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## **"Do it for me, my dear": structuration and relational dialectics among mother-daughter dyads in Lebanese arranged marriages**

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“DO IT FOR ME, MY DEAR:” STRUCTURATION AND RELATIONAL DIALECTICS  
AMONG MOTHER-DAUGHTER DYADS IN LEBANESE ARRANGED MARRIAGES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
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In

The Department of Communication Studies

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research applied a two-step triangulation approach to the study of mother-daughter communication in arranged marriages among the religious Sunnis of Beirut, Lebanon.

Combining the theory of structuration and relational dialectics in one theoretical framework, the study investigated the role of mother-daughter interactions in the socialization of the daughter into the marital experience. The study investigated the process of marital socialization by first surveying 199 mother-daughter dyads, representing 398 individuals. In the second step, in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 families (three interviews per dyad), randomly selected out of the 199 surveyed pairs.

The dyadic data analysis of the surveys assessed mother-daughter generational difference and the interdependence of their views on marriage, taking into consideration the daughter's marital status (single, engaged, and married). Findings revealed that mother-daughter interdependence moved in a curvilinear fashion. The mother and her engaged daughter converged in their marital views, then slightly diverged as the daughter's relationship with her husband progressed.

The analysis of the 36 interviews examined stancemaking in the reported speeches of past mother-daughter conversations, and dialogues that took place during the third mother-daughter interviews. The stance analysis revealed the flow of socialization (one-way for the mother, and conversational for the daughter), and the three main lines of socialization: Structuration rules related to male-female interactions, criteria for selecting the ideal husband, and guidelines on how to become a good wife and mother.

The analysis of stance alignments also exposed four mother-daughter relational dialectics happening during the arranged marriage process: Real versus ideal, powerful versus powerless,

individual versus collective, and connection versus separation. Those dialectics corresponded to the fundamental tensions and the power resources that influenced both the daughter's marital structuration and her relationship with her mother during the marital process.

The main findings were discussed at the end in line with mother-daughter connection, and the cultural schema of gender among the religious Sunnis of Beirut, Lebanon. The socialization involved in arranged marriages constitutes a turning-point in mother-daughter relationship, and a potential source of institutionalizing the perception of women as fragile beings in constant need of protection.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

From a social constructionism perspective (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Gergen, 1985), our social reality and the layers of meanings that we attribute to our actions are co-constructed in conversations. Social and intersubjective, our reality is structured through communication. Consequently, our understanding and interpretation of experience are historic, bound by the cultural context (the multiple social interactions) that we are situated in (Winch, 2003). Our language is a vehicle for and a contributing agent of this social construction. Language exposes a shared platform for the interpretations of our particular communication acts. As Deetz (1973) wrote: “Intersubjectivity is made possible by this trans-subjectivity of language – the sharable World which the linguistic gesture creates” (p. 49).

In the daily interactions of its members, every family constructs its unique as well as its culturally shared values, such as those related to religion, tradition, and political ideologies. While being nurtured to behave in accordance with their particular family rules, children are socialized to act adequately in line with the overall cultural values of the society they live in. Socialization, as defined by Baquedano-López (1997), is this process of “becoming a competent member of society, of internalizing the norms, role expectations, and values of the community; in sum, of becoming culturally competent” (p. 29).

Following this social constructionism framework, my dissertation attempts to illustrate the role of communication in the emergence of cultural reality within the Muslim Sunni community of Beirut, Lebanon. The study focuses on the conversations of mother-daughter dyads centered on a culturally embedded phenomenon: arranged marriage as practiced by the community in question. The study explores the role of social interactions in the development of the mother-daughter relationship, and mothers’ contributions to the socialization of their

daughters into the culture of arranged marriage. In short, this dissertation's objective is to understand the role of mother-daughter interactions in the construction of marital experience and, in the process, of "culturally competent" women.

To reach this objective, this study will combine Giddens' structuration framework (1979; 1984) with relational dialectics theory (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a), thus accounting for both agency and structure in the arranged marriage process. I survey the main topics of marital structuration discussed by the dyad and the underlying social rules negotiated and co-constructed in mother-daughter interactions during the early phases of the marital relationship; when the daughter is single, receiving male candidates, engaged and recently married. I also examine the mother-daughter relational dialectics taking place during the structuration of the marital process throughout these four phases, as the daughter transitions from singlehood to womanhood and copes with the social implications of this new position.

In this research, I define arranged marriage as the marital process resulting from a family member introducing and arranging the encounters of the couple for the sole purpose of marriage. In the Beirut Sunni version of arranged marriages, the relationship evolves through four main stages: the first meetings, the *fatiha* (specific meeting where the first chapter in the Qur'an is read to affirm that the couple has agreed to develop the relationship) and engagement, the *qiran* (the contract signing ceremony where the couple is religiously announced husband and wife), and the wedding (the ceremony after which man and woman move in together) (Nasser & Dabbous, 2008).

### **Overview of Arranged Marriages**

Literature on arranged marriages has not addressed the mother-daughter relationship during the process. Scholars writing on the arranged marriage process have usually focused on



the characteristics of an arranged marriage, as opposed to marriage based on love, the religious perception of arranged marital relationships and the social movement from arranged to love marriage customs.

Fox (1975) described the arranged marriage in Turkey during the early 1970s as a marriage system where the elders of the family control the selection of mates for their children. For him, the main functions of arranged marriages were to maintain the elders' control over family members, to preserve the economic and social status of the family and preserve the harmony among its members through the cautious selection of those who enter the family unit. The child's autonomous selection of his or her mate based on love is seen as an uncontrollable threat endangering the status of the extended family. The child might get attached to an "unsuitable" person, which makes love an uncertainty to be avoided.

Joseph (1979) explained that traditionally among Berber societies in Morocco, the mother gains prominence from the social status of her son. For this reason, while the father is concerned about preserving or enhancing the family status through strategic relationships, the mother acts subtly as a broker to ensure her own political position by favoring for her child the most promising mate selection. Love in those societies is perceived as a potential threat not only to the married couple, but also to the religious, social and/or political commitments that marriage –as an institution– is intended to accomplish. In such societies, the nuptial connection is at the locus of strategic family and clan alliances, and/or social structure maintenance (Kim, 1974; Meriwether, 1999).

According to Gupta (1979), religious Indians believe that their mate is predestined, determined by unforeseen forces. Couples are "made for each other" and consequently they submit to their fate with no objections. Love from this perspective is seen as a destructive

element that contradicts religious beliefs and leads to the disruption of the family for the sake of individual affirmations.

Yet, societies of arranged marriages are not static. Their attitude toward love in marriage is slowly changing. In fact, affection in those societies is caught in the middle of different social dynamics; mainly, the tensions between child-parent, individual-collective and progressive-conservative (Hart, 2007).

In this regard, Prakasa and Rao (1979) noted a change in attitude of Indian youth toward mate selection. They found that the majority of college students wanted more involvement in their choice of mate, preferring that their parents consult them before any selection. They favored more pre-marital contact with their partners so couples get to know each other (which previously was usually not the case), yet they did not mind their parents taking care of their marital arrangements. Similarly, Xiaohe and Whyte (1990) found that Chinese society is slowly moving toward the love type of marriage. Parents' influence on mate selection is gradually decreasing amid a rise of the dating culture.

As illustrated by the above review, most of the arranged marriage literature studies the phenomenon through the biased paradigm of modernity (Hart, 2007). It looks at the process as an antithesis to the love marriage, which is presented as a sign of modernity, freedom and individuality –all characteristics of Western societies (Giddens, 1992). This research fills a gap by addressing arranged marriages as a social system that both “enables” and “constrains,” using Giddens’ (1993) terms. This paper provides room for agency as well as structure, offering a more nuanced version of the reality of today’s arranged marriages.

The Lebanese context offers an added value to the study of arranged marriages. Given its historical and cultural characteristics, Lebanon provides a rich testing environment where

research can examine religious and non-religious couples. The variety of the Lebanese people in terms of religious sects (Sunnis, Shiites, Druze, Catholics, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox ...), degrees of religiosity, ethnic backgrounds and cultural aspirations makes the country a Middle Eastern version of the American melting pot. Representative of this heterogeneity, the capital Beirut offers a window into an array of marriage practices differing across, and sometimes within, sectarian communities. Among these various practices is the arranged marriage process. Largely favored until the 1970s, the arranged marriage in Beirut is not the dominant trend today. The tradition survives however among the more conservative and religious families of the Lebanese capital. Among them is the sub-community of Muslim Sunni conservatives. The Middle East in general and Lebanon in particular are significantly understudied in this field as most arranged marriage studies focus on South-East Asia, Turkey and China and usually date from the 1970s.

Finally, this research is unique in its approach. Unlike other arranged marriage literature, it uses the latter as a means to an end. Although a description of arranged marriages among Sunni Beirutis is included in the study, the ultimate objective of this work is not merely descriptive. The focus is rather a broader understanding of cultural transmission and family relations. This research considers the mother-daughter bond as “an emergent phenomenon that is at once structured and structuring, socially organized and socially organizing,” and arranged marriages as social activities “provid[ing] the raw materials of empirical analysis and serv[ing] as windows on underlying principles of social organization and cultural orientation” (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002, p. 345). Arranged marriages offer an unparalleled opportunity to study enculturation and family relations because it is a conscious, active effort to produce a new familial nucleus. Given the interaction between mother and daughter during this process,

arranged marriages also offer a window into the development of the two women's relationship during a turning point in the daughter's life.

### **Overview of Mother-Daughter Relationship**

According to Fischer (1991), studying the mother-daughter relationship is particularly important because such dyads present uniquely intense levels of bonding, interdependence and emotional connectedness. In addition, girls tend to communicate more with their parents than boys, and parents tend to require more information from the former than the latter, allowing more revealing insights about parent-children relationships (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). The influence of maternal bonding extends beyond the two women in question. It also affects the development of the family system involved. According to Hagestad (1986), women in their families act as the kinkeepers, connecting all family members across generations. Studying maternal bonds, especially during turning-points of the relationship such as marriage, pregnancy or childbirth, therefore becomes quite revealing. Surprisingly, little research has been done in this direction.

Fisher and Miller-Day (2006) pointed out this gap in the studies of maternal relationships. They stated that most of the research about mothers and daughters has concentrated on studying the dyad when the daughter is an adolescent (e.g., Kroger, 2000; Arnold, Pratt & Hicks, 2004) or when the mother is old or sick and needs someone to take care of her (e.g., Cicirelli, 1992; Bromberg, 1993; Fingerman, 2001; Pecchioni & Nussbaum, 2001). Research on the relational development that happens before or after these two stages is understudied, despite its importance in understanding the transition of the daughters into adulthood and motherhood. During this period, daughters form a unique identity, yet stay closely connected to their mothers through “velvet chains ... of security, love, and devotion” (Fisher & Miller-Day, 2006, p. 5).

In a study of 21 dyads where daughters were transitioning into adulthood, Fisher and Miller-Day (2006) reported that the turning-point brought the two women together. Mothers described a more open and frequent communication where the focus ceased to center solely around the needs of the daughter. Daughters, on the other hand, explained that after turning 18, they suddenly looked at their mothers as a source of advice rather than authority.

In her study on maternal relationships across three generations of women in a U.S. Midwestern community, Miller-Day (2004) found two relational types of mother-daughter dyads: the connected and the enmeshed relationships. She described dyads as connected when the mother and the daughter were emotionally close while maintaining autonomy. The connected dyads had a relationship script that adapted to the transitions in their social roles (e.g., the development of the daughter into motherhood). They were open to each other's advice, opinion, or challenge. On the other hand, the enmeshed dyads were closely connected and highly loyal to each other. Their relational script was rather rigid and inadaptible to changes in their social roles. The mother continued to perform her status as a mother, guiding her daughter through the application of emotional reward (if she is pleased) or emotional withdrawal (if she is dissatisfied with her daughter's attitude). Unwilling to endanger the relationship, the daughter in return felt obliged to conform to the expectations and interpretations of her mother.

The two types of mother-daughter relationships lead to an interesting paradox in terms of self-disclosure, Miller-Day (2004) found. Commonly sharing secrets, mothers and daughters in connected dyads maintained their relational intimacy after the latter matured into adulthood. Daughters sharing an enmeshed relationship with their mothers, on the other hand, practiced "awe-inspiring amounts of secrecy" (p. 142).

Hall and Langellier (1988) studied the mother-daughter collaboration in the storytelling of family narratives among five dyads of various demographic backgrounds. They found that mothers played the role of family historians, using strategies to determine which accounts are allowable and ensuring the stories' accuracy and completeness. Daughters, on the other hand, confirmed and complemented their mothers' narrative authority. They were content to be the objects of the stories. Although they occasionally challenged the accuracy and significance of some accounts, daughters usually teamed up with their mothers, thus confirming their mutual role in the mother-daughter dyad.

This study adds to the scarce mother-daughter literature by looking at a turning-point in the daughter's life, namely the transition from singlehood to marriage. The dissertation investigates this stage of the daughter's life as a potential, previously unexamined, turning-point in the mother-daughter relationship. Just as the daughter's transition to adulthood (e.g., Fisher & Miller-Day, 2006; Guerrero & Afifi, 1995), her pregnancy and childbirth, her change of residence (e.g., Miller-Day, 2004), and her caregiving to her sick or aging mother (e.g., Cicirelli, 1992) are considered defining events in the mother-daughter connection, so could the arranged marriage process be a crucial stage in the development of the relationship between the two women.

The focus on arranged marriage in particular, as opposed to other forms of marital relations, also provides added value to this study. In arranged relationships particularly, women engage their mothers in the selection of the candidate and the organization of the process and are therefore more susceptible to their instructions. Because of their expertise in the marital tradition and –in most cases– their emotional connection to their daughters, mothers are expected to contribute significantly to the metamorphosis of their daughters from singlehood to married life.

Mothers also play a double role of parent and agent of social transmission. As they contribute to this key process, mothers also structure their daughters' understanding of how a "culturally competent" woman should be. Examining the mother-daughter relationship with an emphasis on this structuration at work illuminates the role that the mother's cultural background plays into her relationship with her daughter.

### **The Upcoming Chapters**

After this brief introduction, chapter 2 will address the marital practices in the Sunni Beirut community, moving from the broader religious and cultural contexts to the more particular family members' interactions. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework of this study. It reviews Giddens' structuration (1979; 1984) and the relational dialectics theory (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a). The combination of the two theories helps attend to structure and agency in the study of social interactions and motivations. Chapter 4 moves into the specifics of the study, laying out the methodology adopted to answer the research questions. Comprising both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study mainly relies on dyadic data analysis (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006) for assessing mother-daughter interdependence and stance analysis (Du Bois, 2007) for uncovering the nuances of the dyad's interaction during this key period of socialization. Chapter 5 focuses on the results of the dyadic data analysis and 6 on the findings of the stance analysis. Finally, in chapter 7, I discuss the conclusions from the two studies.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT**

The following chapter focuses on the marital practices in the Sunni Beirut community moving from the broader religious and cultural contexts to the more particular family members' interactions. Reviewing the socio-cultural background in which the phenomena under study take place illuminates the heritage, values and principles that underlie mother-daughter conversations. I will first review the types and conditions of marriage according to Islamic law (formal guidelines), then will discuss the past and present practices of marriage among the Sunnis of Beirut (current practices).

#### **Marriage in Islam**

##### **Marriage Proposals**

Islamic law does not command one form of marriage proposal in particular. It flexibly allows the socio-cultural customs of the community in question (*`uruf*) and the family's personal conditions to outline the engagement process. During the time of Prophet Mohamed, several forms of engagement were practiced. Most were interrelated with the tribal customs of the day (Abu-Shaqua, 1990). Together, they constitute a specific system that Islam encourages or, at least, does not condemn.<sup>1</sup>

Still practiced today, *khutba `an tariq ahl al mar'a* was one of the common ways of engagement during the early days of Islam. According to this custom, a man formally asked a woman's parents to grant him union to their daughter. In one example, Prophet Mohamed himself asked his close companion Abu Bakr for the hand of his young daughter, Aisha. Another form of engagement that the prophet himself practiced was *khutbat al rashida ila*

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<sup>1</sup> The Islamic law takes any custom that was widespread during Prophet Mohamed's time and that the prophet witnessed but did not forbid to be Islamically acceptable and to constitute part of the *Sunnah* (teachings of Prophet Mohamed).



*nafsiha*, where a man directly approached an adult, self-dependent woman for marriage. During the times of the prophet, it was also common to have a woman's family contact a reputable man, asking him to marry their daughter (*`ard al insan ibnatahu wa ukhtahu `ala ahl al khayr*). The Sunnah includes many stories of people asking Prophet Mohamed to marry their daughter or one of their relatives. The Qur'an also mentions the story of a wise, old person offering Prophet Moses to marry one of his two daughters. Characteristic of the tribal society of early Islam, another custom had a man ask the head of the tribe (*kabir al qawm*) to bless his marriage with a specific woman. Alternatively, the marriage could also be initiated by the tribal leader himself. No forcing, however, was involved in such custom. Both parties had to consent to the marriage for it to be religiously acceptable. A less frequent but acceptable form of engagement was when a woman approached a man for marriage. Religious scholars called this form *`ard al mar'a nafsaha `ala al rajul assalih*, or having a woman propose to a man of good reputation.

### **Intimacy, Love and Marriage in Islam**

During engagement, the rules governing behavior between male and female strangers still apply to the engaged couple, Abu-Shaqua (1990) explained. For instance, if the woman is veiled, she cannot uncover in front of her fiancé. They cannot engage in sexual behavior. The engagement period is intended mainly to help the couple get acquainted with each other. The main purpose behind this process is for men and women to assess the personal and familial conditions that may affect their marriage. Religious teachings recommend that the most important criterion for a candidate's selection be his level of piety. Prophet Mohamed mentioned that a man usually married a woman for "her money, her family, her beauty and her piety, and the latter is the best criterion for selection" (Bukhari & Muslim, in Abu-Shaqua, 1990,

p. 40). The woman and her family are also advised to select the husband-to-be based on his religiosity.

As for the role of love in marriage, the Qur'an refers to this issue in the following verse:

And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect (30: 21).

Islam in this regard acknowledges the love affection as a bond created by God to unite couples and produce family institutions. As long as it does not lead to acts considered as sinful, affection in itself is judged as a positive emotion. It is rather the intentions and the behavioral outcome that may result from this emotional experience that are evaluated as religiously right or wrong (*halal* or *haram*, respectively). Love is good if it leads to a *halal* outcome (such as family institution) and bad if it leads to a *haram* (such as pre-marital sexual intercourse).

According to Islamic teachings, love is a natural human condition but its expression is social –and hence must abide by a specific ethical structure. Islamic rules regarding love and sex are designed to discipline rather than prohibit them. Islam views the institution of marriage as the right, or *halal*, channel for the expression of romantic affection and sexual attraction. Abu-Shaqua (1990) reported the story of a man who came to Prophet Mohamed asking for advice on the marriage of an orphan woman of whom he was in charge. The man said two candidates approached him; a rich man that he liked and a poor one the girl liked. The prophet's position was in favor of love; "Better for lovers to marry," he said (Ibn Majah, in Abu-Shaqua, 1990, p. 46).

### **The Marriage Contract: Some Conditions of Interest to the Research**

Marriage in Islam is surrounded by a set of rules stipulated in the Qur'an and through the teachings of the prophet. Those guidelines inform the marital contract binding the couple. As we

shall see later, however, some of these rules are breached by Muslim communities today, replaced with tribal laws (in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, etc.) or local traditions, as is the case in Lebanon (United Nations Development Programme, 2006).

