transience permeates sojourners' attitude to feeling like they belong, since 'they' (in this case 'they' equals the sojourner) are temporary; thus, the sojourner can remain an observer and as such it is acceptable to be separate and hold no responsibility to Dubai.

Additionally, what is highlighted in the above two extracts is how the sojourner constructs an understanding of how the sojourner lives in Dubai, the asymmetry of life

here; 'we' are different from 'them', thus, in inter-group situations, there is an unequal status. What the sojourner is 'saying' is that there are tremendous contrasts or discrepancies and inequities between the host nationals and the expatriate: *I am a transient and they would discard me as soon as I am no longer economically useful to them.* This would certainly not be true for the local.

It appears that this unequal status has the effect of separating the sojourner from any feeling of belonging and responsibility, thus providing insight and a possible explanation for the detachment between integration with host nationals or the host country. There is a demarcation in definite terms between the foreigner and the local, which may or may not be visible to the host. Additionally, this demarcation further alienates and results in the sojourner not wanting to contribute to an alien environment. This illustrates further that there is a dominant sentiment of vulnerability in some contexts, yet, on the other hand, remaining disconnected means there is perhaps also a feeling of invulnerability in the sojourners' 'foreignness', which allows them to remain detached from the host country's culture and therefore, the sojourner does not need to have feelings of responsibility or a need to contribute, and the sojourner can remain on the outside, as part of the out-group, detached and alienated from the host environment.

Occasionally, this feeling of vulnerability stems into the physical. One female, MZ comments that she feels uncomfortable and self-conscious when exercising, expressing her feelings on the possibility of physical abuse:

Extract 13

MZ: *Umm, probably I'm just kind-of-afraid of youth in you just hear stories, so sometimes I'm just afraid of seeing groups of young men, be they workers or be they arrh, young Arab youth, arr sometimes I go out walking at night, and if I see them in a group it's a sense of being uncomfortable sometimes fear - ... rape, or abduct*

Finally, what is magnified is that sojourners appear to be exonerated from responsibility. They don't need nor should they have a sense of belonging to a culture or country in which either their time is transient and/ or they are considered or treated as 'foreign' or alien, unable to gain immigrant status.

Sojourners' relationships with friends, an important support system for sojourner identity

Although it has been said that friends are the family we would choose, in Dubai, this adage seems particularly poignant. Because none of the sojourners I interviewed had extended family living in Dubai, the importance of friends takes on increased value. However, this relationship is not without its problems. These extracts address sojourner's friendships. Since friendships make up an essential support system for the sojourner, there are some issues that need investigating further.

The first issue concerns how the sojourner constructs her identity within friendships and how friends seem to form around 'pockets':

Extract 14

JV: *arrhhh everyone comes here with bringing with them their own culture, and while everyone interacts side-by-side working, socializing umm entertaining, people are very much ensconced in their own nationality, or* [long pause] *Western culture, Indian culture, Pakistani culture, Arab culture, Iranian culture, each pocket has its own umm way of life and they all mix together, I think, umm by natural by natural affiliation, they naturally are divided from other cultures*

What is of analytical interest here is that within the concept of comparative identity or Tajfel's concepts of social comparison (Tajfel, 1972,1978, cited in Ros, Huici & Gomez, 2000), in order to construct meaning in discourse we need 'difference', a difference of 'other' (Hall, 1997). Thus, as du Gay, Hall et al (1997) point out

> *culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system. The marking of 'difference' is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture.* (Original italics, p. 236).

JV's discourse demonstrates differences in-group categories as being distinct due to either ethnic or national dimensions. Therefore, when we look at culture as a salient dimension of sojourner identities and relations, there has to be knowledge and acknowledgment that, in Dubai, scores of ethnic groups exist; however, as JW points out, communities essentially act autonomously (Fishman, 1977, cited in Ros, Huici & Gomez,

2000). That there are these separate communities or distinctions that operate at a group level, along ethnic or nationality lines, is apparent, but we must consider how this impacts the identity of sojourners.