According to the teachings of Islam, the engagement period ends with the signing of the marriage contract and the announcement of the marriage to family and friends. Unlike the engagement, whose news should be limited to the direct family circle, marriage in Islam must be announced publicly. Prophet Mohamed is quoted saying: “*Ash-hidu annikah wa a`alinuh*” or “let the marriage be widely known” (Tabarani, in Abu-Shaqua, 1990, p. 79). For this reason, couples are highly encouraged to have a wedding ceremony.

A second condition for marriage is the agreement on the marriage contract, or what the Qur'an calls *mithaqan ghalizan*:

There is no blame on you if ye make an offer of betrothal or hold it in your hearts. Allah knows that ye cherish them in your hearts: But do not make a secret contract with them except in terms Honorable, nor resolve on the tie of Marriage till the term prescribed is fulfilled. And know that Allah Knoweth what is in your hearts, and take heed of Him; and know that Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Forbearing (1: 235).

To help women secure a smooth transition from their parents' house to their husband's, and fair treatment in case of divorce, Islam requires men and their families to sign a marriage contract providing the brides-to-be with dowries.<sup>2</sup> The amount and terms of payment are left for both families to negotiate. Women can also include other provisions in the contract, such as revoking the husband's license to marry a second woman. The marriage contract is considered a legal document ratified by the presence of two witnesses.

A third condition for marriage in Islam is the requirement that a woman be free to select her husband-to-be. Parents cannot force their daughter to marry anyone against her will. Prophet

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<sup>2</sup> This amount is considered the property of the married woman alone.

Mohamed is quoted saying: “Widows or divorcees are not to be wed without their request, and virgins are not to be wed without their approval” (Bukhari & Muslim, in Abu-Shaqua, 1990, p. 71). If, during the engagement period, one of the partners feels unsatisfied with the relationship, parents are religiously requested to respect their child’s decision to end the commitment. On the other hand, both men and women are encouraged (and according to some scholars, obliged) to seek their guardians’ consent upon the signing of the contract. Prophet Mohamed said: “No wedding is to happen without the presence of a guardian. And the ruler is the guardian for those who don’t have one” (Ahmad, in Abu-Shaqua, 1990, p. 76).

### **Marriage among the Sunnis of Beirut**

#### **A Brief Look at the Sunnis of Beirut**

With 18 official religious sects spread on a piece of land the size of Rhode Island, Lebanon is notorious for its sectarian socio-political system, deeply entrenched in the Lebanese psyche today. With the country’s independence from France in 1943, sectarianism was institutionalized when the political leaders and architects of modern Lebanon instituted the National Pact. The verbal treaty arranged the available positions of power among the various sects, making, for instance, the presidency a Christian Maronite post, the prime ministry a Sunni one, and the house speaker a Shiite.

Since then, sectarianism has become “the basic principle in Lebanese life. (...) [It] serve[d] as a passport, a cheque, a privilege and a certificate of competence” (Gilmour, 1983, p. 28). Governmental agencies, political organizations and parties, law courts, private businesses, schools, universities, hospitals, fitness centers, charity organizations, and other institutions are all “known to be” affiliated with one sect or the other. Sectarian affiliation determines a person’s choice of school, youth and sports clubs, and even selection of a spouse (Kaii, 1997). Personal

status laws are defined along sectarian lines. Each sect has its own judicial court where matters such as marital contracts, divorce cases, and inheritance distribution are executed (Jabbra, 2004; Nouredine, 1998).

The Sunni communities in Lebanon are mainly concentrated in the country's port cities and constitute one of the major religious sects of the capital, Beirut. Like other sects in Lebanon, Beirut's Sunnis are not particularly religious. Islam for them is more an identity, a group affiliation, than a belief –which explains why their marriage practices do not always conform to its teachings. Despite this reality, a religious minority can be found among Sunni Beirutis. It mainly defines itself in terms of the tenets of Islam and its status as a communal minority in a sea of secular Lebanese. Among them are traditionally religious families. Also part of the religious minority is an emerging group of middle- to upper-class, Westernized and liberal Sunnis who recently rediscovered their religion.<sup>3</sup>

### **Past Practices of Marriage**

Up until the middle of the last century, people in Beirut married at a young age; the mean age before 1958 was around 25 for men and 19 for women (Saxena, Kulczycki & Jurdi, 2004). This tradition was mainly respected to prevent children from engaging in premarital relationships and guarantee that women do get married (a public disgrace for the family was to have an unwed daughter). This custom made children more vulnerable to the authority of their parents who controlled the financial resources needed for marriage (like wedding expenses and housing). Consequently, the selection of the bride- or husband-to-be was closely controlled by the parents. Children were frequently forced to marry according to their parents' will and without an

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<sup>3</sup> The group includes a growing generation of young women, coming from liberal families and educated in Western institutions, who reacted to the social crisis in the Arab World by reverting to Islam. They wear a trendy veil and adopt an open liberal interpretation of their religion. For more information see Stratton's (2006) book, *Muhajababes*, or Dabbous' (2005, May 17) article in The Daily Star newspaper.

extended engagement period allowing them to get acquainted with their new partners.

Engagements at the time only lasted a few weeks, the time needed for the bride to prepare for her wedding ceremony. Many couples were not even allowed to see each other during this period (Dafer, 2003).

Women often chose their sons' future wives during morning social gatherings (*subhiyat*), engagements and wedding ceremonies, and in public bathing facilities (Dafer, 2003). Mothers and, in some cases, other women in the family toured the potential candidates' houses. Marriage brokers also helped match couples against specific compensations. Traditionally, parents sought to prioritize the marriage of their elder daughters, leaving the nuptials of the youngest until later. Even when a male candidate proposed to see a younger daughter, he was shown the eldest only. Rare were the cases where the son selected his wife without the mediation of his family. Traditional constraints gave parents more selection authority but also limited the spaces of gender encounters. The unmediated selection of a bride usually happened when the latter was a relative or a neighbor (Dafer, 2003).

### **Marriage in Beirut Today**

In terms of gender relations, male-female encounters are much more common and accepted today (Dafer, 2003). Pre-marital romantic relationships have become more frequent. By the time they get engaged, many couples are now well acquainted with each other. The engagement period is longer, ranging from one to four years, mostly due to social, financial and gender-related reasons. Unlike the newly-weds of the past who remained dependent on their parents during the first few years, couples are more independent from their families, and consequently have to secure their own housing and financial resources before marrying. To do so, many Lebanese males travel abroad seeking higher salaries in the oil-rich Gulf countries.

Engaged women, on the other hand, often insist on completing higher education before getting married (see Table 1 for a 1970-1996 comparison of level of education and gender in Lebanon).

Table 1

Education: Total enrollment by level and sex, 1970 and 1996

Education Level	(Numbers) 1970					1996				
	Male	row %	Female	row %	Total	Male	row %	Female	row %	Total
Primary	213,780	53	187,005	47	400,785	189,799	53	170,211	47	360,010
Intermediate	79,110	58	57,405	42	136,515	109,351	49	115,546	51	224,897
Secondary	28,890	65	15,870	35	44,760	54,349	50	54,285	50	108,634
University	21,780	77	6,375	23	28,155	42,468	49	44,223	51	86,691
Total	343,560	56	266,655	44	610,215	395,967	51	384,265	49	780,232

Source: Lebanon: Ministry of Planning (1970); Lebanon: Ministry of Social Affairs and UNFPA (1996) in UNDP & CDR (1998).

University degrees allow women to pursue their own careers and later contribute to the household income. As a result, the average age of marriage in Beirut increased to around 32 for men and 29 for women (United Nations Development Programme and the Council for Development and Reconstruction, 1998; See Table 2 for a comparison with other regions in Lebanon).

Table 2

Mean age at marriage by Lebanese Governorates (*Mohafazat*) and sex in 1996

Governorates	Male (Years)	Female
Beirut	31.8	28.6
Mount Lebanon	31.8	27.8
North Lebanon	29.6	25.9
Bekaa	31.2	28.5
South Lebanon	29.4	26.3
Nabatieh	29.3	28.3
Total Lebanon	30.9	27.5

Source: Lebanon: PAPCHILD (Unpublished Data) in UNDP & CDR (1998).

Although gender relations have become more open over the years and love is widely accepted as a legitimate motivation for people to wed (Nasser & Dabbous, 2008), marital relations are still bound by traditional socio-cultural considerations when it comes to the selection of the other party. For instance, men mainly look for beauty and love when they date

but, if they decide to marry, they prefer candidates that conform to their family values and norms. In this sense, their criteria for romantic relationships are liberal, but when it comes to marriage, men revert to traditional standards. The premarital relation is perceived as “having fun” while the marital one is considered a “serious” connection where socio-religious family rules need to be respected. Women, on the other hand, do not have a dichotomy between “fun” and “serious” relationships. They tend to look at dating as the beginning of a potential marital relation. Women avoid men who “waste time” playing around (Dafer, 2003).

Sectarian considerations also apply to this “fun-versus-serious” attitude. For example, a college student will not mind going out with someone of a different sect if they do not consider the relationship to be “serious,” potentially leading to marriage. Going out with someone from a different sect is accepted as a short-lived relationship, unless the couple deliberately breaks with socio-cultural considerations and decides to get married, despite pressure from their families (Al-Baayni, 1998).

In spite of this greater openness, inter-religious and inter-sect marriages are rare. The Sunni marries a Sunni, the Shiite a Shiite. The same rule applies to the Christian Maronite, the Druze, the Greek orthodox, and the rest of the 18 confessions that constitute Lebanon’s diverse society. Parents rarely accept parties from other sects, unless the person converts. Among religious families, standards are even stricter: Candidates should not only be of the same sect, they should also observe religious practices with the same degree of devotion. In a national survey, Kaii (1997) reported that 82% of respondents supported the religious versus the civil marriage.

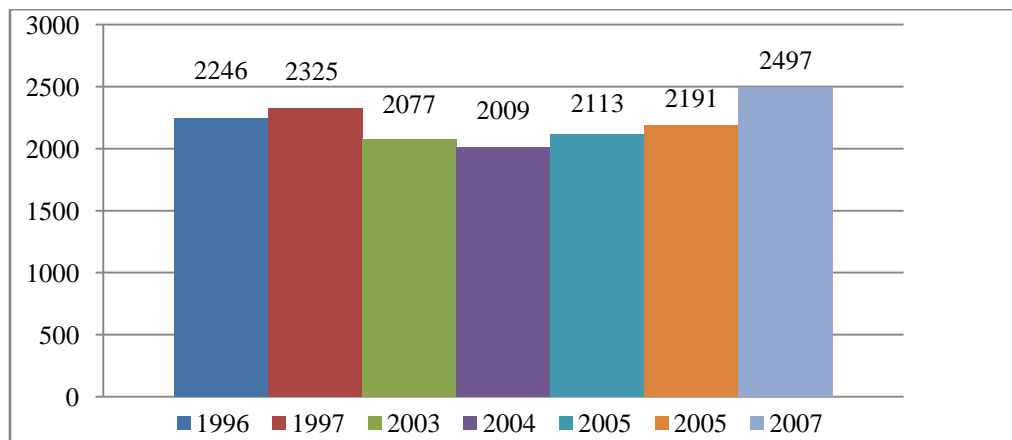
Although they do marry people from other cities, Beirutis favor candidates from the capital. Beirut is the cultural, political, financial and commercial center of the country, a fact that



translates into a perception of status among original citizens. Parents of a Beirut marrying someone from outside the city rarely appreciate –and sometimes oppose– the marriage. In brief, the ideal candidate for the Sunnis of Beirut is a Beirut of the same sect, of similar social, financial and educational status –a “like-us!” person (Al-Baayni, 1998).

It should also be noted that, although polygamy is religiously acceptable, Muslim men in Lebanon rarely if ever marry more than one woman at the same time. A study of Muslim families in Lebanon showed that the Lebanese Muslim community finds the practice economically impractical and socially undesirable (Collelo, 1987).

Finally, around 2200 marriage contracts are executed each year at the Muslim Sunni Court in Beirut (Muslim Sunni Court in Beirut, 2008). The wedding season is usually during the months of July and August (see Figure 1 and 2). A second seasonality for weddings –but with a lesser frequency– happens during the winter break in December.

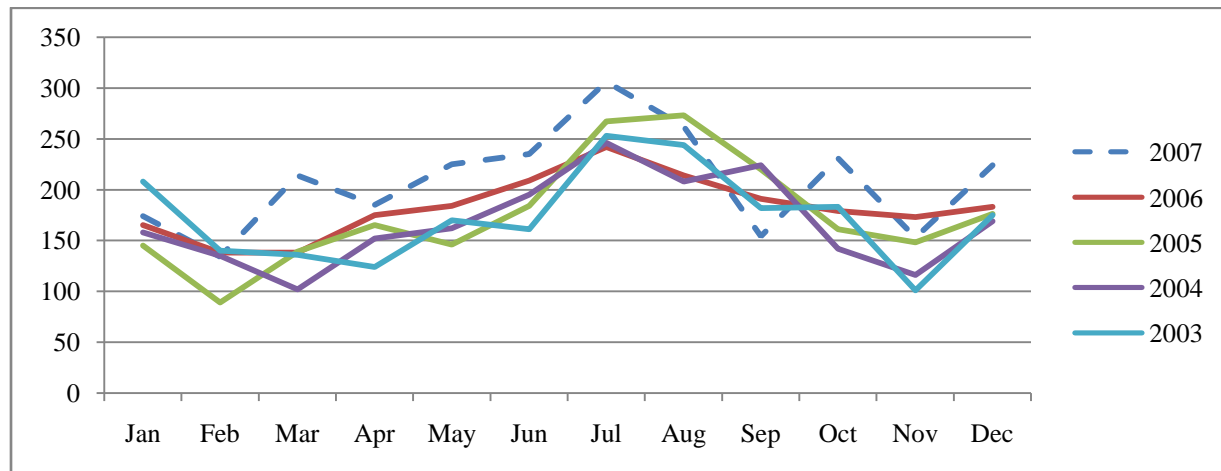


Source: The Muslim Sunni Court in Beirut (2008). Unpublished data.

Figure 1  
Number of marriages per year at the Muslim Sunni Court in Beirut

The Court’s (2008) data shows that Sunni Beirutis tend to organize their weddings during those seasonal job vacations rather than during the principal religious holidays of *’Id al-Fitr* (celebrating the end of Ramadan and fasting during that month) and *’Id al-Adha* (celebrating

Prophet Abraham's sacrifice). A possible explanation for this trend is that the wedding seasons (summer, December) coincide with the return of many immigrants working or living abroad, who choose to spend their summer or winter vacations in Lebanon.



Source: The Muslim Sunni Court in Beirut (2008). Unpublished data.

Figure 2

Summer (July-August) seasonality of the marriages among Sunnis in Beirut (Number of marital contracts/month during the period of 2003-2007)

In her ethnographic account of couples of arranged marriages in a village in western Turkey, Hart (2007) notes the fusion of love with the current social arrangement of relationships. She evokes the ideological reinterpretation of the marriage practices in the Turkish society which allows family-arranged relations to develop into a romantic courtship. At the same time, the ideological shift opens the door for relationships originating in romantic love by allowing them to progress along the lines of the arranged marriage structure. The arranged marriages in Beirut today are characterized by a similar fusion of love and tradition (Nasser & Dabbous, 2008).

After discussing the socio-cultural context that frames the mother-daughter interactions during arranged marriages, the following chapter will review the theoretical framework used in this study, Giddens' structuration and Baxter's relational dialectics theory. It will also define the research questions that articulate this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Giddens' structuration theory (1979; 1984) and the relational dialectics theory (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a) constitute the theoretical framework through which I intend to observe the process of the marital socialization between the mother and her daughter. The combination of the two theories helps attend to the structural in addition to the agentic factors in the study of social interactions and motivations. They both start from the fundamental assumption, delineated by McDermott and Roth (1978) that a "person's behavior is best described in terms of the behavior of those immediately about that person, those with whom the person is doing interactional work in the construction of recognizable social scenes or events" (p. 321).

In this chapter I will first review the theory of structuration, then the relational dialectics theory. I discuss the rationale of combining the two theories, and conclude with the research questions.

#### **The Theory of Structuration**

The use of Giddens' theory of structuration approaches the social institution, such as the arranged marriage, as a recurring set of patterns of practices bound by specific contextual settings (Giddens, 1984). Giddens differentiates between the social system, the social structure and the structuration of the social system (Giddens, 1979). The social system, according to Giddens, is the "structured totality." It is the overall entity of social relations shaped by individuals' performance of regulated practices. For instance, arranged marriage is an institution that connects and organizes actors (the couple, their family, the social class, etc.) around regular forms of social behaviors, such as the parents' mediation of spouse selection, the associated religious ceremonies, and the negotiation over the marital contract.

The social structure is a constituent of the social system. Giddens defines the structure as the “structuring properties” (Giddens, 1979) that lead to the reproduction of the social system. It is a “virtual order” that depends on the agents’ knowledge (memory) of how to act and what should be done in particular situations and is reinforced through the routine application (practice) of this knowledge. Regarding arranged marriage, the system is governed by an interconnected set of social, religious, economic, and even political expectations and laws. Such frames of meaning are reinstated daily, whenever the couples and their families abide by them. Such routine performances provide the social system with a sense of cohesion (Karp, 1986).

In addition to the role of memory and the recurrence of practice, a third characteristic of social structure is its intrinsic capability not only to maintain but also to transform practices. Giddens calls this “the duality of structure” where “the structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems” (Giddens, 1979, p. 69). The properties reproduce practices resulting in new contextual conditions, that lead to new practices that necessitate the creation of further new properties. The social structure in this perspective is considered as both a set of guidelines for actors’ behavior (e.g., the arranged marriage structure requiring the couple’s respect of the social laws to get married) and a platform for social production and change (e.g., the arranged marriage structure allowing couples to create new interpersonal rules through interaction).

Agency, referring to individuals’ capability to act, is based on their reflexive monitoring of their social context. For Giddens, agents are constantly reflecting and rationalizing their behavior even when those activities are structured in the form of daily routines. Agents have the capacity to intervene and alter this structure’s order at any moment, but usually choose to maintain it out of an “anthological security” (Giddens, 1984, p. 50). Agents in this sense

structure their life in a predictive fashion in order to reduce uncertainty-related anxiety. Agents' actions highlight a certain aspect of structure and that structure itself provides the potential for agency (Giddens, 1993; Ahearn, 2001). Giddens' social theory of structuration provides an opportunity to realize the interplay between agency and structure.

Giddens defines as structuration those conditions that determine the continuity or transformation of the structure (Giddens, 1979). As a virtual order, the structure for Giddens is not a stable entity but rather a process. In this sense, the process is that of a structuration taking place in specific time and place (Karp, 1986). The study of structuration depends on the analysis of the rules and resources that agents of a system use, rely on and create in their daily interactions. Giddens (1979) writes that "to study the structuration of a social system is to study the ways in which that system, via the application of generative rules and resources, and in the context of unintended outcomes, is produced and reproduced in interaction" (p. 66).

The theory considers rules as both regulative and constitutive. Not only do they guide people as to what they should and should not do (regulative), they also instruct them how to do it (constitutive). Accordingly, rules produce practices (Giddens, 1979). In an arranged marriage context, for example, regulative rules clarify that a man and a woman cannot go out together unchaperoned at the first stage of the relationship. Constitutive regulations, on the other hand, instruct the male candidate on the types of subjects of conversation to approach during the first meeting and determine the stages of the engagement process (first visit, subsequent visits, *fatiha*, engagement, contract signing, and wedding).

The theory approaches regulative and constitutive rules as both restraining and facilitating agencies (Giddens, 1993). The same rule that prohibits an agent from a particular behavior can be used by this person to achieve other purposes. For instance, at the first stages of

the relationship, the man might use the rules of privacy that prevent him from physically touching, or going out alone with his future wife, in order to speed up the process toward more marital commitment. To this end, he might ask his fiancée and her parents to move to the *qiran* stage (signing the marriage contract) so that he can have more privacy to get to know her better. This will grant him “husband” status and allow him more sexual intimacy with his wife. This same rule of privacy can also be invoked by the parents as a tactic to pressure the couple to accept a more “official” commitment status. In this case, the parents will grant the couple more privacy as long as the couple is steadily moving toward marriage. The rule of privacy can be both enabling and/or constraining for the goals of parents and their children alike.

As a third characteristic, the rules of structuration are not overtly stated. Giddens states that rules “cannot be strictly defined” (1979, p. 67). He explains that social norms are similar to the syntactic rules of language. People need not be aware of how language works to be able to speak. Likewise, in their daily practices, people abide by social structural rules without necessarily being able to articulate them. Those rules reside in the agents’ “practical consciousness,” which Giddens defines as “inherent in the capability to ‘go on’ within the routines of social life” (Giddens, 1984, p. 4). Unlike “discursive consciousness,” whereby individuals can articulate the rationale behind their behavior (rationalization of action), practical consciousness is embedded in agents’ routine actions. Yet, with agents’ reflexivity (mindfully observing one’s and others’ actions), this embedded knowledge can still surface in discursive consciousness. The boundaries between the two are not strictly closed (Giddens, 1984).

In the case of an engaged couple who have been seeing each other on a daily basis and interacting with their partner’s family networks, couples in an arranged marriage are expected to develop a set of rules of how, when, and where they should see each other. They might create

rules specific to their exchange of emotional communication, such as calling each other “my love” (*habibeh or habibteh*). Those rules structure their daily routine of how to enact being engaged. As Giddens argues, these rules are produced and reproduced at the moment of interaction, although they are not necessarily stated openly in each encounter. However, for instance, a daughter may decide to disclose to her mother about the advent of exchange of emotional expressions with her fiancé; their discussion about this development allows them to articulate certain expectations associated with this practice. This form of meta-communication of emotions (Gottman, 1994) between the mother and her daughter may move the emotional rule from the practical consciousness to the realm of the discursive.

In addition to the rules, structuration is a function of the resources agents apply in their social life. According to Giddens, resources are the power currency people regularly use in their interactions (Giddens, 1979). Every interaction involving communication and practices is not limited to an exchange of meaning, or what Giddens calls signification (Giddens, 1984). People’s relations are also shaped by an exchange of resources of domination. Of particular interest to the study of socialization, the application of power influences signification. In other words, the dominant agent defines the meanings of the interaction. Giddens (1993) writes:

The creation of frames of meaning occurs as *the mediation of practical activities*, and in terms of differentials of power which actors are able to bring to bear... *Frames of meaning are imbalanced in relation to the possession of power*, whether this be a result of the superior linguistic or dialectical skills of one person in conversation with another; the possession of relevant types of ‘technical knowledge’; the mobilization of authority or ‘force’, etc. (p. 120, italics in original).

For example, a mother who likes a certain candidate for her daughter may attempt to turn her daughter’s hesitation to commit to the relationship (the daughter might be unsure if she likes the man) by drawing on her expertise in marriage and her authority as parent. She persuades her

daughter to accept the man by highlighting his obvious positive qualities, such as religiosity, generosity or financial stability.

Power, a “transformative capacity,” is hence a component of every interaction. It is the ability of the agent to use available resources to achieve a favorable end. It is “the capability to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others” (Giddens, 1993, p. 118). Consequently, power requires an interaction of agents for the exchange of resources to take place. The dominant needs a dominated to apply domination. Giddens’ power concept is thus conceived as articulation of autonomy and dependence (Karp, 1986). Yet, power is not a synonym for conflict. Conflict is only one possible result of the exercise of power. In many cases, power resources are exchanged in an interaction for the benefit or interest of both parties. The mother after all is sincerely acting for the perceived benefit of her daughter. She intervenes out of affection. A relational tension, in this case, arises only when the daughter decides to contradict her mother’s will.

As stated in the quote from Giddens above, power resources can take the form of mobilizations of authority, expertise, communication skills, threat, or force. In an arranged marriage, parents know the correct conventions and rituals in the organization of the marital process (control of expertise) and are therefore able to indirectly influence and manage the process contrary to what their children expressly desire but within their own informed understanding of what is in their children’s best interest. This exercise of dominance through the advantage of expertise should not, however, be judged as an act of aggression. In fact, the children very often welcome such parental guidance. For instance, if the man is working abroad, his mother will play a key role in bride selection by short-listing single women for him to visit when he comes back to Lebanon. In this case application, the theory of structuration does not



focus on the critical analysis of dominance but rather on how mobilization of resources produces and maintains structures.

Of relevance to this study, the theory of structuration considers the interaction as its unit of analysis. It follows an interactional analysis approach that views behavior as socially organized (McDermott & Roth, 1978). The structuration, the recursive application of rules and resources, and the articulation of the layers of significance and domination take place at the moment and place of communication (Giddens, 1979). The structure of the social system is revealed in communication, and communication is made possible through the application of the structural set (Karp, 1986). Giddens (1979) explains that

rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but are thereby also reconstituted through such interaction. Structure is thus the mode in which the relation between moment and totality expresses itself in social reproduction (p. 70).

In other words, actors are linked to their social system through their application of the social structure in their interactions.

In the following section I move to the second theoretical framework, the relational dialectics, that helps understand the underlying mother-daughter tensions in coping with the socialization process.

### **The Relational Dialectics Theory**

Influenced by Bakhtin's dialogism (Baxter, 2007; Holquist, 1990), the relational dialectics theory starts from the assumption that social life is a dialogue of different, often opposed, tendencies and perspectives (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a). Those contradictions do not happen inside but rather between individuals. They are relational in nature rather than resulting from internal problematic discomforts.

Unlike the social systems theories that view social relations as balanced structures with defined boundaries, relational dialectics considers relations as unstable, in continuous flux between centripetal (forces of unity) and centrifugal (forces of difference) forces (Baxter, 2004a). For systems theories, relations in social systems are fundamentally stable but threatened from time to time by destabilizing tensions. The relational dialectics paradigm, on the other hand, acknowledges change, and even chaos, as a constant feature of social relations. Exceptionally, however, social relationships sometimes assume “aesthetic moments” of order that are “fleeting moment[s] of wholeness in which competing fragments and disorder are temporarily united” (Baxter, 2004a, p. 186). During those aesthetic moments, individuals experience their relationship as a unity of partners having differences that complete one another. For relational dialectics, therefore, the social relationship is established not by maintaining homeostasis (a sense of equilibrium assumed by systems theorists) but by achieving a sense of completion through the fusion of the multiple voices in the relationship. For instance, a stage of stability in a mother-daughter relationship is reached when the two merge their opinions in addressing the marital concerns. At this moment, they achieve a shared perception of the marriage reality.

Aesthetic oneness is experienced in social relationships when members highlight their similarities as well as their differences. In terms of relational similarities, Baxter (2004b) proposes “chronotopic similarity” as an essential factor in creating a sense of commonality between partners. Chronotopic similarity is defined as “the stockpile of shared time-space experiences that a pair constructs through their joint interaction events over time” (Baxter, 2004b, p. 4). Such experiences are divided into two types of interactions: Mundane, everyday events that the members of a relationship share together (e.g., watching TV or having lunch

together) and the less frequent, socially meaningful turning-point events that significantly affect the members and their relationship (e.g., the *fatiha*, the engagement or the wedding ceremony). Relational parties like the mother and her daughter are drawn closer together through the participation in common everyday speech events, such as small talk, gossip or jokes, discussions of future plans, or self-disclosure. The accumulation of shared experiences constructs a shared relational memory (Goldsmith & Baxter, 1996).

In contrast, turning-point events are exceptional moments that relational partners engage in to break with daily routines. Usually assessed in retrospect, the nature and significance of those moments are relative to each relationship. The dyad evaluates the meaning of particular past interactions and celebrates them as historic. In this regard, turning-points have two main values. They mark a shared experience for the relational members and provide a fertile communication platform for acts of remembering those events, such as reminiscing, storytelling, celebrations and rituals. Those remembering practices foster a sense of togetherness for the members (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2002; Baxter, Braithwaite, & Nicholson, 1999; Baxter & Bullis, 1986; Baxter & Erbert, 1999; Braithwaite, Baxter, & Harper, 1998; Baxter & Pittman, 2001). Chronotopic similarities, originating from mundane and significant communication events, provide the relational members with a relational identity, a perception of who they are as a pair (Baxter, 2004b). In this research, for instance, daughter's arranged marriage is investigated as a possible turning-point event in mother-daughter relationship. This emotionally rich event may draw the dyad closer together because of the amount of time they spend discussing the details and preparing the logistics. During this ritualistic process that the mother and daughter share, the two would compare and contrast their marital experiences.

In relational dialectics, differences are as fundamental for the development and enrichment of the relationship as are similarities (Baxter & West, 2003). Baxter writes in this regard that the theory “presupposes that the business of relating is as much about differences as similarities” (2004b, p. 5). It is important to note here that in relational dialectics differences are not inherently problematic (i.e., necessarily generating relational conflicts), nor cognitively predetermined outside the relationship (e.g., when assuming personality differences would create relational tensions). The theory approaches relational differences as a fact of life that could lead to fruitful dialogue (Baxter, 2004a). Differences and similarities can be considered together because the “difference cannot be understood apart from its interplay with similarity” (Baxter, 2004b, p. 6). For instance, partners at a certain period of their relationship might appreciate being different from one another in one area and similar in another. Later on, however, those same differences or similarities might generate conflicts. Similarly, a conservative mother may be proud and assured of her daughter’s shy nature with men when the girl is still single. But that mother might criticize her daughter for this same attitude and advise her to relax when the latter does not feel comfortable sharing her emotions with her fiancé.

This example shows that relational differences (and similarities) are sole constructs of the social interaction. As Baxter explains:

Contradictions do not sit “out there” as objective forces that drive communicative choices between partners. Contradictions are constituted in the discursive sea of what Bakhtin called “verbal-ideological” forces ... That is, communication is the interpenetration of united-yet-competing values, orientations, perspectives, or ideas (Baxter, 2004a, p. 184-5).

Because contradictions are located at the conversational level, they are dependent on the actual time-place factors and nature of the interaction. For this reason, Baxter (2004a) argues that each relationship has a distinctive set of contradictions relative to its relational context; hence,

dialectical tensions are not constructs that can be projected universally to all relationships. Nevertheless, scholars of dialectics have frequently focused on studying three main sets of dialectics (e.g., Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006; Baxter & Erbert, 1999; Baxter & Simon, 1993; Baxter, 1990). The first tension is between integration and separation, which occurs whenever partners experience opposing desires to connect to each other and maintain margins of independence at the same time. The daughter, for instance, may seek her parents' blessing of her marital relationship and their advice but would still want to decide independently whether to stop or continue the relationship.

The second tension is between stability and change. It occurs whenever partners experience a comfort in preserving a certain convention of behavior and a desire to break with the routine at the same time. For instance, the daughter may prefer the arranged marriage structure because she wants her family to approve of the candidate as well. At the same time, however, she may also prefer a man of a non-traditional character. The two tendencies are in conflict because the visiting males, who opt for an arranged marriage, tend to have a traditional mindset. As a result, the daughter's wish to secure her parents' blessing may be filtering out a lot of the non-traditional men that she also would like to have.

The third widely analyzed dialectic is the tension between expression and non-expression. It happens when partners manage their needs of self-disclosure with their concerns of privacy. During her marital relationship process, the daughter may choose what information to share with her mother and what relational secrets to hide from her. She might ask her mother's advice concerning a particular minor dispute with her fiancé. Yet, she might conceal a more serious conflict because she fears her family's intervention could aggravate the situation.

Baxter (1988) explains that dyads cope with their relational dialectics by applying one of the following four strategies: cyclic alternation, segmentation, selection and integration. In cyclic alternation, the partner switches from one time to another between the two dialectical contradictions. For example, the daughter may decide to self-disclose and connect with her mother at the beginning of her relationship with her fiancé. Later, as she gets more intimate with her fiancé, she assumes more independence from her family.

Partners use the second strategy of segmentation when they fulfill their opposing motivations each in a separate context. The daughter applies segmentation, for instance, if she decides to be conservative in some aspects of marriage and innovative in others. When she faces a role dialectic (Apker, Propp, & Ford, 2005) between being a daughter that depends on her family network emotionally and financially and turning into an engaged woman, she switches from a daughter at home to a mature fiancée in public.

The third strategy of selection is engaged when the partner decides to fulfill one opposite and disregard the other. Selection is an act of prioritizing. For example, when facing the dilemma of accepting or rejecting an unqualified candidate (e.g., on grounds of unacceptable education, religiosity) to whom she is attracted, the daughter may well reject him. After discussing the matter with her family she concludes that factors such as education and religiosity are more important than sexual attraction.

In the fourth strategy of integration, the partners combine the opposites by either neutralizing them (such as applying them with moderation), reframing the tension, or disqualifying particular aspects in them (Baxter, 1988). Facing a tension between satisfying the obligations set by her traditional parents and her desire for a non-traditional relationship with her fiancé, the daughter may negotiate the social rules with her family by moderating

their rigid interpretations. For example, the young woman may convince her parents that she can go out with her fiancé provided that she is accompanied by her sister. In another case, a woman may reinterpret her parents' desire to speed up the *qiran* process as a way for her to test her fiancé's commitment.

These examples of dialectics emphasize the “constitutive” role of communication in relationships. The dialectical process of forging competing voices takes place in communication and communication-based rituals (Baxter, 2004a). As Baxter puts it, “to engage in dialogue, voices interpenetrate one another and thereby constitute and change one another” (2004a, p. 186). Communication in this sense is constitutive, with individuals constructing themselves and their relationships in the actual “utterance” of their interactions, in their dialogues (2004a, 2004b). Communication, here, is not considered as goal-oriented or for expressing behaviors that are “contained” in a relationship. It is rather the producer of the relationship. It constitutes a relational process born at the moment of undertaking the communication practices (Baxter, 2004b). Through communication, the participating selves are constantly transformed into a perceived social unity, or relational identity. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) characterize this constitutive process as the “becoming” of the self through dialogue. The communication of the daughter with her fiancé, her mother, her other family members, her mother-in-law, etc., are all those social interactions that contribute to her socialization into a person of family responsibilities, into a wife.

This development however should not be misinterpreted as a unidirectional progress toward an ideal, stable status. The relational dialectics theory considers this process of becoming as a continuous change of the individual's self and her relational identity affected by the interactions with other participants in the relationship (Baxter, 2004b). In interaction,

interlocutors achieve interpenetration of their voices by joining their different perspectives and tendencies over time, while maintaining their sense of uniqueness. Conversations are therefore the stage for centripetal and centrifugal flux and for the realization of fleeting aesthetic moments (2004a).

### **Synthesis: The Two Theories' Similarities and Differences**

The theory of structuration and the relational dialectics theory have four aspects in common. They share an appreciation of relational differences, emphasize the role of communication, and recognize both the importance of change and the value of mundane practices. Both Giddens and Baxter argue that differences do not imply necessarily relational conflicts. Both acknowledge differences, whether as power resources exchanged in order to maintain or change structures (for the theory of structuration), or potential foundations for individual and relational growth (for relational dialectics). As for the role of communication, the theory of structuration views conversations as the site of production and reproduction of structures. For relational dialectics, communication constitutes selves and relations. Both theories are interested in studying the elements of social change at the level of the society and the individual. For the theory of structuration, possibilities for change are embedded in the interplay of agency, reflexivity and the structural properties of rules and resources. Change may well result from unintended consequences. For relational dialectics, social change is the product of centrifugal and centripetal tensions taking place at the moment of the interaction. Change, however, does not happen during critical turning-points only, but in the mundane, routine practices as well. In this sense both theories value everyday practices as they reveal and reconstitute relationships. They credit those social interactions as sources of structuration, for the



theory of structuration, and as sources of cohesion through chronotopic similarities, for relational dialectics.

A major difference between the two theories is that they are based on two opposing worldviews. For Giddens, the world tends more toward structuration than toward chaos. Structuration provides stability based on routine practices. For Baxter, the world is a chaotic environment made of contradictory tensions. Contradictions create change. Giddens argues that relations are based on structures that are cognitive but also influenced by the moment of interaction. As self-reflexive, goal-oriented agents, relational members come to the interaction with a bag of expectations. Yet, those expectations can be modified in the communication. Baxter, on the other hand, sees relations as sole constructs of communicative interactions (participants reach shared meaning during interaction). Relational members are participants in interactions that they make sense of retrospectively.

In her discussion of the limitations of the relational dialectics research, Baxter (2004b) wrote that

the bulk of my relational dialectics research activity to date has focused on identifying the contradictions that animate relating by emphasizing the tension of opposition. We know less about the unity of these oppositions. In large measure, unity has been undertheorized and underresearched in my own work and in the dialectically oriented work of others. Typically, unity has been glossed as simple co-presence. However, from a dialogic perspective, unity needs to be conceptualized as authoring [using Bakhtin's term]. That is, we need to understand how it is that such discursive opposites as separation and integration can complete, enhance, and enable one another at the same time that they limit or constrain one another (pp. 8-9).

I propose that Giddens' structuration model can help respond to Baxter's concern in the following way: structuration can be perceived as a process of unification, of organizing relations, through the interplay of multiple contradictory voices. In fact, Baxter in the above quote –though she does not mention the subject of structures– echoes Giddens by drawing on his description of

structures as “enabling” and “constraining” the communication-generated tensions. The distinction between the two approaches has been narrowed by Baxter. In a recent study with colleagues, Baxter used Giddens’ structuration theory directly to investigate the structures of co-parenting involved in a divorce process (Schrodt, Baxter, Chad McBride, Braithwaite, & Fine, 2006). In another research project (Baxter, Dun, & Sahlstein, 2001), she studied relational communication by focusing on the relating rules that partners in friendships and romantic relationships perceive and apply.

In considering the structural rules and resources in relation to the dialectical tensions in mother-daughter interactions, this study attempts to find out how relational tensions contribute to the creation of unity or structures. In particular, combining the two theoretical frameworks will help identify how the dyad’s efforts to cope with dialectical tensions produces, reproduces or alters structures. In this case, the resources of power in the relationship will be considered as elements of mother-daughter relational dialectics. While managing her relational dialectics with her mother, the daughter for instance may alter social rules involved in her marital socialization.