Interestingly, while some sojourners in Dubai enjoy socializing with a variety of different nationalities, some of the sojourners I interviewed wanted more or only had interaction with those of their own nationality or of the same or similar culture. Furthermore, these friendships are not always straightforward or unproblematic, for several reasons, such as religious boundaries, as the following extract demonstrates

Extract 15

HD: *Because Pakistanis are Muslim and the divide, it's very difficult to assess whom you could have in your house for dinner because they may not drink, you know, but it's very difficult to announce let's have a club for Pakistanis that who drink [right] you know, not who drink but those who don't have an issue with alcohol, that's it really, that don't have an issue with alcohol, but if you're an Indian you don't have to announce that at all that it's just done you know [right] so I think it's a bit hard , I would love to have a group of Pakistani friends for instance, sometimes I feel quite left out, I was saying this to R* (her husband) *in the supermarket the other day, I often see young Urdu speaking women, whether they are Indian or Pakistani trendy ladies in high heels or whatever they are, they're young and shopping for their young family or they're working or in their in their work out clothes and they're on the cell phone and they are having a conversation in Urdu and I have <u>nobody</u> I could do that with*

N: *Oh ok*

HD: *And I would like to, I would love to actually*

In this context, we find HD demarking individuals (or group of individuals) along cultural and language lines. Interestingly, in this context of cultural separation, the sojourner is confronted with the challenge of cultural participation and belonging and there are several challenges to sojourner friendships and identities as we are beginning to discover. For example, HD feels out of a group that is perceived as favorable, this is indicated in the second part of the above extract, where there is an inferred sadness. HD constructs this when she changes from a matter of fact topic to construct her identity as disappointed at a certain cultural positioning that can interfere with friendships to a personal account of how she would like to be involved in another in-group. Additionally,

since "part of our cultural identity is tied to the language(s) that we speak", it is not surprising that she states that she would *"love"* to be involved in an Urdu-speaking group (Martin and Nakayama, 2003, p. 222). There is a need for some cultural knowledge about certain people's religious beliefs or why certain people would find it difficult to socialize if they didn't drink alcohol or why one would want to associate with a nationality speaking the same language; this is not given by HD, but cultural knowledge is inferred.

Additionally, below PL describes how culture plays an important role in sojourner's friendship identification,

Extract 16

PL: *Arhhhh, I don't think it is a necessity, I really don't think it is a necessity, umm we come from the civilized world so we mix with civilized people, umm, most of my friends are shall we say are English speaking arr white males, females, all the rest of it so I don't tend to mix outside my own culture, certainly from a local state I have a few local friends have a few Indian and Pakistani friends, possibly more at work than I do socially socially, umm yeah it is important to arrhh like for like your own country people.*

By addressing cultural positioning, we can focus on how sojourners construct their identity, and it is perhaps worth mentioning here that their account of their 'selves' is constructed in context, which is relevant to their situation. Additionally, because "identity formation involves the development of both personal identity and group identity, group identity is of particular importance among members of minority groups within multicultural" societies (Phinney, 1990, Tajifel & Turner, 1986, cited in Phinney, 2000, p.28). Thus, for Western (European) sojourners in Dubai, it is worth remembering that Westerners only make up 1.3% of the population. PL's construction of himself as being involved in a Western group is interesting; for example, he describes the importance of being civilized; this serves to separate him from 'others' and also acts to identify himself and his culture as 'civilised'. He also uses it to 'explain' why he would want to socialize or identify with those in his own culture. He does not elaborate on by implication who the polar opposite of civilized, 'the primitive,' are in Dubai, so the reader must gather he means those outside his culture or cultures similar to his. This position, according to Ros, Huici and Gomez (2000), introduces a "position of positive or negative character of social identity [which is] derive[d] from comparison with relevant groups in social context" (p.81). Moreover, intergroup differentiation is frequently dealt with in this

binary comparison; that is, between groups, the in-group and another group, the out-group, in which only one social identity is considered (Ros, Huici & Gomez 2000).

However, interestingly from a conversationalist point of view is the 'repair' PL makes, contradicting himself so as not to appear inappropriate. He asserts that he does indeed have a few Indian and Pakistani friends, although he does not identify if they belong to the category of 'civilised' or 'uncivilized.' Because he calls them friends, we are to assume they are considered and identified as 'civilised;' however, they are not to be included in his social group. Thus, there is another inference at work here, in which there is a distinction in identifying with work friends and social friends. What this serves to do is implicate that there are in fact two in-groups, and it may only be a degree or contextual differences that account for this differentiation that serves to separate in-groups. What "causes this separation, is salience, which is determined by how accessible a social category is and by its contextual fit, that is by its adequacy to patterns of intracategory similarities and intercategory differences in certain dimensions found in the environment" (Oaks, 1987, cited in Ros et al, 2000, p. 81). This means that the relationship between friendships and sojourners' identity can depend upon the sojourner having a higher degree of identification within one's own cultural boundaries, and thus reconfirming their own identity to their culture.

Interestingly, sojourner friendships can be challenging in other ways, as MZ talks about issues regarding 'maintenance' surrounding sojourner's friendships:

Extract 17a

MZ: I was quite close to a British woman and umm a New Zealander that I also worked with in this organization probably at the time I was working closer with those individuals, but when I stopped working there the American girl was the only one that I kept a continuing friendship with.

N: Yeah do you think it's work to maintain friendships here?

MZ: <u>Absolutely</u>

N: More work than in America?

MZ: <u>Absolutely</u>, I feel I have to put effort into arrhhh maintaining friendships, I have one friend who I just a<u>dore</u> I talk to her on the phone once a month but sadly over the last 2 or 3 years I have seen her only once or twice, even though I still consider her a very good friend, it just takes effort, effort that I feel she just

doesn't put in, they live umm almost out by Sharjah, so it's difficult they we busy, it's just hard to get together

N: *And you find too with friends at least or or I find that if they don't put the effort back into you then you just lose track of each other, so you find you err um can cast away friends but they weren't really friends just*

MZ: *Absolutely*

And later:

Extract 17b

MZ: *The friends I do have, most most would say that I they are, they are [pause] lucky cos I am a good friend and I try not to be a flaky person*

An additional challenge that can result from this transient lifestyle is that people who have been here for some time are disappointed when old friends leave, as noted by MZ:

Extract 17c

MZ: *Umm, I think my social life has changed a couple of times drastically here, mainly when I was first here I was friends with a large group of Americans that I worked with at the American university*

N: *humm humm*

MZ: *umm and Huma was included in this as well, and so there was a group of eight to twelve of us that went out together every weekend always had a party on someone's birthday there was always something going on, that we, that we were together and this was the bulk of my social life, and one by one contracts were up, and they <u>all</u> moved away*

The above interchanges are interesting from a number of perspectives. First, they convey how expectations of friendship must change. Friendships are described as different from home as involving more 'work', emphasis is placed on the word *absolutely* as if to stress the interplay that occurs, and without effort friendships quickly disappear. This therefore impacts the sojourner and puts pressure on them to make more effort than they would perhaps want to or are used to, in order to maintain friendships. Additionally, the sojourner must learn new cultural and social behaviours in order to 'adapt' and reduce stress. Thus, persons must act in the context of the social structure and recognize that they are occupants of certain positions or roles. This means they must act in accordance with others' expectations of one's own behaviours (Mc Call & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980, cited in Stets & Burke, 2000).

Second, according to identity theory, what occurs is that people take on certain roles, and having a particular role identity means acting to fulfill the expectations of that role (Stets

& Burke, 2000). MZ shows how she acts in accordance with how friends 'should' act in context; indeed, she declares she is a "*good friend*" and not a *"flaky person"*. This self-categorization or identification demonstrates how she views herself not only in comparison with 'others', but acts to provide a label, providing meaning, to distinguish herself from others who occupy a flaky or different role in Dubai's society. Interestingly, here the interchange between MZ and N (self) demonstrates how my role identification changes from researcher, investigating issues, to friend, relating to the stresses of friendships and consequences, indeed relating my own thoughts on the difficulties of maintaining friendships.

Finally, in order to identify with Dubai life, the sojourner must learn to alter in response to new or changing relationships. Thus, as MZ's discourse outlines (above), at certain times the sojourner must be able to adapt or change to suit their surroundings; however, she does not give us immediately an insight into what happens if the sojourner doesn't or can't change. Then, later, she states that:

Extract 18

MZ: *It's just very hard to establish relationships here, and arrhh, some people would just as soon not bother to speak or to make eye contact with you, and that is not ethnically or racially motivated, it is just how it is, and it's not like you're walking around trying to make friends in Karama or any restaurant, I'm kind of past that in my life, that I'm looking to make new friends.*

Thus, perhaps a critical consequence for sojourners is that they can become reluctant to meet new people.

Finally, I will briefly consider the following two themes: i) movable identities and ii) transportable identities.

Movable identities: flexible and unfixed identities

These extracts below 19a and b, were in response to the question "do you think you have changed as a person, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with those changes":

Extract 19a

PL: *So I guess you just have to adapt to the environment in order to fit in more than anything, suppose if you try to instill what you had at home into the environment*

you were moving to or vice versa, then you've just got an uphill battle, you just got to adapt to the society you are living in.