### **The Research Questions**

Taking into consideration the socio-cultural background in which the mother-daughter conversations take place, and applying the frameworks of the theories of structuration and relational dialectics, this study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

#### **1- Overall assessment of mother-daughter’s marital socialization within the Sunni Beiruti community:**

**RQ 1A: How similar are the daughters’ views about marital relationships to those of their mothers?**

**RQ 1B: How much do the daughters’ views correspond to their mothers’ during the different stages of the marital process (receiving candidates, engagement, and early marriage)?**

**2- The socialization of arranged marriage:**

**RQ 2A: In mother-daughter dyads, is the socialization flow unidirectional (from mother to daughter) or is it conversational?**

**RQ 2B: What are the main structuration lines of marital socialization mothers and daughters engage in?**

**RQ 2C: What are the social rules of marriage that mothers negotiate with their daughters?**

**RQ 2D: How do the structuration rules evolve during the different stages of the marital process (singlehood, receiving candidates, engagement, and early marriage)?**

**3- Mothers-daughters relational dialectics:**

**RQ 3A: What are the relational dialectics experienced by the mother-daughter dyad during the arranged marriage process?**

**RQ 3B: What are the power resources that mothers employ to influence their daughters?**

**RQ 3C: What are the daughters' strategies to cope with the relational dialectics?**

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The socialization process happens most often during everyday interactions and consequently tends to exist at the level of the practical consciousness rather than the discursive consciousness (Giddens, 1997). The rules for how to become a wife emerge out of the daily interactions and shared practices of the daughter with her family and her fiancé's network, and sometimes out of the direct observations of the marital experiences of her siblings, parents and other kin. In other words, this socialization of marriage is an act of co-construction (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995) by the daughter and her family circle. It takes place in the daily routines as well as in specific turning-points of the daughter's marital relationship (Baxter, 2004).

This complex reality poses a methodological challenge because the population under study tends to consider daily routines as private rituals beyond the access of "strangers," including researchers such as myself, a male member of the community. To overcome this difficulty and produce a more thorough understanding of the topic under consideration, this study used a "syncretic approach" (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 252) of quantitative and qualitative methods.

This chapter explains the two methodological approaches applied in this research and specifies the analysis methods adopted to extract the findings. The first phase of the study comprised of a survey that assessed mothers' and daughters' opinions about marital relationships. In the second phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with a number of mother-daughter dyads using narrative and photo-elicited techniques.

## **The Quantitative Study**

The quantitative study was designed to provide an overview assessment of mother-daughter interdependence in an arranged marriage structure. It comprised of a paper-and-pencil, self-administered survey testing the difference of mother' and daughter's marital views in a cross-sectional design comparing mother and daughter opinions about marriage before and after the latter became engaged to marry a male candidate. The questionnaire was administered to dyads where daughters enjoyed various marital statuses, ranging from single and receiving male candidates at home, engaged to recently married (up to four years of marriage). The survey sought to uncover the degree of alignment between the two women. It was intended to measure how much the mother's and daughter's opinions converge or diverge in regard to marriage, love and social roles, taking into consideration the daughter's relational conditions.

The questionnaire was based on an adaptation of Stephen and Markman's (1993) symbolic interdependence scale. In its initial version, symbolic interdependence refers to a couple's co-construction of shared meaning about the world. Stephen (1984) defines symbolic interdependence as "a state of emergent blended consciousness between relationship members" (p. 397). Based on the symbolic interaction and social exchange theories (Honeycutt, 2009), symbolic interdependence highlights the role of conversations and social interactions in creating a consensual worldview. Applying Stephen and Markman's (1993) Relationship Worldview Index (RWI-2) scale to couples of different relationship levels (randomly-paired strangers, daters, engaged and married), Stephen (1984) found that individuals with more developed relationships had higher scores of symbolic interdependence. He also found an association between relational satisfaction and commitment. The higher the couple's frequency of interactions, the higher was the co-construction of their relationship reality. And the closer the

couple felt to each other, the more committed to the relationship, and the more the partners reacted similarly to relationship issues.

The study adapted 36 items of the original 60-item symbolic interdependence scale (RWI-2) to test the level of interdependence between mothers and daughters about marital relationships. The scale was shortened to ensure a better response rate. Because the questionnaire was devised by an American scholar and based on a Western concept of relationships, the scale needed to be customized for Lebanese cultural realities and translated into Arabic. The selection and adaptation of items took into consideration cultural sensitivities and the conditions of arranged marriage (e.g., asking about marital relationships rather than romantic relationships).

Considering the culture under study, items such as “One should feel free to participate in several relationships at once” were taken out. Deleted items also included statements such as: “It doesn't matter in a relationship if partners differ in the amount they like to be touched” and “If people can accept that they will be in several relationships during their lifetime, they may learn to approach relationships with a healthier outlook.” Instead, adapted items to the culture of arranged marriage included statements such as the following: “A marital relationship provides stability in life” and “It is important that partners get to know each other's families well before their marriage.” Items about traditional social roles, such as “Men should make the important decisions in the life of the family,” were added. Daughters and mothers were asked to agree or disagree on those statements using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strong disagreement to 5 = Strong agreement).

Stephen and Markman (1983) reported a reliability of .73 for the 60-item RWI-2 scale that they used as a uni-dimensional measurement. As for its construct validity, in addition to connecting it to relational satisfaction and commitment, Stephen applied the scale in longitudinal

studies of couple relationships testing interdependence in multiple conditions, such as relationship development (Stephen, 1985), sexual types of intimacy (Stephen & Harrison, 1985), and long-distance relationships (Stephen, 1986). In this study, the RWI-2 was used as uni-dimensional scale to compute the interdependence of marital views among mother-daughter dyads. Using exploratory factor analysis, sub-scales within the RWI-2 were also computed to compare mother-daughter generational differences along several characteristics related to marital relationships (see Chapter 5 for more details).

In addition to the RWI-2 scale, the survey included questions about demographic information. In the case of daughters specifically, the survey also inquired about the nature (arranged vs. not arranged) and stage of the relationship they are engaged in –if any. The questionnaire at the end asked mothers and daughters if they agree to be interviewed for in-depth discussion about marriages. Those who agreed provided their contact information (name, telephone and email address). This information was kept confidential and only used for the qualitative phase to select twelve dyads representing the various stages of the arranged marriage process (see Mother and Daughter Questionnaires in Appendix A– Survey Instrument).

Regarding sampling procedures, the survey was administered to females at various Sunni social and non-profit organizations, such as *Irshad & Islah* Organization, *`Ibad-Arrahman* Organization, and at universities in Beirut with important religious Sunni Beiruti concentration, such as *Al-Azhar* University, the *Shari`a* College, *Imam Uza`i* University, and *Al-Bayadir* School. Made of two separate questionnaires, surveys included code numbers to help pair the appropriate dyads during data analysis. To attend to cultural sensitivity and break the distrust many families felt toward strangers, female liaisons were enlisted that belonged to each of these

organizations.<sup>4</sup> They were asked to administer the surveys to eligible daughters (in the age range of accepting candidates at home) and their mothers. Female liaisons either gave the surveys to daughters and asked them to have their mothers fill a copy separately or they administered the surveys to mothers and requested them to ask their daughters to fill a copy on their own. A few days later, surveys were collected from the various female liaisons. Around 350 mother-daughter surveys were distributed. The returned forms, completed by both the mother and her daughter, were 215 (61.43% as response rate).

### **The Qualitative Study**

The qualitative study is intended to provide more in-depth information on the socialization dynamics that occur at the mother-daughter level of the arranged marriage process. It is designed to explore the relational rules, the resources that both mothers and daughters, and the relational dialectics and strategies mothers and daughters experience and employ in their relationships.

### **The Three-Interview Scenario**

The study addressed mothers and daughters through a three-interview scenario (e.g., Chadiha, Veroff & Leber, 1998). As proposed by Fiese and Spagnola (2005), the interviews probed the dyad addressing three categories of narratives: stories of personal experience (e.g., mother telling the story of her marriage), perception of family relationships (e.g., a critical intervention of the mother to help her daughter resolve a tension with her fiancé), and interpretations of events mother and daughter shared together (e.g., talking about everyday activities they do together).

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<sup>4</sup> The ideal situation in such a case would be to distribute, and collect back, the surveys in sealed envelopes but, given the cultural sensitivity and to ensure the collection of the targeted number of surveys, I had to use a total of 22 female liaisons that the students and members of Islamic organizations trusted.



The first interview included the mother only. Following Buehlman, Gottman and Katz's (1992) Oral History Interview, the mother was asked to relate the story of her daughter's marital or pre-marital relationship and the story of her own marriage. She was also asked to articulate her philosophy about marriage, love, and gender roles. In addition to the Oral History questions, the mother was asked to comment on the way she and her daughter communicate with each other. The questions about the patterns of communication (in terms of conversation-orientation, and conformity-orientation) were adapted from the revised Ritchie and Fitzpatrick's (1990) Family Communication Pattern Instrument (see Mother Interview Protocol in Appendix B– Interview Protocol).

The second interview involved the daughter only. Following the Oral History Interview, she was asked to relate the story of her current marital or pre-marital relationship and to express her philosophy about marriage, love, and gender roles. The daughter was also asked to comment on the type of communication she has with her mother. The revised FCPI (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) questions were used as a starting point to generate a thorough discussion with the daughter about her communication with her mother. The daughter was requested to provide real, rather than hypothetical, examples of her interactions with her mother (see Daughter Interview Protocol in Appendix B– Interview Protocol).

The third interview involved both the mother and her daughter. Based on the two previous meetings, topics that the two women shared or differed on were determined before the third interview took place. During this final meeting, mother and daughter were encouraged to engage in a discussion about these similarities and differences. They were then asked to comment on two wedding pictures, one in which the father is handing his daughter to her husband-to-be and the one in which the new couple hold hands in the midst of a cheering crowd.

The same set of pictures was shared with all the interviewed dyads (see Figure 4 and 5 in Appendix B– Interview Protocol).

The purpose of this photo-elicited discussion was to prompt spontaneous conversations between the mother and her daughter. The intention behind initiating those conversations was to help bring to the surface the current, ongoing dialogue between the mother and her daughter about marriage. The dual voice approach, as opposed to a single interview with the daughter or the mother, provided a wider spectrum of the meanings involved in the socialization of marriage. The third interview did not have a fully prepared protocol of questions. While the photo-elicited discussion was shared with all dyads, the rest of the questions were generated as follow-ups to the first and second interviews (see sample questions in Mother-Daughter Interview Protocol in Appendix B– Interview Protocol).

Of the 215 dyads who filled in the questionnaires, 108 accepted to be interviewed. Twelve among these were randomly selected for in-depth interviewing. In order to monitor the socialization process along the different stages of arranged marriage, the dyads' selection was equally stratified according to the daughter's social status sub-groups: single, engaged, and married. Four dyads were selected from the 52 families of single daughters who accepted to be interviewed, four from 22 families of engaged daughters, and four from 34 families of married daughters (see Table 3 for details about the twelve dyads' demographics). An additional seven families (of four engaged daughters, and three married) were originally interviewed for this study but were dropped from the analysis for one of the following reasons: a- the dyads' responses revealed that the daughter's marital relationship did not completely qualify as an arranged marriage (in the case of three dyads), the interviewer was not effective in probing respondents (in

the case of one dyad), or the family decided to either abstain from or rush the third interview (in the case of two dyads).

To avoid gender sensitivities among traditional families and in an effort to entice women to speak more freely, seven female interviewers were recruited to contact the families and conduct the interviews. The recruited female interviewers had one debriefing and training session on the nature of the research and the questionnaires before contacting the families. After the first two interviews (i.e., the individual ones with the mother and daughter) and before the third one (i.e., the joint mother-daughter one), I had a second debriefing session with interviewers during which the questions for the third interview were reviewed. The share of dyads for each interviewer varied from one to three families per person, depending on the availability of the interviewer and the families (see Table 4 for a description of the team of interviewers).

Table 3  
Demographics of the mother-daughter dyads selected for the in-depth interviews

<b>Family</b>	<b>Mother Age</b>	<b>Mother Profession</b>	<b>Mother Status</b>	<b>Daughter Age</b>	<b>Daughter Profession</b>	<b>Daughter Status</b>
1	55	Social worker	Married	29	Graphic designer	Single
2	59	Housewife	Married	24	Graduate student	Single
3	47	Social worker	Married	23	Teacher	Single
4	49	Housewife	Married	21	College student	Single
5	51	Housewife	Married	28	Accountant	Engaged
6	47	Housewife	Married	24	Teacher	Engaged
7	43	Housewife	Married	20	College student	Engaged
8	54	Housewife	Married	19	College student	Engaged
9	43	Housewife	Married	18	Housewife	Married
10	59	Housewife	Married	25	Assistant manager	Married
11	37	Jewelry	Married	20	Graphic designer	Married
12	50	Housewife	Married	25	Housewife	Married

Table 4

Details about the team of interviewers who conducted the in-depth interviews

Interviewer	Profession	Age	Interviewed
1	Graduate student	33	Families # 1, 4, and 12
2	School supervisor	59	Families # 9, 10, and 11
3	Artist Painter	55	Families # 3 and 6
4	Speech therapist	33	Family # 2
5	Graphic designer	29	Family # 5
6	Graphic designer	26	Family # 7
7	Graduate student	29	Family # 8

The twelve dyads were each subjected to the three audio-taped interviews in the following order: one with the mother (*M* duration of recording time = 41 minutes, ranging from 18 minutes to 1 hour and 4 minutes), one with the daughter (*M* duration = 41 minutes, ranging from 18 minutes to 1 hour and 35 minutes), and a third with the mother and her daughter (*M* duration = 44 minutes, ranging from 21 minutes to 1 hour and 6 minutes). Interviewers were instructed not to allow any outsiders, such as the father or the fiancé, to be in room during the interviews. On average, the interviewer took two weeks to finish the three interviews for each dyad (scheduling the first week for the first two individual interviews, and the next for the third). The interviewing process was completed in a period of two months.

### Stance Analysis as Coding Scheme

As an analytical tool of discourse analysis, the stance triangle as formulated by Du Bois (2007) was adopted in the coding and examination of the mother-daughter interviews. In the following section, I will review Du Bois' interpretation of the stance act, his stance triangle model, and explain how this study applied this method in the examination of the dyads' audio-taped interviews.

An increasing number of scholars in linguistics and anthropology have incorporated stance analysis into their study of language in social interactions. For instance, studies have

looked at stancetaking in relation to epistemic certainty and affect in discourse (Biber & Finegan, 1998), speakers' evaluations (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), sociocultural indexicality and identity (Ochs, 1992; 1993) and directives and affective alignments in family conversations (Goodwin, 2006). The concept of stance relates to other notions of footing, framing, alignment and positioning in terms of their similar focus on the relation participants in conversations have with each other and with the topics/objects of their talk (Gordon, 2006).

Based on a triangular configuration that connects the two interlocutors and their object of conversation, Du Bois (2007) provides a comprehensive definition of stance as

a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field... I evaluate something, and thereby position myself, and thereby align with you (p. 163).

This theoretical framework of stance, thus, consolidates previous disparate mechanism of evaluation in discourse (Du Bois, 2007). It incorporates the three acts of evaluation, positioning and alignment (convergence or divergence) into the formulation and interpretation of stancetaking between two interlocutors. Evaluation (as evident in the utterance: "this is good") corresponds here to "the process whereby a stancetaker orients to an object of stance and characterizes it as having some specific quality or value" (p. 143). Positioning (as evident in the utterances: "I am surprised" or "I like it") refers to the subjective act of orienting oneself to the object of stance. It subsumes an affective or a familiarity connection to the object. Alignment (as evident in the utterances: "I agree with you" or "yeah!") signals the degree of convergence or divergence of the two subjects in relation to the shared stance object.

The act of stancetaking is considered in Du Bois' (2007) triangle as a product of dialogue, where the uttered stance from the first speaker is followed by a counter-stance from the

second. Du Bois (2007) calls the first stance “the stance lead” and the second “the stance follow” (p. 161). Consequently, the acts of evaluation, positioning and alignment are considered simultaneously for the two stancetakers. The combination of the stance lead and the stance follow in analysis generates at least five connecting vectors linking the two subjects and their shared object. The possible five vectors of the stancetaking in the conversation can be sketched as the following:

Vectors linking Subject 1 and the Object of stance:

- 1- Subject 1 evaluates the Object: e.g. “I don’t find him (candidate) suitable!”
- 2- The Object is positioned in relation to Subject 1: (I stand in opposition to him).

Vectors linking Subject 2 and the Object of stance:

- 3- Subject 2 evaluates the Object: e.g. “I don’t find him suitable either!”
- 4- The Object is positioned in relation to Subject 2: (I stand in opposition to him).

Vector linking Subject 1 and Subject 2:

- 5- Subject 2 aligns himself with Subject 1: resonance/parallelism of sentences structure signaling convergence (see Table 5 by the end of this chapter for an application of stance analysis).

Du Bois (2007) argues that using the stance triangle in the interpretation of the stancetaking process helps reveal all three subsidiary acts even if some of them are not explicitly mentioned. For instance, in the example above, Subject 2 does not need to utter “I agree with you” for a stance analyst to interpret his reaction as a positive alignment with the first subject. The addition, as well, of the adverb “so” by Subject 2 indexes the stancetaker’s subjectivity and pushes the utterance beyond an objective evaluation. It signals a positioning formulated by an implicit affective stance that may be uttered in the form of “I like it a lot!” One can infer here

that although Subject 1 and Subject 2 are positively aligned in terms of their assessment of the Object, their respective positions toward it are slightly different. Subject 2 stance utterance expresses a “closer” position to the Object.

Five conceptual principles characterize stancetaking (Englebreton, 2007).

First, a stance can be articulated in the form of a) a physical action, b) an individual’s belief, attitude or evaluation, and/or c) a social value. Goodwin (2007), for instance, divides stance into five categories: 1- instrumental stance (organizing objects to facilitates the execution of an activity), 2- cooperative stance (showing assistance or interest by aligning the body toward others), 3- epistemic stance (supporting ideas, showing knowledge of a topic), 4- affective stance (expressing one’s emotions, and feeling toward others), 5- moral stance (respecting the values of the community). One can argue here that the instrumental and cooperative stances belong to the physical order, the epistemic and affective correspond to the personal beliefs/attitude/evaluation order, and the moral stance reflects the social value. Du Bois (2007) however disagrees with such sub-divisions of stance. He argues that all those forms can potentially constitute aspects of “a single overarching unified stance act” (p. 163).

Second, a stance is a public expression that can be highlighted, examined and interpreted by others. For instance, Kärkkäinen (2006) examines the marker “I think” as an indication of epistemic stance referring to the speaker’s degree of commitment and knowledge of the discussed topic. Other linguistic markers that may underline stancetaking include: comparative adjectives (e.g., nice, bigger, better), negation (e.g., do not), adverbs of degree (e.g., almost, enough, extremely), modal auxiliaries (e.g., might, could), sentence adverbs (e.g., apparently, in my opinion), and conjunctions (e.g., but, and, or) (Johnstone, 2008, pp. 137).

Third, a stance is dialogically and intersubjectively constructed; this feature makes it particularly congenial to my data. Following a constructionist interpretation of stancetaking, Kärkkäinen (2006) argues: “stance is not primarily situated within the minds of individual speakers, but rather emerges from dialogic interaction between interlocutors in particular dialogic and sequential contexts” (p. 700). It is the product of participants’ on-going or past interactions, and builds on previously uttered stances (Du Bois, 2007; Kärkkäinen, 2006). Stancetaking is predicated upon an intersubjective formulation, where participants continually consider the others’ previous stances when articulating their own through time. In the process of composing an intertextual conversation (Tannen, 1989; 2006), participants frequently incorporate into their stancetaking the previously uttered stance of their co-participant, resulting in a resonance of utterances, or a “considerable structural parallelism in language as manifested in the repetition of words, phrases, syntactic structures, or prosodic patterns” (Kärkkäinen, 2006, p. 720).