And later in the interview process PH states:

Extract 19b

N: *So you would say being flexible is an important quality to living here then*

PH: *I would say that being flexible is an important quality to living anywhere anywhere as an expatriate*

N: *hmmm humm*

PH: *umm* [pause] *umm a foreign country is-s-s-s-s-s part of life's rich patterns, and in its own way helps you umm grow better grow better, so yeah, I think you have to be flexible*

N: *Sure, so you just touched on this, obviously you have changed developmentally as a person, in what ways do you think you are satisfied with those changes and in what way are you dissatisfied with those changes?*

PH: [pause] *ummmm* [pause]. *It's satisfied and dissatisfied with the same change, it's umm, I am far more tolerant than I used to be, umm, you know, I get along with inshallah, whereas if someone didn't turn up on time before, I would be totally frustrated by it, now I accept it and in some ways I expect it, which is not right, you expect people to be fashionably late*

N: *In business meetings as well?*

PH: *Oh yes, I mean, local local people they won't turn up, they won't even phone you to apologise, because it's Inshallah, it's God's will, nothing to do with him being late, ummm so that I have learnt to tolerate and accept, and in some ways I think it's it's bad because you are getting away from some of life's disciplines you are allowing yourself not to feel disciplined anymore*

What is important here is the view that identities must be 'movable', and develop in order to cope. Clearly for the sojourner, this means being flexible or increasing tolerance; thus, identities are subject to change due to contextual, historical and relational information (Collier, 1998). This reinforces the notion that identities are therefore not fixed but rather relational (Hall, 1997).

Furthermore, in the first extracts, a moveable and flexible identity is viewed entirely positively; however, PH expresses satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the same change. Thus, what occurs is that the individual is replaced as the locus of knowledge to the relationship (Gergen, 1994). In the above extract, PH does indicate some 'tensions' and 'frustrations' that needed to be overcome in order to build a relationship, in which

there is a difference between PH's culture and social system and the host national's. This in effect, according to Carbaugh (1996), creates "stratified social identities" between him and them (p.65).

Therefore, it is important to note the importance of cultural and situational 'reality' if sojourners are to have better communication and understanding (Martin & Nakayama, 2003). Thus, understanding the process of adaptation in intercultural transitions depends upon shaping intercultural exchanges and often adapting to the new cultural context or risk becoming "culturally incompetent" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p.298). This "calls for a balance between the individual and the contextual demands" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p.298).

Transportable identities: Dichotomy of "selves"

It appears that fundamentally the "self" is those certain psychological traits that do not change with situational changes; however, when the sojourner returns to their 'homeland,' they, their 'selves,' change to the situation. For example, their topics of conversation can appear markedly different, again demonstrating that identity is occasioned and situational, and not fixed. It can also be said that for a sojourner to be successful, they must stride between two cultures and two 'realities.'

JV: *I don't change, and I don't feel that [pause] my conversation point would be different, possibly, like dirty dippers [laughs] umm, and things like that, but then I have those conversations here, a lot of my friends have children, umm but they have nannies*
N: *Right*
JV: *Your friends back home, my friends back home don't have nannies, they couldn't afford them, it's so they don't feel umm, uncomfortable with it, it's more so I don't feel uncomfortable with it*

What is of interest is that our 'selves' are interestingly more in 'co-existence', that is, there are two dimensions of identity; 'coping' involves successfully integrating the two or more types of discourse (Ward & Kennedy, 1994). This also involves for the sojourner the acceptance that each location, host country or home nation(s) has their own 'reality' and thus again for the sojourner 'truth and reality' are contextual and situational. So, in

order to adjust, or have what can be referred to as a transportable identity, the sojourner must be flexible and relativistic.

In summary, it is clear that, in the context of Dubai, a discourse of belonging is important when socializing or interacting with other sojourners, which in turn is instrumental in marking identities and a way to achieve flexible and relativistic perspective and identity. Moreover, specifically, cultural constructs of opposites, or 'otherness' become compelling signifiers; that is, identity is achieved through differences and claims of belonging (Hall, 1997).

In this chapter of analysis I have focused on how the participants represent themselves and what meanings are constructed. I focused on an analysis of their discourse, what was important to them and how they developed a construction of 'selves'. It is important to remind the reader that although 'reality' was portrayed in the extracts, these are the experiences of particular sojourners living in Dubai, and the 'truth' is therefore, contextual, situated and occasioned. Their words serve to illustrate how sojourners identify themselves, in multiple situations and how their words operate to construct their identity. Finally, what is significant then is not only how one is different with reference to 'other' but the fact that the sojourners share a similar worldview, a common system of thinking, feeling and talking about things, a system of meaning and interpretations with one's co-nationals.

PART THREE
DISCUSSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD

Chapter IV
Discussion

In this study, I have attempted to explore and understand *some* of the issues surrounding sojourner's identities as culturally situated in Dubai and constructed in discourse. This study focuses on both the discursive as well as the moment-to-moment construction of identity. In particular, I integrated social constructionist theory with conversational analysis to investigate identity issues. I focused on occasioned situations and the role of difference in the construction of sojourners' identity. Thus, I have claimed that identity is not fixed and finite, but flexible. Moreover, the emphasis was on the meanings the participants produced and how they contrasted 'reality'; that is, the participants' views and words were significant, whether or not they were 'true' or commonly held. Therefore, it is important to recognize that "knowledge does not operate in a void ... it is put to work, through certain technologies and strategies of application, in specific situations [and] historical contexts" (Foucault, cited in Hall, 2003, p. 49).

I also argued for a combination of analysis: "while an analysis of the minutiae of interaction is essential, it is equally important to consider talk as a culturally situated practice" (Abell & Stokoe, 2001, p.432). Therefore, I needed to draw upon two theories to address identity, namely constructionist theories and conversational analysis theories (Abell & Stokoe, 2001). Together, "then, the symbolizing component of identity consists, minimally, in a communication form and its meanings, and/or in symbols of identity and their meanings, as these are being used in situated (cultural) communication scenes" (Carbaugh, 1996, p. 34). Consequently, I needed to go beyond the data to explicate identities of sojourners (Abell & Stokoe, 2001).

At the beginning of the interviews, the issue of nationality and identity was addressed. It was revealed how identity and nationality or national identity permeates the identity of the sojourner. Sojourners can essentially become a hyphened identity with their homeland, whether this is wanted or not, conscious or unconscious. This is particularly interesting for sojourners living in a foreign country because there are not the banal reminders of nationhood that call attention to their nationality (Billings, 1995).

The next theme was the restrictions or boundaries on identity, and how sojourners changed to 'fit' the environment. Here, it was discovered that a variety of identities are managed and, as Carbaugh (1996) reminds us, "specific cultural scenes are explored as they symbolically construct social identities, ... [in which] the comparative dimensions appears periodically in ways that emphasize contrasts among social identities within a scene" (p. xii). Therefore, the situated nature in which the sojourner identifies ways to act or assimilate into the surrounding society, which means paying careful attention to contextual cues, such as culture and communication, as occasioned or situated.

I explored the concept of sojourners' belongingness and responsibility and found that the political status of the sojourned, the sojourners' transient status, language, culture, and access to host national are powerful in affecting the sojourners' sense of feeling, as they fit in or have any accountability to Dubai society.

Next, a theme formed around sojourner support systems or relationships, which addressed not only cultural differences as they appear related to notions of friendships but co-national friendships of sojourners. Sojourners have a tendency to develop friendships with sojourners who are very similar to them. This is hardly surprising, for, according to the similarity principle, we tend to want to have those around us that have similar attitudes, or values to our own, thereby reducing cognitive inconsistency or dissidence (Martin & Nakayama, 2003). One of the issues was that of obstacles to cross-cultural friendships, specifically of boundary-crossing between sojourners and Dubai's host nationals. Related phenomena such as social inequality and little cultural commonality between the two groups were shown to lead to sojourners less likely to initiate "boundary crossing friendships" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p 337). Thus, it seems cultural and

contextual differences important in making unions and divisions in sojourner friendships; however, it is worth investigating other variables, such as age, gender, intelligence, religion and socio-economical status.

A movable identity flexible and unfixed, was of analytical interest. It is not merely "contextual knowledge about others that leads to better communication or heightened understanding;" the sojourner has to adapt and be flexible (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 6). Most importantly for the sojourners interviewed was this notion of adapting and being or becoming more flexible to challenges such as dissimilarities of culture, communication style and values. Thus, since intercultural relations are unique in many ways, "newcomers to a society ... need to acquire important skills" such as flexibility to host nation culture and values (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 335).