Fourth, a stance indexes the broader socio-cultural context. It refers to social values and ideologies beyond the actual text. Du Bois (2007) identifies two possible locations in the act of stancetaking that index the socio-cultural values. The first one resides in the formal evaluation of stance objects. The stance taker’s assessment of right or wrong, good or bad may be framed by the social values of the society. Du Bois wrote: “Via specific acts of stancetaking, value can be focused and directed at a precise target, as locally relevant values are activated to frame the significance of participants’ actions” (2007, p. 141).

The second possible inference is situated in the collaborative act of stancetaking. As mentioned above, stancetaking is an intersubjective endeavor, where each participant in the conversation formulates his/her stance while taking into consideration the other co-



participant's subjectivity. Because of this, the degree of the two subjects' collaboration (their alignment of convergence or divergence) may hint to dynamics of power in their relationship, and consequently to socio-cultural expectations, such as social or gender roles (e.g., Ochs' (1992) examination of stances indexing gender differences).

Fifth, a stance has a pragmatic consequence for which it holds speakers responsible. By providing an evaluation, a position toward an object, and an intersubjective connection with the co-participant, stancetaking commits the stancetaker to responsibility in interpersonal interactions and social implications. Moreover, some stances persist over time and serve to define the identity of the stancetaker. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) refer to this process of accumulation of stances into "durable structures of identity" as "stance accretion" (p. 596).

Because stancetaking is relational, the method fits well with the requisites of dyadic data analysis. Comparing the daughter's stance with her mother's when the two are interviewed together and when they speak independently helps us track points of convergence and divergence in a variety of layers where the direct interaction between the two (in the third common interview) acts as a mediating variable affecting alignment.

### **Coding Focus**

Coding the 36 interviews of 12 mother-daughter dyads, this study solely focused on: a-reported speech, where mother or daughter describe past conversations using introductory sentences such as "she told me" or "she said," etc.; and b-instances of actual dialogue in the third interview, where mother and daughter discuss a given subject without addressing the interviewer or being interrupted by her.

Focusing on reported speech is methodologically important for many reasons. It enables to resuscitate past dialogues and compare them with current conversations, unveiling patterns of intersubjectivity and social construction of the marital experience. The comparison of mothers' and daughters' reported speech checks for the disparities in the two narratives, and consequently, the co-construction of meaning among them. In addition, analysis of reported speeches helps overcome the time and space constraints of extracting live conversations from interviewees about particular topics.

Reported speech is most often found in narratives. Narratives are a fundamental instrument of socialization (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002). Ochs and Capps (1996) define narratives of personal experience as the “verbalized, visualized, and/or embodied framings of a sequence of actual or possible life events” (p. 19). Narratives include several genres such as stories, diaries, gossip, and jokes. Personal narratives have two characteristics: temporality and point of view (Ochs & Capps, 1996). As a temporal sequencing of events, the act of storytelling connects the narrator and the listener through the interpretation of past, current and potential experiences. “The telling of past events is intricately linked to tellers' and listeners' concerns about their present and their future lives” (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002, p. 25). For this reason, storytelling is practiced for the purpose of conveying a stance. This usually takes the form of a moral at the end of the story, that Labov (1972) labels as coda.

Narratives function at multiple socializing levels (Ochs & Capps, 1996; Ochs & Shohet, 2006). For instance, the personal stories told by the mother about her marital experience may underline ideological assumptions, set a moral order, and allow her to position herself in relation to her daughter as the expert. In this regard, the storytelling opportunities allow the narrator to explain, evaluate, and praise or condemn other family members' behaviors, feelings or thoughts

(Ochs & Taylor, 1992). Everyday family routines, such as mealtime, are frequently accompanied by storytelling that serves as entertainment but also as a vehicle of structuration of family roles and values (Ochs & Taylor, 1992). “Narrative thus focuses on particular protagonists and events while situating tellers and their audiences within a web of cultural and moral expectations, ideologies, and meanings” (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002, p. 353); consequently, narratives have a normalizing value. In tellings and re-tellings, family narratives create a shared understanding between mother and daughter of the experiences of marriage and romantic relationships.

### Coding Process

Each instance of reported speech or actual dialogue was coded following Du Bois’ (2007) stance diagram (see Table 5 for an example application). The diagram includes a mention of the speaker (the person reporting the stance), the subject of the stance (the persons who took the stance), their implied evaluations and positions (e.g., I like, I dislike), the stance object (e.g., the wedding, the fiancé), and the resulting alignment between the two subjects (i.e., patterns of convergence or divergence).

Table 5  
Example application of Du Bois (2007) Stance Diagram (with an addition of the reported speech category)

Utt. Code	Speaker	Reported Speech	Stance Subject	Positions/Evaluates	Stance Object	Aligns
(X)	Mother (A)	She said	“I (Daughter)	don’t like	him (candidate)”	
(X)	Mother (A)	I told her	(Mother)	“It is up to you”	(candidate)	(Convergence)
(Y)	Daughter (A)	I told her	“I (Daughter)	don’t like	him (candidate)”	
(Y)	Daughter (A)	She replied	(Mother)	“Why don’t you give	him (candidate)	another chance (Div.)”

The interviews were transcribed in their original language (Arabic Lebanese dialect) and then coded for instances and content of reported speech in the first two interviews and actual mother-daughter conversations in the third interview. Reported speech contained phrases such as: I told her (*Iltilla*), she told me (*Alitli*), I asked her (*Sa'alta*), she asked me (*Sa'alitni*), I advised her (*Nassahta*), we had a fight over (*Tkhana'na*), I warned her (*Nabbahta*), I replied to her (*Raddayt `alayha*). Each instance of reported speech was then broken into one or several utterances that represented an act of stancetaking. Each utterance was coded in terms of: the speaker of the reported speech, the subject of the stance, the subject's position/evaluation, the stance object, the alignment (if available). Its occurrence along the daughter's marital development, i.e. singlehood (before she started seeing candidates), seeing candidates, engagement, and marriage was also noted. For example, the following is a quote from a daughter describing how she and her mother reacted to unsuitable candidates the day of the candidate's first visit:

[1] "Sometimes we go to the kitchen, and we whisper to each other: 'Never! Never! Never!'" (Daughter, graphic designer, single, 29). (see Appendix C for the transcription of quotes in the original language)

In this speech narrated by the daughter (the speaker), two stance utterances are spotted because of the use of the pronoun "we." The first stance is taken by the daughter (the stance subject) against the visiting candidate (the stance object). Her stance position/evaluation is negative toward the candidate: "Never! Never! Never!" The second stance is taken by the mother (the stance subject), also against the visiting candidate (the stance object). The mother's position/evaluation is also negative: "Never! Never! Never!" In this case, the two stances converge (alignment) as the two subjects reject the stance object. The conversation took place (occurrence) when the daughter was seeing candidates.

As a member validation of the coding process (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), a Sunni Beiruti Lebanese female evaluated a sample of mother-daughter stances at the time of the analysis. The member first received a briefing on the stance analysis coding scheme. She then evaluated mother-daughter alignments (divergence = 0; and convergence = 1) in 250 stance utterances, representing 10.34 percent of total coded stances. Intercoder reliability tests were then calculated to measure the agreement between the researcher's and the member's coding of stance alignments. The tests resulted in a percent agreement = 97.7 percent (of 132 instances of mother-daughter alignments) and Cohen's kappa = 0.95.

The following chapters, 5 and 6, report respectively the results of the mother-daughter interdependence analysis, and the stance analysis of reported and actual mother-daughter conversations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DYADIC DATA ANALYSIS**

The survey study is designed to explore the level of interdependence of religious Sunni Beirut mothers and their daughters and to assess if this interdependence is influenced by the daughters' marital development.

The initial sample size was 215 mother-daughter dyads, representing 430 individuals. A data cleaning process reduced the final sample to  $N = 199$  pairs, representing 398 individuals. Sixteen dyads were deleted in cases where members reported being non-Lebanese or born outside metropolitan Beirut, or where a daughter's social status indicated she was divorced or widowed (the total sub-sample of divorcees or widows,  $n = 3$ , was too small to be analyzed separately).

This study first contrasted between the group of mothers, taken all together, and the group of daughters, representing one collective body. This step was designed to understand the overall generational differences between mothers and daughters in the religious Sunni Beirut community. The data was then analyzed at the dyadic level to answer the two research questions about mother-daughter interdependence.

#### **Sampling**

##### **Age**

The mean age of mothers was  $M = 50.67$  ( $SD = 7.52$ ), ranging from 38 to 77 years old. The mean age of daughters was  $M = 23.38$  ( $SD = 5.37$ ), ranging from 16 to 39 years old. The mean of mother-daughter age difference was  $M = 27.01$  ( $SD = 6.19$ ) (see Table 6).

##### **Social Status**

In terms of marital status, 87.4% of mothers were married, 10.1% widowed, and 2.5% divorced. 53.8% of daughters were single, 20.6% engaged, and 25.6% married. A Chi Square

test examined the distribution of the daughters' social status across the mothers' social groups. Results revealed a non-significant relationship,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 198) = 2.94, p = .57$ . Daughters' social status (single, engaged, or married) was fairly distributed across the three mother social groups (married, widowed, and divorced).

Table 6  
Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Demographics ( $N = 398$ )

<b>Age</b>					
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Age Difference</b>
Mother	50.67	7.52	38	77	
Daughter	23.38	5.37	16	39	27 (SD=6.19)

<b>Social Status</b>						
	<b>Single</b>	<b>Engaged</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>Widowed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Mother			87.40%	2.50%	10.10%	$n = 199$
Daughter	53.80%	20.60%	25.60%			$n = 199$

<b>Education</b>					
	<b>Below High School</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Graduate Studies</b>	<b>Total</b>
Mother	32.30%	37.90%	24.10%	5.60%	$n = 199$
Daughter	6.30%	25.00%	58.30%	10.40%	$n = 199$

### Education Level

The majority of mothers (70.2%) reported having an education of high school or below, and only 29.7% had an undergraduate or graduate college degree. On the other hand, 68.7% of daughters said that they are pursuing or have earned a college degree, while 31.3% reported having a high school degree or below. A Chi Square test examined the relationship between the daughters' education level and their social status. Results revealed that the two variables were related,  $\chi^2 (6, N = 192) = 15.46, p = .017$ . There were more than expected high school students

among singles, and higher than expected percentage of college education among married daughters. The engaged group had a higher than expected graduate studies percentage (see Table 7).

To test for the relationship between daughters' education level and their age in the sample, a one-way ANOVA was computed. The results revealed a significant effect,  $F(3, 177) = 23.40, p < .001, \eta^2 = .28$ . The comparison of mean differences of daughters' age across the four education groups was significant for the high school, college, and graduate studies groups,  $p < .001$ . The high school group in the sample tended to be younger than the college student group ( $M$  high school = 19.07,  $SE = .67$ ;  $M$  college = 24.22,  $SE = .47$ ), and the latter was younger than the graduate studies group ( $M$  graduate studies = 28.61,  $SE = 1.06$ ).

Table 7  
Cross-Tabulation between the Daughters' Social Status and their Level of Education

		Daughter's Education				
Daughter's Social Status		Below High School	High School	College	Graduate Studies	Total
Single	Count	6	34	60	7	107
	Expected Count	6.7	26.8	62.4	11.1	107.0
Engaged	Count	3	7	18	9	37
	Expected Count	2.3	9.3	21.6	3.9	37.0
Married	Count	3	7	34	4	48
	Expected Count	3.0	12.0	28.0	5.0	48.0
Total		12	48	112	20	192

Note.  $\chi^2 = 15.46, p = .017$

### Type of Marriage

In terms of type of marriage, 43.9% of the engaged and 52.2% of the married daughters in the sample described their relationship in line with the arranged marriage definition that this study adopts. Introduced by a family member or a friend, they met their partner with the explicit



intention of getting married. A 2x2 Cross-Tabulation examining the distribution of marital types (Arranged or Other) among the engaged and married groups revealed a non-significant relationship,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 87) = .60, p > .05$ . The arranged relationship was fairly balanced between the two social groups.

### **Factorial Analysis**

To test the content validity and reliability of the Arabic adaptation of Stephen and Markman's (1993) Relationship Worldview Index (RWI-2), the 36 items used in the questionnaire were subjected to a "principal component" factor analysis with varimax rotation. The analysis was conducted on the combined individual structure of the dyadic data ( $N=398$ ), by considering each member of the dyad as an individual unit (Kenny et. al., 2006). The analysis yielded 12 factors with Eigenvalues of 1.0 and above and items with factor loading of above 0.4. The solution accounted for 59.11% of the variance in the data.

The 12 factors were examined based on DeVellis' (2003) items performance evaluation. Each item of a factor was checked in terms of its loading on a common latent variable, its inter-item correlations, and its variance. This process resulted in the deletion of eight items. An item was deemed invalid and was deleted when: a- it did not load (below 0.4 factor loading) on any of the 12 factors, item (6); b- when its meaning did not match with the substantive content of the factor, item (35); c- when inter-item correlations were very low or non-significant, items (17), (28), (33), and d- when the item's variance was very low, items (1), (3), and (27). Despite the precautions that were taken during the translation of the survey to Arabic and the adaptation of some questions to the culture under study, some items were still misinterpreted by the target audience. In one example, the entry (1) "marital relationships should provide pleasure and enjoyment," probably because the cultural misinterpretation of the words "pleasure" and

“enjoyment” confused respondents. Table 8 shows the complete list of items and evaluation of their performance.

Table 8  
Factorial Analysis, Evaluation of Items Performance

Factor	Measuring	Items	Fact. Load.	Inter-items corr.	Variance
1	Disclosure ( $\alpha = .73$ )	19	Nothing should be hidden from the husband (Reversed)	0.61	
		31	The wife may sometimes conceal facts from her husband	0.82	
		32	The husband may sometimes conceal facts from his wife	0.83	
2	Importance of Love ( $\alpha = .69$ )	4	Marriage should be built on love	0.81	
		16	For a marriage to succeed husband and wife should be in love with each other	0.65	
		29	Love is a prerequisite for marriage	0.74	
3	Benefits of Marriage ( $\alpha = .58$ )	1	Marital relationships should provide pleasure and enjoyment (Deleted)	0.62	0.46 ( $M=4.37$ )
		3	In marriage, the husband should provide tenderness and support (Deleted)	0.5	0.28 ( $M=4.66$ )
		5	Being married provide purpose for one's life	0.64	
		13	A marital relationship provides stability in life	0.64	
4	Husband-Wife Compatibility ( $\alpha = .54$ )	18	In a marital relationship it is very important that the couple share the same ideas about religion	0.68	
		20	Marriage works best when both spouses have similar hobbies and interests	0.47	
		22	Differences in partners' backgrounds negatively affect the marital relationship	0.72	
		26	In marriage, spouses should spend as much time as possible together	0.42	
		35	The wife's most important job is to raise her children (Deleted)	0.54	(Meaning does not match factor)
5	Gender Roles ( $\alpha = .49$ )	2	The wife should feel free to be herself in a marital relationship (Reversed)	0.46	
		28	Marital success depends on the wife's, rather than her husband's, sense of responsibility (Deleted)	0.41	non-significant $r(28*2)$ and $r(28*34)$

(Table 8 Cont.)

		34	At home, the husband should not be expected to do housework	0.51	
		36	Men should make the important decisions in the life of the family	0.65	
6	Parental Interference ( $\alpha = .88$ )	23	The husband's family should not interfere in his marital life	0.93	
		24	The wife's family should not interfere in her marital life	0.91	
7	Tension Avoidance ( $\alpha = .38$ )	8	A marital relationship should be smooth and constant, not all ups and downs	0.67	
		10	A marital relationship should be more under the control of one's will and less under the control of one's emotion	0.7	
		15	Money matters are a secondary issue in a marital relationship	0.47	
8	Wife's Assertiveness ( $\alpha = .45$ )	7	It is important that the wife have a strong commitment to her personal growth that is not lost when she gets married	0.48	
		21	Marriage should not stand in the way of a woman's career	0.76	
		25	A good marital relationship is one in which the wife honestly shares her true feelings with her husband	0.42	
9	Controlling Partner	9	One should not try to control one's partner in a marital relationship	0.71	
		33	For a marriage to succeed, husband and wife do not necessarily need to discuss their previous romantic experiences (Deleted)	0.45	$r(33*9) = .14, p = .005$
10	Openness ( $\alpha = .33$ )	11	Fighting can actually lead to a better marital relationship	0.63	
		12	People who have the most freedom in their marital relationship are those who allow their spouse freedom and privacy	0.68	
11	Relationship Building	14	It is important that partners get to know each other's families well before their marriage	0.61	

(Table 8 Cont.)

		17	Respect between husband and wife is more important than love (Deleted)	0.47	non-sign. $r(17*14)$	0.46 ( $M=4.57$ )
		27	One has to make great efforts to get the most from a marital relationship (Deleted)	0.64		0.46 ( $M=4.43$ )
12	Importance of Sex	30	Sex is an essential element of the marital relationship	0.76		
	Non-factor	6	Being married means giving all of oneself to one's partner (Deleted)			

### Comparison of Mother and Daughter Generations

A series of paired-samples t-tests were conducted in order to examine the generational difference in marital views between the mother and the daughter groups, while controlling for the relational tie in the dyad. After transforming the data set into a dyad structure where each unit combines the responses of the two dyad members ( $N=199$ ), the mother and the daughter groups' scores were compared at the construct level for the factors that had reliability of Cronbach's  $\alpha > .69$ . The factors used for the generational comparison were: Level of Disclosure, Importance of Love, and Parental Interference. The remaining constructs were not selected for analysis because of their low reliability coefficient ( $\alpha < .7$ ) (Nunnally, 1978).

The Level of Disclosure scale ( $\alpha = .73$ ) was computed by averaging the three items that loaded on this factor. The items were: (19) "Nothing should be hidden from the husband;" (31) "The wife may sometimes conceal facts from her husband;" and (32) "The husband may sometimes conceal facts from his wife." The computed paired-samples t-test examining the mean difference between the mother and the daughter groups revealed a significant effect,  $t(191) = 5.11, p < .001$  (Paired-samples correlation  $r = .38$ ). The mother group was more in favor of a

lower level of disclosure between husband and wife ( $M$  mother = 3.14,  $SD$  = .76;  $M$  daughter = 2.79,  $SD$  = .90). The daughter tended to be against husband and wife hiding facts from each other.

The Importance of Love scale ( $\alpha$  = .69) was computed by averaging the three items that loaded on this factor. The items were: (4) “Marriage should be built on love;” (16) “For a marriage to succeed husband and wife should be in love with each other;” and (29) “Love is a prerequisite for marriage.” The paired-samples t-test examining the mean difference between the mother and the daughter groups revealed a significant effect,  $t(194) = -2.63$ ,  $p = .009$  (Paired-samples correlation  $r = .24$ ). The daughter group put slightly more emphasis on love as a prerequisite to marriage than the mother group ( $M$  mother = 3.75,  $SD$  = .67;  $M$  daughter = 3.91,  $SD$  = .74). Interestingly, an independent-samples t-test comparing the mean difference between the arranged group (the daughters who got engaged or married through an arranged process) and the non-arranged group (those having a non-arranged relationship) revealed a non-significant effect,  $p > .05$ . Daughters who went for an arranged marriage did not value love differently from those who chose a non-arranged relationship.