Transportable identities: Dichotomy of selves was of interest due to the "notion that identity formation is negotiated, co-created, reinforced, and challenged through communication with others; they emerge when messages are exchanged between persons" (Hecht, Collier, & Ribeau, 1993, cited in Martin & Nakayama, 2003,p 151). In other words, identities are situational 'selves,' not a singular 'self', and our 'selves' are contextual and occasioned.

Thus, I have analysed the text with the view to weave together constructionist frameworks, specifically, social identity theory and identity theory with conversational analysis in order to tease out how identity is negotiated and situated in sojourners living in the Islamic yet cosmopolitan city of Dubai.

Finally, before I discuss the implication and some recommendations for further studies into sojourner identities, there are confines to this research project that will require identification. Firstly, to explore my topic of research, I believe it was essential to employ the qualitative approach. However, choosing this methodological approach involved some limitations that need to be made explicit: for example, generalizations to other locations and historical times, reflexivity, non-random selection of participants and reliability and validity.

Limitations

Firstly, transferability or comparisons with other sojourners in differing cultures or other multi-national locations will be limited as this study is specific to expatriates living in Dubai's society and, as such, results are situational, contextual and historically specific to the Islamic multi-cultural city of Dubai. Additionally, due to the specific social and political surrounding, the social meaning of the participants may limit outside environmental generalizations or theories on how sojourner identity is affected or changed when not surrounded by traditions (Haralambos & Holborn, 1995). In spite of these limitations, these findings, according to Coolican (2000, p. 470), may well be transferable to certain surroundings where "researchers can enter into dialogue and ... adapt findings to their particular location and ... group". Also, as Bryman (1997, cited in Coolican, 2000) states, what is key is whether thought processes are similar and can be applied in other situations.

Additionally, despite qualitative approaches adding richness and depth, limitations can occur because of use of reflective and interpretive procedures which result in subtle biases potentially influencing the researcher, the researcher-participant interaction or with the researcher's interpretation of subject matter, be it at a conscious and/or unconscious level, causing unintentional constraints on meanings or processing. Also, people interviewed may be concerned with projecting a certain image or identity or have troubled identities that disrupt investigations. Therefore, it is important to recognize that this study operates from my own perspective, an indication of which has been provided in the Foreword, and as such is located within certain parameters of my understanding, which may further control the applicability of generalizations to other locations.

Another limitation is the non-random selection of participants and my reliance on friends and contacts, along with limited numbers interviewed due to the time parameters of this study, which may result in a restricted representation of identity effects of persons living in the Dubai. Additionally, discourse analysis and conversational analysis involves electronic recordings which can be disadvantageous since they do not demonstrate how

discourse is used in naturally occurring and informal conversations, that is, talk in everyday practice, which would otherwise be unaffected by the presence of recording equipment (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001).

Finally, reliability and validity are worthy of mention, primarily to counter criticism that qualitative research lacks validity, and so the reader does not assume these issues have been overlooked or disregarded. Regarding the limitations related to reliability and validity, Pidgeon and Henwood state that

> ... the constructivist view challenges the dualistic distinction between knower and known, leading to the realization that personal and social forms of subjectivity are always present in research ... On this view it follows that there are no methodological criteria for guaranteeing the *absolute* accuracy of research (quantitative or qualitative).
>
> (Cited in Coolican, 2000, p. 467, original italics)

Indeed, validity is arguably more likely guaranteed when conducting qualitative research than some "survey or experimental measurements" (Babbie, 2000, p.298). However, according to Babbie (2000), reliability is certainly an area of concern in which the researcher must attend and be conscious of his or her own bias and strive for objectivity, which I have addressed above.

Recommendations and Implications

For those entering the field of qualitative research in this area, there are two main recommendations that need to be made.

First, particularly for the novice interviewer/researcher, I would recommend a pilot interview. Although it seems simple to conduct interviews, there are some "unanticipated twists and turns of the interviewing process and the complexities [involved in] the interviewing relationship [that] deserves exploration before the researcher plunges headlong into the thick of their

projects"? (Siedman, 1998, p. 32). Thus, spending some valuable time on pilot interviews or establishing adequate techniques can be invaluable to the researcher and those they interview.

Second, it would be advantageous to do a series or at the very least a follow up interview with sojourners.