The Parental Interference scale ( $\alpha$  = .88) was computed by averaging items (23) and (24): “The husband’s family should not interfere in his marital life” and “The wife’s family should not interfere in her marital life.” The paired-samples t-test comparing the means of the mother and the daughter groups yielded non-significant results,  $p > .05$ . The mother and the daughter groups opposed parents’ interference in the couple’s life.

### **Mother-Daughter Interdependence**

The second research question addresses the interdependence, within the religious Sunni Beirut community, between the daughters’ views about marital relationships and those of their

mothers along the development of the daughter's marital experience. To examine this question, analysis at the dyadic level was conducted. A dyadic index was computed to calculate the degree of similarity between the members of each dyad (Kenny et al., 2006). The 28 factored items of RWI-2 were used to compute the Mother-Daughter Distance.

The Mother-Daughter Distance equals the square root of the sum of the squared mother-daughter differences for the 28 items (item X *mother* – item X *daughter*). The wider the distance, the more dissimilar the daughter is from her mother. The dissimilarity for the 28 five-point, Likert type items could range from 0 (completely similar) to 21.17 (completely different).

The distance index was selected for two reasons in line with the argument presented by Kenny et al. (2006). First, as a fundamental assumption, a mother and her daughter would tend to have more similarities than dissimilarities. The dissimilarity index in this case will look for those differences. Second, the distance index is more adequate than the similarity indexes (e.g., Pearson product-moment correlation) to capture the full range of dissimilarity in terms of the shape (the pattern), level (the mean value) and spread (variability) of the mother and daughter scores' differences.

The calculation of the Mother-Daughter Distance Index resulted in  $M = 5.95$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ , with dissimilarity ranging from 0 to 10.15,  $N = 199$ . This shows that mothers and daughters share many attitudes regarding marital relations.

To study the development of mother-daughter interdependence across the daughter's marital stages (single, engaged, or married), an ANOVA tested for the effects of the daughter's status on the Distance Index. The results revealed a small effect that approached significance,  $F(2, 196) = 2.94$ ,  $p = .055$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . The single group projected a wider Distance from their mothers than did the engaged and married groups ( $M$  single = 6.20,  $SE = .16$ ;  $M$  engaged = 5.57,

$SE = .25$ ,  $M$  married = 5.72,  $SE = .23$ ) and two focused t-tests (Hayes, 2005) with Bonferroni adjustments comparing single-engaged and single-married mean differences yielded no significant results,  $p > .025$ .

To further examine the effect of marital experience on Mother-Daughter Distance, the two statuses of “engaged” and “married,” pertaining to the daughter, were combined into a “marital experience” group ( $n = 92$ ). The group of singles was considered as the “non-marital experience” group ( $n = 107$ ). An independent-samples t-test was then conducted to test for the effect of marital experience on Mother-Daughter Distance. The results revealed a significant effect,  $t(184.84) = 2.37$ ,  $p = .01$ . The “non-marital experience” group had a wider Mother-Daughter Distance than the “marital experience” group ( $M$  non-marital = 6.20,  $SD = .1.53$ ;  $M$  marital = 5.65,  $SD = 1.70$ ). The opinions of the daughters with marital experience are more similar to their mothers’ than those of the single women.

Additional analyses were conducted in order to investigate the interaction of the daughter’s marital experience and the duration of her relationship with her partner on the Mother-Daughter Distance. An interval scale “Daughter-Partner Experience” was computed by combining the daughter’s marital experience (marital and non-marital groups) and daughter’s answers to the survey question: “When did you meet for the first time?” The scale varied from 0 = no relationship (still single, representing the non-marital group), 1 = knowing the partner for up to 12 months (1<sup>st</sup> 33% split of duration), 2 = knowing the partner for up to 30 months (2<sup>nd</sup> 33% split of duration), and 3 = knowing the partner for more than 30 months. The levels 1, 2 and 3 represented the development of the daughter’s marital relationship.

A quadratic regression model was estimated by regressing Daughter-Partner Experience and its square on Mother-Daughter Distance. The results, summarized in Table 9, revealed a

significant curvilinear relationship explaining 2.4% of the variance in Mother-Daughter Distance,  $F(2, 191) = 3.35, p = .037$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .024$ . The positive  $\beta$  of the squared Daughter-Partner Experience indicated that the curve bends upward (see Figure 3). The Mother-Daughter Distance decreases when the daughter enters in the marital process. The distance however increases again as the daughter's relationship progresses in time.

Table 9  
Summary of Quadratic Regression Analysis for Daughter-Partner Experience Predicting Mother-Daughter Distance ( $N = 199$ )

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	$p$
Daughter-Partner Experience	-0.7	0.28	-0.61	0.014
Daughter-Partner Experience**2	0.16	0.07	0.53	0.032

Note.  $R^2 = .034$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .024$

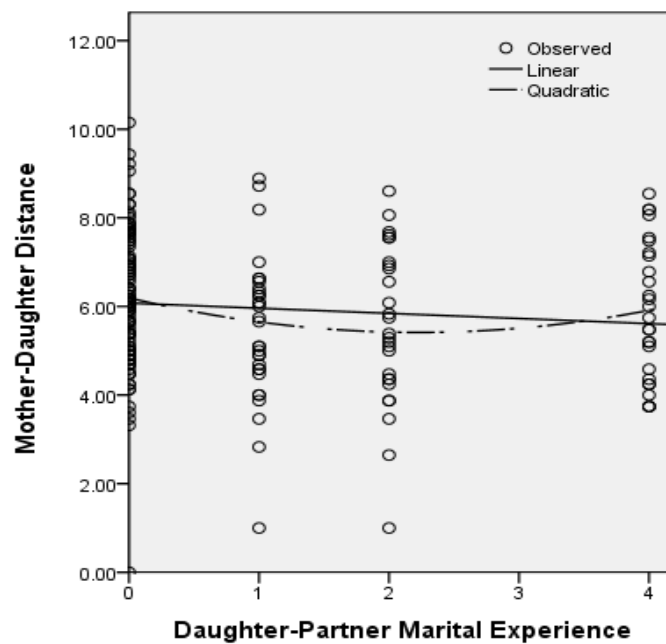


Figure 3  
Chart of Quadratic Regression Analysis for Daughter-Partner Experience Predicting Mother-Daughter Distance.



## **Conclusion**

In terms of mother-daughter generational differences, the above results showed that, in the religious Muslim Sunni community in Beirut, today's generation of daughters tends to be more educated than their mothers'. The majority of the mothers in the sample had a high school education or below, while most daughters' were pursuing higher education.

Concerning marital views, the mother's generation had a rather pragmatic and rational attitude, while the daughters' was more romantic and idealistic in its approach to marriage. The results indicated that mothers, more than their daughters, did not mind hiding some information from their husbands, and accepted that partners have some privacy in the relationship. Daughters, more than their mothers, valued the role of love as fundamental to the development and success of the marital relationship. Interestingly, those views were expressed among both daughters who married out of love and those who engaged in an arranged marriage. The latter did not value love differently from the former.

As for the dyad marital interdependence, the calculated Mother-Daughter Distance index of dissimilarity showed that, overall, daughters' opinion about marital relationships tended to be similar to their mothers'. However, further examination of the Distance index across the daughter's marital stages revealed that there was more mother-daughter divergence when the daughter was single. Moving into a curvilinear fashion, distance decreased at the beginning of the daughter's marital relationship (the dyad converged in their marital views), then increased again as her relationship with her partner progressed.

In following chapter, the stance analysis of mother-daughter conversations during the arranged marital process will illuminate the reasons behind the convergence between mothers and daughters at the beginning of the latter's marital relationship. The next chapter explores the

structuration process and the relational dialectics involved in mother-daughter interactions during the early period of arranged marriage.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **STANCE ANALYSIS**

This study applied stance analysis as a methodology to uncover the social rules and relational dialectics underlying mother-daughter conversations among Sunni Beirut families. Ordinarily used as a theoretical framework (Du Bois, 2007), stance analysis was applied in this research as a coding scheme and method of discourse analysis. It supplied a tangible unit of analysis –stancetaking (evaluations, positions and alignment patterns)– where rules, power dynamics and dialectics concretely emerge, making analysis of the dyads' discourse as reliable as possible.

This chapter reports the findings of the stance analysis. It attempts to answer the research questions regarding the structuration of arranged marriages (the flow of socialization, the main structuration lines, social rules and their development) and mother-daughter relational dialectics during the marital process (types of dialectics, power resources, and daughter's coping strategies).

The coding of the reported speech identified in the 36 interviews (3 interviews per dyad) yielded a total of 2417 utterances of stancetaking related to marriage, with a mean of 201 stances per dyad, ranging from 98 stances in Family 4 (dyad with single daughter who had received at the time of the interview one arranged visit) to 365 stances in Family 12 (dyad with married daughter who recently gave birth to her first child).

#### **The Stance Subject: The Flow of Marital Socialization**

Examining the subjects of the stancetaking, the person who took the stance, was intended to unveil patterns of the structuration directions.

A Chi Square test examined the distribution of stance subjects across the 12 families. Results revealed a significant relationship,  $\chi^2(11, N = 2415) = 35.65, p < .001$ . Mothers in all

dyads, with the exception of Family 7, expressed more stances related to marriage and relationships than their daughters did (see Table 10). However, when the speaker (person who reported the speech) was accounted for, results of the cross-tabulation between the speaker and the stance subject revealed a significant effect,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 2415) = 271.80, p < .001$ . Mothers, as speakers, attributed 75.3 percent of stancetaking to themselves (mothers as stance subjects) and 24.7 percent to their daughters (daughters as stance subjects). When daughters were the speakers, stancetaking was more balanced between themselves (daughters as stance subjects at 57.7 percent) and their mothers (mothers as stance subjects at 42.3 percent). In other words, mothers were more likely to report that they told their daughters to do so and so. Daughters, on the other hand, presented a balanced report where they told their mothers so and so as much as their mothers told them to do so and so.

Table 10  
Frequencies of marriage-related stances by family and stance subjects

Family	Stances per dyad	Percent of Total	Stances by Stance Subject*	
			Mother	Daughter
1	201	8.3	118	83
2	151	6.2	93	58
3	238	9.8	145	93
4	98	4.1	69	29
5	148	6.1	71	77
6	185	7.7	100	85
7	174	7.2	107	67
8	128	5.3	82	46
9	311	12.9	220	91
10	187	7.7	102	85
11	231	9.6	149	82
12	365	15.1	223	142
	2417	100.0	1479	938

\* $\chi^2 (11, N = 2415) = 35.65, p < .001$

These results reveal that mothers reported a rather unidirectional flow of marital socialization: marital instructions (stance lead) given from the mother to her daughter, without necessarily following it with a reply from the daughter (stance follow). On the other hand, daughters reported a rather conversational flow of marital socialization. A stance lead from the mother was followed by a stance follow from her daughter, and vice versa.

In some families, such as Families 5, 6 and 8 where the three daughters were engaged, the latter attributed more stances to themselves (79.5 percent, 69.0 percent, and 71.8 percent respectively) than to their mothers (See Table 11). This may imply that those three daughters perceived their engagement as a personal matter independently from the role of their mothers.

Table 11  
Frequencies of stances by speaker-stance subject and family

		Family												Total
Speaker	Stance Subject	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Mother	Mother	77	62	84	46	62	74	64	71	181	63	115	141	1040
		38.7	41.1	35.3	46.9	41.9	40.0	36.8	55.5	58.2	33.7	49.8	38.6	43.1
	Daughter	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
		31	10	31	9	42	27	15	18	30	31	49	48	341
		15.6	6.6	13.0	9.2	28.4	14.6	8.6	14.1	9.6%	16.6	21.2	13.2	14.1
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Daughter	Mother	41	31	61	23	9	26	41	11	39	39	34	82	437
		20.6	20.5	25.6	23.5	6.1	14.1	23.6	8.6	12.5	20.9	14.7	22.5	18.1
	Daughter	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
		50	48	62	20	35	58	54	28	61	54	33	94	597
		25.1	31.8	26.1	20.4	23.6	31.4	31.0	21.9	19.6	28.9	14.3	25.8	24.7
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total		199	151	238	98	148	185	174	128	311	187	231	365	2415
		100.0	100.	100.	100.	100.	100.	100.	100.	100.0	100.	100.	100.	100.0
		%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	%	0%	0%	0%	%

$\chi^2 (33, N = 2415) = 152.55, p < .001$

### The Stance Object: Three Lines of Structuration

Studying the object of the stance was intended to unveil the structuration lines related to the arranged marriage process among Sunni Beirut families (topics of conversations). At the

second level, objects of stances revealed the social rules when considered along with the subjects' evaluations.

The reported speech in the 36 interviews referred to 163 different objects of stancetaking. This means that during the different phases of the arranged marriage the mother-daughter dyads have reacted to, debated and evaluated at least 163 topics related to the marital relationship of the daughter. A thorough examination of these topics identified three major lines of structuration around which stance objects clustered. The first line dealt with the regulation of male-female interactions in terms of when, where, and how the daughter should meet with the other sex. The second line set guidelines for the selection of the ideal husband. The third line of structuration equipped the daughter with the standards and model she should observe in order to be a good wife and mother.

To secure member validation (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), a Sunni Beiruti Lebanese female coded a sample of the data according to the three categories. She received a briefing on the distinctive definitions of the three structuration lines. The member then evaluated and assigned each of the 163 stance objects to one of the categories. The intercoder reliability testing the agreement between the researcher's and the member's stance objects groupings resulted in a percent agreement of 88.2 percent and Cohen's kappa = 0.82. The two coders then reviewed their disagreements in the reliability coding, and 10 stance objects were reassigned following the member's coding.

One hundred thirty-eight stance objects (out of the 163) were classified along those three major structuration lines: 1- The regulation of male-female contacts, 2- the guidelines for the selection of the ideal husband, and 3- the standards of good wife and mother. The rest of the

stances referred mainly to comments about the communication and relationship of mother and daughter (useful in understanding the relational dialectics in the dyad).

### **The Regulation of Male-Female Contacts**

Fifty-eight stance objects were grouped under this line of structuration, representing 931 stances (38.52 percent of total stances). In *the regulation of male-female contacts*, the mother and her daughter negotiated the rules of interacting with male strangers (i.e., any man other than the father or the brother) and the appropriate types of relationships the daughter should build with them. The large number of stance statements suggests that mothers and daughters engaged in extensive communication about this subject. The rules regulating male-female contacts were formed through communication between parent and child. Mothers expressly used conversations to teach their daughters about the way they should behave around men during each stage of their development, from the moment they got their period to the moment they got married. It is therefore understandable that mothers were more likely to utter the stance lead (73 percent). As we shall see later in the analysis of stance alignments, however, this line of structuration involved the highest number of mother-daughter divergences. The mother-daughter conversations generated two types of rules that structure gender contacts, one relating to the relationship daughters have with men before marriage (e.g., at school, college, work, etc.) and the other in connection with the proper procedures of the arranged marriage.

**The Rules of the Acceptable and the Unacceptable Ways of Interacting with Males at School, College, Work and Other Places.** Those rules were mainly expressed in mother-daughter conversations about the dangers of having a romantic relationship (55 stances, in 7 families), where the mother attempted to limit her daughter's exposure to and relationship with men. This control of exposure to the other sex was also expressed in conversations about the

daughter's outings with her school and university girlfriends (53 stances, in 8 families), the daughter's attitude toward men in general (26 stances, in Family 1, single daughter), the daughter's interacting with male friends at school and university (30 stances, in 6 families) and the mother's inquiries about daughter's activities at university (16 stances, 4 families). In the example of family 12, which was a highly conservative family, the mother did not allow her daughter to go out with her university friends, even in groups:

[2] "It is all about persuasion. We fight the first day. 'No we want to do things, we want to go out with our friends, there is a trip..' 'No! No! No!' 'Why not?' and so on.. Then I would come back to it the next day.. 'Mom<sup>5</sup> no. Because it is not religiously allowed for you to go out with guys and girls. You know some things happen. You will want to imitate your friend..' 'I will not sit with a guy! It is their problem if they want to..' Then I'd tell her 'mom, you are a human being. It is inevitable that humans will imitate .. But when you protect yourself and decline to go to such things, you will not put yourself in this situation, that's it. You will not commit a mistake, you will preserve yourself.' Yes, thank God, it is all about persuasion. They are convinced in the end." (Mother, housewife, 50).

Some mothers said they initiated the conversation about such rules, where caution was advised against the male sex, the day their daughters had their period for the first time (17 stances, in 4 families). In the case of family 4, for example, the mother told her daughter, who had just gotten her period, to be vigilant in protecting herself against strangers of the male sex:

[3] "I told her when she started getting her period to pay attention.. To pay attention not to fall down. If she goes to the restroom, to make sure not to let anyone follow her.. If she is with a friend, I mean.. I want to go to the restroom at school, I do but I tell my (girl) friend to watch at the door for anybody coming." (Mother, housewife, 49).

Sometimes, on the other hand, some mothers encouraged their daughters to be more easy-going with men, especially when the latter were in or beyond the expected age of marriage. The mother in family 1, for example, instructed her 29-year-old single daughter on how to behave with men in social gatherings as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> The use of "mom" is culture specific, indexing a social position as "I am your mother." Mothers in Lebanon sometimes start their speech by addressing their children as "Ya immeh" or "Ya mama" which translates literally into: "My mother!" but means "my son," "my daughter."



[4] "I never tell her to play the coquette, no. But I urge her; 'mommy, do socialize, relax and loosen up when you talk [to men]." (Mother, social worker, 55).

The mother, in this case, found her daughter to be too uninviting toward men, which limited the possibilities she had of meeting the right husband.

In general, however, mothers often found remedy in the arranged marriage to control for male-female contacts and avoid possible development of romantic relationships with uncertain consequences. The arranged marriage structure provided the mother with some control over the identity and characteristics of the man who was to marry her daughter. Some reported telling their daughters that a respected man was one who intended to get married and who came to see the parents first. As the mother in family 11 explained:

[5] "This man [one she met outside her home] will take whatever he wants from you and leave you.. I tell her that the good man does not enter from the window. He comes in respectably from the door. He tells us that I like this girl, I want her to be my wife." (Mother, Jeweler, 37).

As this quote shows, the rules relating to gender contact were often based on an effort to manage the daughter's virginity and good reputation. Closely related was the desire to see the daughter marry the right person or, perhaps more appropriately, to protect her from marrying the wrong man. The arranged marriage in those conditions was perceived by the mother as the prevention of unwarranted love affairs. For example, the mother in family 4 recalled how she warned her daughter, during the latter's first year of college, against being attracted blindly to a fellow student. The mother did not mind that her daughter meets somebody at the university but she wanted her to be selective. Fearing that the daughter's inexperience in dealing with males could make her fall in love with the wrong person, she told her to use reason first, before falling in love:

[6] "When she got into college, the first year, I talked to her about everything. I made it clear that the person who wants to build a relationship.. The person should know better..

Not to get emotionally involved.. Emotionally involved.. Always use your head, in everything you do. Use your head first and don't let your emotions guide you." (Mother, housewife, 49).