However, that said, despite inexperience as an interviewer, researchers can explicate information on identity even when identity is not explicitly being asked about. As Carbaugh (1996) points out, "even if "identity" is not being discussed explicitly as part of the form of a communicative practice, it is being implicated as some level in the cultural meanings of that practice" (p.33). The "symbols" used to tease out 'identity' are "particular words, phrases, or images that are used [by individuals] to identify a person as an example of a kind of person" (Carbaugh, 1996, p.33). For example,

> " a 'man', (Philipsen, 1992), or a 'self'. Each communication form, and each symbol of identity, when used in a social scene, implicates some meanings rather than others. In other words, the effective meaning of a particular symbol, or form, is contingent upon its use by someone, and the particular social scene in which it is used (Hymes, 1962).

Therefore, although the information gained in the first interview was certainly sufficient, it would have been of further interest and indeed valuable to follow up after listening to the tape recordings and reflection upon transcripts. For example, one point that came to light after some reflection and study of the demographic data was that all the married sojourners in my study chose to keep their maiden names with the exception of one, and she hyphenated with the addition of her husband's surname being tagged onto her original surname. What does this say about identity of the sojourner in a Muslim country[13]? Realistically, is it of any importance to sojourners since this decision to not change or change one's surname was probably made long prior to coming to live in a restricted country. Does this phenomenon have any import when they work or interact socially? Additionally, what is worthy of further exploration "as far as nationality is

[13] Muslim women, particularly Arabs, do not change the women's names after marriage. This has to do with paternalistic issues, which always override any other aspect of identity. Changing names after marriage is considered Western.

concerned, [is] one need[s] to look for the reasons why people in the contemporary do not forget their nationality" (Billing, 1995). Finally, more work is needed on the issue of sojourners' experiences and identity, for this line of research not only provides insight into sojourners, but insight into other host country's social cultures and structures.

This study has a number of implications for sojourner identities and how they are situationally constructed and impacted when living in a foreign country. Specifically, problems that appear in the cross-cultural experience, such as, communications styles and methods of coping. First, there are implications for sojourner's ability to adjust and cope with 'difference', in order to fit into a new environment. Therefore, sojourners need to find effective ways of establishing and maintaining links, with their homeland, family and/or friends while also developing the ability to overcome difficulties and challenges in their new location. Furthermore, I think this requires that sojourners adopt a discourse that represents identity as relational and contingent, subject to changes and transformations according to historical time, contextual site and upon conditions of interaction. Therefore by adhering to a non-essentialist identity and assuming a flexible stance may be particularly beneficial to sojourners. For 'flexibility' not only helps the sojourner broaden their own sense of identity but assists in the interpretation of host nationals and with family and friends who stay in their home land.

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APPENDIX A

What are your experiences when residing away from your country of origin and living an expatriate lifestyle?

Information Sheet

My Fellow Expatriate,

As you may be aware, I am collecting information for my Masters thesis towards my M.A Psychology degree, at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I am a full-time postgraduate student in the Massey Department of Psychology Programme of which, my supervisor is Dr. Christine Stephens, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how expatriates are affected when not surrounded by family or customary traditions, and how this experience affects expatriates. Furthermore, this project explores how sojourner experiences are socially constructed, by addressing conversation. Specifically, I will be asking questions related to how you feel about your home country and how you see yourself or describe your experiences particularly in relation to your nationality when living abroad. Additionally, my approach will not be analytical, that is, I will not be making judgments about your opinions, instead I only wish to gain understanding and different views will be greatly valued.

If you are interested in taking part in the research it will involve you participating in an individual interview or attending a small focus group depending on your choice. Basically, I will require some information on your background, such as your age, marital status, professional affiliation, education, languages, and previous overseas experience. Then I will proceed with the main questions of the study. I will tape-record our conversation, which should last about one to one and a half hours with an additional one-hour to review the tape recording (if you desire). I will transcribe it at a later time. As the only researcher in the study, I am the only person who will have access to the tape and the transcribed text and the items will be kept safely locked in a cabinet in my house.

Protecting your Confidentiality: Everything that you say and do during this interview will be kept in confidence. I am the only interviewer, transcriber and researcher in this study, and I will not share or disclose any part of our conversation that personally identifies you with anybody. The contents of this interview will be used only as a source of data for my Masters Thesis.