Conversations about getting married (39 stances, in 9 families) and the right time and age to do so (16 stances, in 8 families) frequently took place around the beginning of or during the daughter's college experience. The mother wished to secure for her daughter marriage with a carefully chosen person, rather than let her fall in love with a stranger. Twenty-two stances, in 5 families, were reported during the girl's college years while 19 stances, in 5 families, were accounted for after the girl's graduation. In relation to this point, mother and daughter often dealt with the issue of taking advantage of, or missing, marital opportunities (18 stances, in 7 families). For many mothers, daughters should get married early on, preferably as soon as they leave college; not doing so meant missing the opportunity to get a good husband. In the case of family 3, for example, a conversation between mother and daughter during the third interview, showed that the mother had clear expectations about the age at which her daughter should consider marriage. The daughter, however, did not share her mother's opinion:

[7] Mother: "I told her many times 'when the woman gets older her chances of finding a good husband shrink, unlike when she's young.' But she doesn't listen to me."

Daughter: "This rationale, that the younger the better for the woman, worked in the past. Today, it's different. Today the woman graduates from college, finds a job, .."

Mother: "And this is what she should do!"

Daughter: "And she can meet someone at age 25, 26. It's not too old for her to find a good husband."

Mother: "No, I don't agree with you. I find that when you get older.. Once you've graduated from college, that's it, you should start serious thinking of marriage."

Daughter: "OK, I agree. You're right. But I don't have to think about marriage when I am in college, the first years of college. I'm still too young. I need to meet people .. you cannot commit to marriage then. Too early." (Mother, social worker, 47 and daughter, teacher, single, 23).

**The Rules Relating to the Proper Procedures of Marrying.** Those conversations were initiated the moment the daughter's family received a request for a visit from a candidate. Very

often, the candidate's mother would call her counterpart to ask whether a meeting was possible. After this phone call, mother and daughter debated over accepting or rejecting the visit (48 stances, in 11 families), the reasons for the daughter's refusal to see the candidate (40 stances, in 10 families), and the mother's need to attend to the social formalities of the candidate's visit, in particular when a close relative refers the candidate to the daughter's family (24 stances, in 4 families). Sometimes, such calls initiated an evaluation of the arranged marriage process (52 stances, in 9 families) as opposed to a marriage of love (29 stances, in 5 families). In the case of family 10, for example, the daughter reported the conversation that frequently happened when her mother got a call for a visit –including the visit of the candidate who ultimately became her husband:

[8] “My mom used to tell me about candidates, but my sister and I were ‘ohhhh.. surely there is something wrong with him..’ We always found something wrong with the candidate. We didn’t like the idea [of an arranged marriage]. You know, in our generation.. We want to meet a person and get to know him before we marry him. One day, she told me ‘my friend and her son are coming’ and I said ‘why would he be different from the others? They are all the same.’” (Daughter, assistant manager, married, 25).

In another example, the daughter in family 2, who insisted she wanted to fall in love before getting married and had many fights over it with her mother, reported that she sometimes saw candidates at home in an effort to “be diplomatic,” as she said:

[9] “I ask her what age he is, what does he do, etc. Just to be diplomatic and pretend that I am interested.. You know.. Then I take a peek from behind the door when he comes in, just to get a first impression. [Laughs]” (Daughter, graduate student, single, 24).

Upon the candidate's visit, where approved, the conversation shifted to the daughter's demeanor in front of the candidate; what she should wear, where she should sit during the visit, and how she should play the good hostess (19 stances, in 4 families). The conversations relating to such issues often revolved around respecting or disrespecting the rules of etiquette and

wanting or refusing to please. In some cases, the choice of clothing became a way of revolting against tradition, including the arranged marriage process. The daughter in family 1, for example, recalled how she chose to wear very high heels in hope to provoke the candidate:

[10] “Once, for example, I refused to see anybody, but mom was shy to reject the family or something of the sort. I told her ‘I am going to wear my highest highest heels. [Laughs]’ I am not short, but I stubbornly said ‘No matter what happens, whether he is short or tall.. No matter how he looks.. I am going to wear high heels.’ ... Sometimes, on the other hand, my mother tells me ‘yes you can wear high heels. It’s ok. On the contrary, it highlights your femininity.’ But because I am tall already, she doesn’t want me to look like a giant.” (Daughter, graphic designer, single, 29).

When both mother and daughter found the candidate suitable, they usually waited for the candidate’s reply (to call back after the visit) before fully voicing their opinion about him (10 stances, in 6 families).

The relationship between candidate and daughter is marked by several official ceremonies, such as the *fatiha*, the engagement and *qiran*. The mother arranged with her daughter the timing of such events, thus orchestrating the speed of the relationship’s development (27 stances, in 5 families). Such intervention in the scheduling of ceremonies provided mothers with a means to control the degree to which their daughters got involved, both physically and emotionally, with their husbands-to-be. In the case of family 12, for example, the mother said she expressly “asked” her daughter and future son-in-law when they wanted to announce the *fatiha* and engagement. After the candidate’s seventh visit, the mother did not want the relationship to grow any further before it became “official.” As the quote shows, the mother did not verbalize her concern or even impose the date directly. Her “suggestion” tactically came in the form of a question:

[11] “I told them ‘listen, I will never never interfere. I will never ask you any questions.. But when do you want to make the engagement official? You let me know and I will announce it to people. Let me know when I should start inviting people for the *fatiha*.” (Mother, housewife, 50).

A condition of relationship development that most mothers insisted on before allowing their daughters to have *qiran* (and consequently, marriage) was the fiancé's purchase of a house (23 stances, in 5 families). The same mother in family 12, who tried to speed up the engagement of her daughter refused to set the date of the *qiran* (and consequently the official marriage) before the husband-to-be bought an apartment. She said:

[12] "I told her 'when he buys a house! When he buys a house, you'll get what you want [*qiran*].' His parents said it was too early to get a house now. After 5 or 6 months of seeing him and liking him.. He wanted to see her without the veil, he wanted to go out with her. They felt suppressed, of course. I understand." (Mother, housewife, 50).

Daughters sometimes challenged this power mothers had by determining the pace of the relationship regardless of their parents' will. In family 6, for example, the daughter did not give in to her mother's desire to speed up the development of her engagement:

[13] "They [my parents] are always faster than I am. The plan in their head is always 'come on, come on, come on.' This is the way they are. Here I say stop. Let's take a minute to think. Let's slow down the pace. Which is also why I do not give them step-by-step details about where the relationship is going." (Daughter, teacher, engaged, 24).

During the engagement period, mother and daughter constantly discussed the latter's attitude toward her fiancé (18 stances, in 5 families), the appropriate demeanor she should have in front of the fiancé (46 stances, in 5 families) and his parents (25 stances, in 5 families), the time and duration of their outings as well as the idea of having a chaperon accompany the couple (58 stances, in 8 families). In one case, for example, the mother in family 8 recalled the problems she had with her daughter when the latter was engaged:

[14] "At first, they were taking their time, staying out late. We had a fight. 'It's not acceptable.. etc.. etc..' 'He comes back late from work, you know. So..' But my daughter did not have *qiran* yet. I will not allow her. So he asked her to bring her mom." (Mother, housewife, 54).

Such restrictions often melted away with the *qiran*. Because the couple were now officially husband and wife (but not living together), they were free to go out without being questioned about timing and duration and without being accompanied by a third party. As the daughter in family 5 put it:

[15] “It is now much easier, with the *qiran*. For you, for him, for his parents and for your parents. There is nothing like ‘you return at ten, you return at nine, you return at eight.. All these restrictions disappear.” (Daughter, accountant, engaged, 28).

Nonetheless, around the time of the *qiran* ceremony, the mother often warned her daughter to control her sexual behavior with her fiancé and make sure that consummation only happened after the wedding (32 stances, in 6 families). Although the daughter was now technically married and not forbidden, religiously, to have sexual intercourse, her mother still wanted to avoid the possibility of pregnancy before the couple moved in together. As the mother in family 9 explained:

[16] “I always have a conversation with my daughter. ‘Mom look, he may pressure you to do some things. You have to be very mature. Problems often happen before the wedding and the wedding never takes place. We do not want to put ourselves in such a position. I have nothing against you two being together but not intercourse.’” (Mother, housewife, 43).

As the quote shows, the mother’s concern here was social rather than religious and it also revolved around preserving the virginity of her daughter until the latter was safely married and in her own home. In fact, the structuration of gender relations is a social management of sexual intercourse. This explains perhaps why daughters sometimes wanted to precipitate the wedding. For them, this ceremony became an escape from the restraints of the established gender rules of contacts. Indeed, as soon as the daughter moved in with her husband, parents relinquished all power over her gender relations or sexual activity.

## **The Guidelines for Selecting the Ideal Husband**

Fifty stance objects were grouped under the guidelines of selecting the ideal husband, representing a total of 596 stances (24.62 percent of total stances). Unlike the case of gender relations construction, conversation about this line of structuration was not top-down. Rather, it took the form of a discussion where mother and daughter reviewed and evaluated the candidate in question. Whereas the first line of structuration was based more on social and religious rules, this one was embedded in interpersonal preferences where mothers and daughters negotiated their choices. The reason may be related to the fact that the social and religious restrictions parents could place (e.g., educated candidate, from a respectable family and from the same religious background) were automatically filtered by the arranged marriage process; when a candidate would come to see a given woman at home, he would know enough about her background and she would know enough about his to make the visit possible in the first place. In other words, candidates who were not appropriate were filtered out before they even came for a visit. Under this line of structuration, mothers were still more likely to utter the stance lead (60 percent) but, as we shall see later, the mother and daughter stances were more often convergent. Two types of rules appeared under this structuration process in mother-daughter conversations: the approach to candidate selection and the criteria of the ideal husband.

**The Approach to Candidate Selection.** The first type of rules dealt with the approach that the family should take to select a husband. Related conversations take place usually after the candidate's first visits, where the mother and the daughter share their opinion about the candidate (69 stances, in 12 families). While discussing the overall qualifications of the candidate (16 stances, in 5 families), the daughter argued with her mother over the appropriate framework to use to evaluate the candidates. Should the daughter, for instance, follow her heart (emotional

approach) in her evaluation of the candidates (38 stances, in 8 families)? Or should she study the candidate carefully by examining particular qualities and disregarding her emotional reaction toward them (rational approach) (33 stances, in 9 families) ? Advocates of the rational approach, mainly the mothers, discounted the value of attraction, predicting that romantic love between partners would blossom during their engagement (7 stances, in 2 families). In family 2, the mother and her single daughter argued –almost fought– during the third interview about the extent to which parents should intervene in the choice of the candidate and how much the daughter’s emotions should be taken into consideration.

[17] Daughter: “Yes, I am mature!”

Mother: “Yes, you are mature. But you are not the only one who’s mature!”

Daughter: “What about you? Did you make the right choice in life?!”

Mother: “Me? My choice in life?”

Daughter: “Yes.”

Mother: “Yes I did.”

Daughter: “So why did you say you wanted to leave him two days ago? You wanted to run away.”

Mother: “Because, because.. [embarrassed]”

Daughter: “If you had made the right choice, why would you want to leave him?”

Mother: “Leave me alone. Should everything be perfect?”

Daughter: “If nobody is perfect, then let me choose what is best for me. I must be the one to decide what are the imperfections I can stand all my life!”

...

Mother: [talking about her parents] “They never gave us any choices or anything.. We were not like you. You.. You don’t know how to hold your tongue!”

Daughter: “OK. We got to the point I want to discuss. Who takes the decision? Who gets to decide about these issues? Me! Me!”

Mother: “We were never asked. It was an imposed yes or no. No choice.”

Daughter: “You said you never had choice. We have all the choice!”

Mother: “They did talk to us but they never gave us a choice.”

Daughter: “And you’re doing the same now. You’re doing the same!”

Mother: “How dare you!”

Daughter: “I swear you’re doing the same.”

Mother: “How dare you!”

Daughter: “Then I should choose.”

Mother: “Aren’t we asking for your opinion?”

Daughter: “I should be the one taking the decision. Me and only me!” (Mother, housewife, 59 and daughter, graduate student, single, 24).



Defining the approach to the selection of a candidate determined the weight of the multiple factors mother and daughter sifted through to make a decision: Would the most suitable candidate be a person of moderate qualifications to whom she felt attracted to (those qualifications will be discussed in the second type of rules), or a person with exceptional qualities about whom she felt neutral (63 stances, in 12 families)? Interestingly, when a mother's approach to selection (rational) contradicted with her daughter's (emotional), the two relied on a higher power, God, to make the decision. Mother and daughter in such cases decided to do *istikhara*, a special series of prayers asking God to guide their decision (11 stances, in 3 families). Muslims believe that, after such prayers, God inspires one to make the right decision (e.g., either mother or daughter suddenly changes her mind) or resolve things by facilitating or impeding the process (e.g., the candidate decides to end it). Muslims sometimes use such a device when they have an important decision to make.

An important factor influencing the adoption of the emotional or the rational approach was the daughter's age and experience with the arranged marriage process. With the first wave of arranged candidates, the young daughter approached the marital process from a more romantic framework. The older the single daughter got, the more candidates she met without finding a partner, the more rational her approach got (7 stances, in 3 families). As one mother (family 1) said:

[18] "My daughter is now 29, almost 30 years old. She is mature. She's not in an age to be interested in.. My daughter, for example, saw several candidates.. Maybe there was one whose looks she didn't like.. I asked her, not a long time ago, I told her 'listen, I sometimes sit and think. There are men that you once refused; if they come back now, would you accept them?' Not come back I mean.. But if they now came for the first time, would you accept them? She says 'I don't know' Not X [cites the name of a candidate] but others maybe, why not?" (Mother, social worker, 55).

**The Criteria of the Ideal Husband.** The second type of rules under the structuration line of selecting the ideal husband defined the specific personal and material qualifications to look for in a candidate and, as a consequence, the qualities to expect in a husband. By evaluating every visiting candidate, the mother and her daughter slowly constructed a set of values they drew from during subsequent evaluations of other candidates. Mother and daughter often compared current candidates with previous ones (51 stances, in 7 families). Simultaneously, those values slowly constructed an image of the daughter's ideal husband, one that provides a combination of material and emotional comfort, protection, respect, and authority (21 stances, in 7 families). The ideal husband in this sense is the person who ensures for the daughter the security, protection and happiness she enjoyed at her parents' house. When she marries, the daughter would be switching dependence but not privileges. As the mother in family 3 put it:

[19] "I always tell her 'we have to take somebody from our environment. Somebody whose family resembles our family. There may be people who are financially better off. There may be people who have less money than we do. In both cases, it's a different lifestyle. It's a different way of thinking. Let us make a moderate choice, even at the financial level. Let us not look upward, or downward. You have to find a husband that will provide the same standards of living that we have. You cannot live with less, and at the same time it will tire you to live with more. As for the religion, I am very insisting about religion. For me, marriage is about religion. It is about two families getting together. I've been telling her such things since she was 15. Family, and religion, and the home environment and the financial status. These are essential things.'" (Mother, social worker, 47).

In line with the above guidelines, mother and daughter evaluated the candidates based on a combined set of values that they deemed essential in a good husband. In other words, when a daughter met a candidate for the first time, she did not look at him merely as a man, a boyfriend, or a friend, but rather as a potential husband, with all the considerations that such a framework entailed. The values that mother and daughter most frequently discussed in the interviews were:

- a) The candidate's physical qualities, specifically his physical appearance and age (43 stances, in 5 families). For many daughters, physical qualities were essential criteria for selection. Mothers, on the other hand, insisted that daughters should go beyond the first impression and spend time with the candidate to know him more and study his personality (19 stances, 7 families).
- b) The candidates' character, specifically his personality and intellect, his social skills, in addition to his attitude toward his mother (22 stances, in 6 families). Daughters believed that the candidate's relationship with his mother (which can be observed during the candidate's first visit where the mother accompanies him) gave an insight into his character. The self-confident husband is the one who respects his mother, but at the same time acts independently from her. For some families, another important indication of the candidate's promising potential as husband was his level of religiosity: A good husband is a true Muslim Sunni believer (31 stances, in 6 families).
- c) The candidate's material resources, in terms of his level of education and profession (17 stances, in 7 families) as well as his financial condition (18 stances, in 6 families). Both mothers and daughters believed that the husband's college degree(s) and job position provided his wife with financial security and respectable social status. The candidate's solid financial condition should allow him to buy a house in Beirut, an important condition for the daughter's family to bless the marriage. A provision of protection and security for the daughter, the house in Beirut also guaranteed that the latter would live in the capital, or would eventually return to live there if she's marrying a candidate living abroad. For this reason, owning a home gained special significance as a criterion when the candidate worked abroad and intended to take the daughter with him when they got married (23 stances, in 4 families).

d) The candidate's matching family and social background, particularly his upbringing as a Sunni from Beirut, from a respectable family and of similar social status (23 stances, in 5 families). The mother, and to a lesser extent her daughter, perceived the marital relationship as a matching not only of two individuals but also of two families. For mothers, and to a lesser extent for daughters, marrying a person of similar socio-religious background reduced future tensions with the husband and his parents. The matching of the two families' background ensured a smoother marital transition.

It is important to note here that the structuration of the above criteria of selection varied in importance as well as in substance (physical, personal, material and social) among the different families. For instance, some families placed more emphasis on the personality traits of the candidate, and gave it more importance than the candidate's financial resources. Others focused on the social ties, or the religious qualifications. Each family constructed its own set of ideals from the above pool of criteria.

During the daughter's engagement and sometimes during her early marriage, those ideals were constantly monitored and revisited in mother and daughter discussions about the fiancé's character (11 stances, in 2 families), his attitude toward the daughter in general (13 stances, in 3 families) and his authority over her, in particular (30 stances, in 6 families), as well as his attitude toward the daughter's parents (13 stances, in 1 family). Mothers sometimes instructed their daughters to take time studying the husband-to-be before moving to the *qiran* stage. Mothers sometimes asked their daughters to probe their fiancés with critical questions beyond the usual romantic conversation (12 stances, in 3 families). In one case, for example, the mother in family 8 criticized the jealousy of her daughter's fiancé –an initiative that finally prompted the husband-to-be to tune down his distrust:

[20] “For example, when we want to go out as a family, she has to call him and tell him where she’s going. ‘Mom you don’t have to do that.. You don’t have to do that.. You’re still engaged. You have a mobile phone and he can call you wherever you are..’ I mean, they do not have *qiran* and they are not married. I don’t like this strictness at this stage. This is just an engagement period. It’s unneeded, right?.. I don’t like control.” (Mother, housewife, 54).

### **The Standards for Becoming a Wife and Mother**

Twenty-eight stance objects were grouped under this line, representing 430 stances (17.79 percent of total stances). The rules related to this structuration process were expressed in conversations between mother and daughter during the different phases of the daughter’s arranged relationship (single, seeing candidates, engagement and marriage), and particularly before the wedding and during the early period of marriage. Those mother-daughter conversations under this structuration line provided daughters with a set of rules guiding their metamorphosis from a girl who is dependent on her parents, to a responsible wife who takes care of her house, her husband, her children and herself. Because these rules were constitutive, in the sense that they focused on how-to guidelines where mothers advised their daughters based on experience, the former were more likely to utter the stance lead (78 percent) and the two members of the dyads were often convergent in their alignment. The rules for becoming a good wife and mother can be classified under two types: the overall framing of the marital life, and the day-to-day management of marriage.