You have the right to:

- Ask any questions about the purpose and nature of this study before, during or after the interview

- You have the right to verify this study and contact my supervisor at Massey University Dr Chris Stephens, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand – c.v.stephens@massey.ac.nz
- Receive information about the results at the conclusion of the study
- Contact the researcher at any time during the study
- Refuse to answer any of the questions (including those pertaining to your background)
- Refuse to be audiotaped from the beginning of the interview or ask me to stop the electronic recording of our conversation at any point during the interview
- Discontinue the interview at any point and withdraw from the study
- Ask me for a copy of the recording and or the transcription
- Ask me to continue the interview at another time for any reason
- Add or withdraw any information

Risks and Benefits: I foresee no physical, psychological, legal, social or any other risks for you in this study. If you feel discomfort at any point during the interview, we will discontinue the process immediately. Among the short-term benefits I can include the satisfaction of sharing our positive and negative experiences and enable you to understand your own experiences better as expatriates here in Dubai. For the long term I hope that our experiences will help other expatriates who plan to live and work in Dubai.

How to contact me

If you are interested in taking part in this research project or you would like further information or clarification on this project, I can be contacted by:

- E-mail Bertram@emirates.net.ae
- Telephone (009714) 343-1401
- Fax (009714) 343-1401
- Mobile Ph. (00971) 050 - 6541760

I thank you for your time, and look forward to hearing from you.
Kindest regards

Nicola Gardiner

APPENDIX B

Participant Consent Form - Individual Interview

I have read the information sheet and have had the details for the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any questions and add or withdraw information for any reason.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped and understand that I have the right to request that the audiotape be returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the information sheet.

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

APPENDIX C

Participant Consent Form and Confidentiality Form
Group Interview

I have read the information sheet and have had the details for the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I also have the right to refuse to answer any questions and add or withdraw information for any reason.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group discussion. I agree to keep any information that I learn about other people with respect to Focus Group discussions strictly confidential.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the information sheet.

Signed: ..... **Signed:** .....

Name: ..... **Name:** .....

Date: ..... **Date:** .....

Signed: ..... **Signed:** .....

Name: ..... **Name:** .....

Date: ..... **Date:** .....

APPENDIX D

A study on how sojourners identity is affected when not surrounded by their family, traditions or normal cultural-customs

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TAPE TRANSCRIPTS

This form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview/s conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts form this may be used by the researcher, Nicola Maree Gardiner in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Full Name – printed: .....

APPENDIX E

Interview Question

Individual interview:

1. When you are living in Dubai do you think that you are a (insert nationality)?
2. How do you describe yourself to people you meet?
3. What are the difficulties with this?
4. How do you feel about your country when you are away?
5. Do you want everybody to know that you are from there?
6. Do you follow a national sport?
7. Do you identify with a particular team
8. Do you keep up with the news and what is happening in your own country regularly?
9. How hard is it to keep your sense of identity as a New Zealander or … in Dubai?
10. If you are raising children in Dubai, is it important to instill a sense of identity to their home country? If yes, how do you achieve this?
11. What aspects of Dubai's culture/lifestyle do you relate to?
12. Is it hard adapting to Dubai's laws and customs?
13. Do you consider yourself as having a feeling of belonging or responsibility to Dubai or the people living here?
14. How important is interaction with locals during your stay here?
15. Do you have any Local's that you consider as "friends"? If yes are they the sort of friends that will outlast your sojourn?
16. Have you changed as a person during your sojourn? In what way? Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with those changes? What do you think made you change?
17. Would you or any member of your family undergo an operation here?
18. Do you prefer to socialise with those of a similar nationality?

19. During the summer months do you leave Dubai, if so do you generally return to your home country? How do you feel when back in your home country?

20. Do you act or describe yourself differently when in your home country?

21. In all the roles that you occupy, (e.g. work, mother, father,) which roles do you feel most accurately describes you or does it entirely depend on the situation?

Follow up questions:

1. How did you feel then?
2. How did you cope with that?
3. What do you mean by …?
4. Can you give me an example of?
5. Can you elaborate?

Focus Group Questions:

1. Should a person always stand up for their country in a conversation?
2. How do you feel when somebody says something derogatory about your nationality?
3. In certain situations are you very conscious and careful to offer your opinions?
4. Is it always important to know someone's nationality in order to get to know him or her well?
5. Do you agree with the following: knowing a person's nationality or country where they were educated always assists in understanding their perspectives on issues?
6. Do stereotypes (positive or negative) regarding nationalities prove to be helpful or hurtful when living in Dubai?

Interview – demographic information

Age:

Gender:

Marital Status:

Nationality:

Children:

Job in Dubai:

Education:

Countries lived outside of Dubai:

Number of years in Dubai

Length of expected stay in Dubai:

Purposes for coming to Dubai/Did you come as a "dependant spouse":