**The Overall Framing of Marital Life.** Under the structuration of what makes a good wife and mother, the first type of rules shaped the daughter’s expectations of, and approach to, her marital life. Mother-daughter conversations frequently framed marriage as a serious and demanding responsibility that required partners’ patience and maturity, especially on the part of the wife. In return, marriage was believed to provide the wife with material stability and emotional fulfillment through the establishment of “a family with children” (33 stances, in 9

families). In one case, for example, the mother in family 5 reported how her engaged daughter came to her for advice when the wedding neared:

[21] “Of course I sometimes give her advice. She now realizes what I mean. She says ‘yes, you’re right.’ I tell her that every step is different than the other. First the engagement, then the *qiran*, then the wedding, then the children, then she’ll be managing a house, she’ll be responsible for the house. She’s already worried about it. She has already started to ask me questions, on her own she comes to me. She’s feeling the heat [laughs]. (Mother, housewife, 51).

Mothers framed their daughters’ marriage in line with theirs. Having married in an arranged process themselves –with the exception of one– mothers shared with their daughters instances of the development of their own marriage and relationship with their husbands as a model to follow (18 stances, in 5 families) or a condition to avoid (13 stances, in 3 families). Those conversations highlighted the fact that the transition to matrimony is not a smooth ride, but a bumpy process. Mothers sometimes warned their daughters of the relational and financial road bumps they might face at the beginning of their marriage. They discussed with their daughters how they adapted to their husbands and their in-laws at the beginning of their marriage, and how they weathered their early financial conditions in order to establish their family. In this sense, the framing of the marital life as expressed in the mother-daughter conversations avoided romanticizing the marital experience by setting realistic expectations of the daughter’s transition into matrimony. For example, the daughter in family 3 reported how her mother taught her about the difficulties any marriage would face at the beginning. Although the young girl was still single, the mother used the real-life case of a relative to educate her daughter about the bumps she could potentially face at the beginning:

[22] “One time we were talking about a couple having problems, she told me that ‘it’s normal that conflicts happen at the beginning of the marriage. The two partners will be figuring out how to live together. They’ve never lived together.’” (Daughter, teacher, single, 23).

**The Day-to-Day Management of Marriage.** This set of rules defined the wife's responsibilities to help her meet her marriage expectations. As the mother-daughter conversations showed, a fundamental role for the wife in her marriage was to hold it together. According to the interviews, a good wife ensured the stability and unity of her marriage by managing her needs as well as those of her husband and children (47 stances, in 8 families). In the case of family 10, for example, the mother advised her daughter that a husband's behavior depended on the way his wife treated him. She told her:

[23] "The person your husband turns out to be depends on the way you treat him, and the person your child turns out to be depends on the way you rear him. In other words, every great woman will have a great husband. There are no great men without a great woman behind them. Take care of him, do all your duties, be loyal to him, love him, respect him. The most important thing is respect between two people. Even if the husband acts like a child, you know? Don't insult him. And respect him, and he will respect you too. He will also love you more." (Mother, housewife, 59).

As the quote above shows, such instructions were designed to ensure a better family environment for both husband and wife. The burden of patiently keeping things together, however, was placed on the female. Mothers told their daughters that a wise companion was the one who avoided direct confrontations with her husband. Upon several instances of marital tensions during engagement and early marriage, some mothers instructed their daughters not to confront their husbands while angry, but rather to wisely and patiently choose the right moment to approach him later (50 stances, 5 families). As one mother (family 11) put it, a wife would not get what she wishes for by opposing her husband or disrespecting him, but rather by managing his temper with subtlety:

[24] "She may be right. She may be right.. I tell her 'you're right' but at the same time I tell her 'this way is better than that one. When a man is angry, he may not realize what he's doing or saying. When he's calmer, I tell him my point of view.. this and this and this.. In this case he will hopefully accept it. When a man is angry, whatever you tell him, it's like he has a black veil hiding his eyes. He doesn't see anything." (Mother, Jeweler, 37).

Mothers also instructed their daughters that a good wife was one who endured her husband's difficult financial conditions and supported him with the house income (32 stances, in 5 families). As one mother (family 9) instructed her daughter:

[25] "I tell her 'you must be patient, mom. It's ok. He's establishing himself, it's not a problem. This is all.. In the future, you'll hopefully be telling your children.. Hopefully.. My dear we've all been through this situation. You'll tell your children 'my dear we were only able to make it because we were patient. Human beings should allow time to pass.. and try to be diplomatic with him.' I also teach her to take a firm step if he doesn't. To tell him we have to stand on our feet, we have to make it.. He's also very young." (Mother, housewife, 43).

Taking into consideration the country's financial conditions which force many young males to travel abroad for work, mothers recommended that their married daughters adapt to their husbands' situation and accept hardships for the sake of a better future. Adapting to current financial conditions often required the wife to assist her husband as a second breadwinner.

Mothers also instructed their daughters that a good wife should strive for her husband's physical and emotional satisfaction (44 stances, in 4 families). She should keep her husband happy by providing him with good food, and a clean and calm home environment. Mothers explained that becoming a responsible housewife required hours of learning (45 stances, in 7 families). A few mothers prepared their daughters early on by calling for their assistance in housekeeping tasks at a young age. Several daughters, however, postponed any conversation or training about housework until they found themselves immersed in the marital experience. In panic, they called daily for their mothers' assistance even when they lived thousands of miles away. In the case of family 10, for example, the daughter chatted online with her mother from Turkey, asking her for advice about housework:

[26] "I am in contact with her through Skype. Whatever I want to do, she tells me how. Stroganoff? She gave me the ingredients and instructions online and I just put things together." (Daughter, assistant manager, married, 25).



Daughters were also told they should seek to please their husbands sexually. In fact, the first proof of being a good wife is the demonstration of virginity the night of the wedding.

Mothers sometimes alluded shyly to the experience of the first sexual intercourse the day before their daughters' wedding, and sometimes they only checked on them the day after the wedding (14 stances, in 4 families). For instance, the daughter in family 10 reminded her mother in the third interview how the latter behaved right before and after the wedding:

[27] Daughter: "No, you didn't say anything. You came to see me in bed the next day and you asked 'was everything ok?' That's all what you came up with... The expression 'everything ok.'"

Mother: "Yes.. What else do you expect me to say?" (Daughter, assistant manager, married, 25).

At the beginning of marriage, the mother and her married daughter discussed the latter's sexual experience, in relation mainly to pregnancy and the desire to have babies (20 stances, in 3 families). Examples of instructions in this respect also included the importance of the body's shape and the outfit a daughter could wear when the husband comes home. For example, although the mother in family 12 did not expressly discuss sex with her daughter, she still discretely suggested that the young woman should dress at home in a way that "appeals to her husband:"

[28] "No.. Sometimes we just suggest.. 'The man needs this or that..' We do not go into more details. Discussing more details is religiously not acceptable. These are private secrets. But we talk in general.. 'Sometimes men like to see their wives ready.. This dress will make you appealing..' We just discuss these things on the surface." (Mother, housewife, 50).

Finally, mothers discussed their daughters' education and career after marriage (40 stances, in 6 families). They insisted that daughters should have a university degree before they got married or, in the few cases where daughters wedded before graduation, that they should continue their education after they got married. As one of the mothers (family 9) reported:

[29] “When they decided to get married before she got her baccalaureate, the most important thing for me was to develop in her and her sister this sense that ‘if you get married and you haven’t finished university, my responsibility doesn’t end until you get your college degree. When you wear your graduation cap, my mission would be over.” (Mother, housewife, 43).

While daughters looked at their college education as self-fulfillment and self-development, mothers wanted a degree for their married daughters as a safety net against life’s uncertainties, including potential divorce or the husband’s death. A college degree, for those mothers, provided the wife with a margin of independence by allowing her to work, and with guaranteed security in case she suddenly found herself alone, or in need to support her husband in dire financial circumstances.

### **The Timing of Stances: Concurrence of the Structural Conversations with the Various Phases of the Marital Process**

A close examination of the timing of the three categories of stancetaking throughout the relationship (i.e., singlehood, seeing candidates, engagement, and marriage) revealed that each structuration line was occurring at relatively distinct phases of the daughter’s road to matrimony. A cross-tabulation of the structuration lines with the timing of the occurrences of stances (that corresponded to each line), revealed a significant effect,  $\chi^2 (6, N = 1956) = 1140.732, p < .001$  (see Table 12). The first structuration line, namely the regulation of male-female contacts, took place in mother-daughter conversations when the daughter was single (during adolescence and early adulthood, at college), when she started receiving candidates at home, and during her engagement. After marriage, the daughter regulated her social interactions with her husband. The second structuration line, namely the guidelines of selecting the ideal husband, occurred in conversations when the daughter was seeing candidates, and continued throughout the engagement. On the other hand, conversations that discussed the standards of becoming a good

wife and mother only became frequent during the early period of the daughter's marriage (see Table 12).

The concurrence of structurational conversations within the daughter's direct experience testifies to the nature of the socialization process. The socialization of marriage, among these religious Sunni families, is constructed by and during the practices of marriage. Using Giddens' terms (1984), the marital socialization happens at the level of the practical consciousness, embedded in the agents' routine actions. Very often, the daughter is not raised by her mother to be a wife or a mother, but rather becomes one when going through the marital experience.

Table 12  
Cross-tabulation of the three structuration lines with the timing of the stancetaking

Structuration lines	Timing of the stancetaking				Total
	Single	Seeing Candidates	Engaged	Married	
Male-Female Contacts	253 27.20%	392 42.10%	265 28.50%	21 2.30%	931 100.00%
Selection of Ideal Husband	64 10.80%	400 67.20%	120 20.20%	11 1.80%	595 100.00%
Becoming good wife and mother	41 9.50%	30 7.00%	80 18.60%	279 64.90%	430 100.00%
Total	358 18.30%	822 42.00%	465 23.80%	311 15.90%	1956 100.00%

$\chi^2 (6, N = 1956) = 1140.732, p < .001$

### **The Stance Alignment: The Relational Dialectics Involved in the Three Lines of Structuration**

Identifying patterns of alignment –especially when comparing between reported speech and instances of actual dialogue– was conducted in order to reveal mother-daughter relational dialectics (including the power dynamics), as well as the corresponding coping strategies.

A cross-tabulation of alignments (convergence/divergence) across structuration lines revealed that the mother-daughter dyads were more divergent than convergent during the

structuration of male-female contacts (55.31 percent of stance divergence). In the case of the other two marital structuration lines, namely selection of the ideal husband and becoming a wife and mother, mothers' and daughters' stances converged more frequently than they diverged (57.75 and 62.42 percent of convergence, respectively) (see Table 13). Those figures revealed that tensions arose frequently when mothers intervened to regulate their daughters' interactions with the men. Tensions arose especially before the daughters got engaged. Once a young woman went through the arranged marriage process, she tended to converge toward her mother's experience and to use her guidance in learning what to expect from the fiancé and later the husband, and how to become a good wife and mother.

Table 13  
Cross-tabulation of alignments (convergence/divergence), the structuration processes and families

Structuration Process	Family													Total	%
	Align.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Male-Female contacts	Con.	21	4	32	7	16	20	13	15	14	6	9	28	185	44.69
	Div.	30	16	30	3	13	21	10	19	17	10	11	49	229	55.31
Selection of Ideal husband	Con.	20	15	32	7	5	9	19	10	13	5	5	9	149	57.75
	Div.	9	25	15	5	1	15	10	3	0	12	3	11	109	42.25
Becoming wife and mother	Con.	0	2	2	1	5	4	6	3	32	13	20	10	98	62.42
	Div.	0	2	3	0	6	1	3	0	9	22	13	0	59	37.58
Total		80	64	114	23	46	70	61	50	85	68	61	107	829	

During this marital immersion, the socialization of the rules of the arranged process developed along multiple mother-daughter dialectical tensions. In this study, dialectical tensions were defined in line with the stance analysis as the coexistence of convergence and divergence in mother-daughter stances about a given experience. Four main tensions were identified through

the analysis of alignments: real versus ideal, powerful versus powerless, individual versus collective, and connection versus separation.

### **Real Versus Ideal**

This dialectical tension is reflected in the convergence of the mother and her daughter in their stances about marriage, love and the arranged marriage process. They both wanted the daughter to get married. They wanted the daughter to find a husband that she falls in love with. They both believed that the arranged process provides a real opportunity for marrying, but it lacks the luster of the ideal romantic relationship. The traditional process of arranged marriage contradicted mainly with the daughter's desire, or expectation, of living a non-traditional romantic encounter.

Several daughters reported feeling unease during their meeting with the candidates because the arranged encounter did not match with what they had envisioned as their ideal way of getting married. For example, the daughter in family 3 expressed her reluctance toward arranged marriages although she admitted that she did receive candidates at home. She said:

[30] "I have to love the person before I accept to marry him. Although I know how harmonious my parent's relationship is. My mom tells me 'our marriage, your father and I, was arranged. At the beginning we were not in love with each other. But our love has grown with time.' Yet, I cannot imagine this happening to me." (Daughter, teacher, single, 23).

Although they were religiously observant, the young women were hoping to experience romantic relationships. The idea of receiving a marital candidate at home revolted them. At the same time, the young women wanted to be married and, because of their religiosity, were not willing to date or enter in a relationship "for fun." The two opposite desires created a tension that was palpable in the interviews. In two cases (families 6 and 10), daughters tried to reframe their encounters with their partners as a romantic reunion. In another example (family 1), the daughter

even negotiated with her mother a way to reframe or “transform” arranged encounters into more romantic possibilities. The attempt came as a strategy to reduce the dialectical tension by reframing it. Description of the negotiations came in the third meeting where both mother and daughter were present:

[31] Mother: “I told her, I told her ‘I am embarrassed to say no. And then what if a good candidate shows up?’”

Daughter: “At that time I was absolutely refusing to see anyone.”

Mother: “So we finally agreed that if someone calls, we have to identify if he is like us.”

Daughter: “Almost!”

Mother: “I would then tell him to call my daughter over her phone, and agree to see her on his own somewhere. If he's OK, I'll give him the number and we're OK. If not, we won't receive him at home. That was our final agreement but nobody has called since [laughs].” (Mother, social worker, 55 and daughter, graphic designer, single, 29).

### **Powerful Versus Powerless**

Mothers often used several power currencies that forced daughters to align with their desires. None, however, involved direct forcing such as punishment for refusing to marry a given candidate. Mothers’ currencies, instead, represented stances of her daughter’s convergence to her mother’s legitimate, emotional, social, expert, persuasive and religious resources. The mother, in other words, used as power currencies her daughter’s respect for her position as parent and caretaker, her daughter’s love and close connection to her and to the rest of the family, her appreciation of her mother’s expertise in marriage and motherhood, and the privileged position Islam specifically gives to mothers.

Mothers capitalized on these resources to gently shift their daughters’ attitude from divergence to convergence on issues related to marriage. In one category of examples, highly conservative mothers sometimes used the currencies available at their disposal to convince their daughters to reconsider an appropriate candidate that the latter had refused. The mother wittingly made no attempt to coerce her daughter. Instead, the powerful mother moved her daughter in

baby steps toward committing to the relationship. She first convinced her to see the candidate one more time only. Then, if the daughter directly rejected the candidate, the mother asked her to give him a second chance by relaxing the rules of gender contacts, letting her daughter—who usually has limited experience with males—to sit with the man in private, go out with him, or chat with him on the Internet. The mother sometimes included other family members in the circle of persuasion, by asking them to open the daughter's eyes to the qualifications of the candidate. The same attempt was repeated during each visit, until the daughter developed an attraction toward the man. If at this time, she remained unmoved about the candidate, however, the mother called off the visits and stopped pressuring her daughter.

The most common currency mothers used was emotional. They often used conditional love, or what Miller-Day (2004) calls “the unconditional love with conditions” (p. 153), to indirectly point out the right steps daughters should take. The use of emotional tactics often worked as many daughters did not want to displease their mothers. For example, although the daughter in family 10 enjoyed a strong personality, she still admitted that:

[32] “Never in my life do I upset my mom. Even if she gave me an advice, and I didn't like her advice, I still talk to her very gently. Tell her ‘I can't’ or something of the sort. Yes, I take everything from her. Whatever she says, I take it.” (Daughter, assistant manager, married, 25).

The religious element was especially emphasized among highly conservative families where mothers associated the blessing they gave to their daughters with the one God bestowed upon them. For example, the mother in family 12 candidly explained how she established her authority based on the religious notion of *Rida al Walidayn min Rida al-Allah* (pleasing one's parents is pleasing God). As she reported, relational dialectics among the daughters, coming in the form of religious conditional love, arose when maternal disapproval was conceived as a religious violation:

[33] “I tell them ‘be careful. If I am not pleased with your behavior, God will not be either.’ As I told you earlier.. That ‘if you do something.. And I do not approve of this thing.. It’s up to you. If you want to do it, do it.’ They got scared. They never did it because they knew I wouldn’t be pleased... I would tell them to remember God. ‘If I am not seeing you, God is watching you, God is seeing you.’” (Mother, housewife, 50).

Daughters sometimes tried to evade their mothers’ power and maintain control over the relationship by keeping their parents in the dark. They managed their privacy by limiting disclosure about their relationships to bare generalities. Daughters tended to neutralize their mothers’ power by avoiding telling them about romantic relationships or not sharing with them any details about communication with their husbands-to-be. As the daughter in family 2 put it, she learned from past experience not to tell her mother about her romantic relationships:

[34] “No, if I’m in a relationship, I don’t tell her anything. I don’t want her to know, because she doesn’t accept it. I tried before and she didn’t accept it. First ‘it’s forbidden to talk to him over the phone.’ And then ‘what did you talk about? What did you do? You’re not allowed to go out. You’re not allowed ... What did he do?’ Things became very strict.” (Daughter, graduate student, single, 24).

### **Individual Versus Collective**

Mothers and daughters converged over the concept of married life as a source of happiness for the daughter (individual preferences). At the same time, living in a conservative environment, they agreed (although to a limited extent on the part of the daughter) that what people think should be taken into consideration (collective preferences). Tensions therefore arose over which voice should be prioritized. Although mothers were always concerned about their daughters’ well-being in their new homes, they often abided by social rules at the expense of the young women’s happiness. Mothers were often concerned about people’s opinion, social etiquette and the religious appropriateness of their daughters’ actions. Daughters, on the other hand, perceived their decisions as individual expressions and private experiences involving only them and their partners.



This tension sometimes surfaced before the wedding, around the social ceremonies related to the arranged marriage: the reception of candidates, the *fatiha*, the engagement, the *qiran*, and the wedding parties. During wedding preparations, for example, mother and daughter often clashed because the former sought to observe social etiquette about place, style, number of invitees, and so on, regardless of the young woman's desire. Although mothers at this stage of the process were already converting from parent to friend, from authority to adviser, tensions still arose about the details surrounding the wedding. A dialogue during mother and daughter interview with family 3 revealed this tension as follows:

[35] Daughter: "So there is the question of whom to invite. For me, from my point of view, of course I want to have a wedding and I want people to be there, but it is not my objective to have 300, 400, 500.. Let's invite.. Let's invite.. Those I know and those I don't, let's bring them and put them in this wedding! Of course, somebody like my father's uncle is distant but he may be invited. But not the head of this bank, or I don't know whom else.. My wedding is not for show off!"

Mother: "I am torn between them.. I mean.. I respect her opinion. This is how things should be. She's idealistic and everything. But at the same time, I understand her father.. She says things.. But her father has friends and acquaintances.. Lots of acquaintances.. Let alone that many people have already invited him. So I feel that he's right. And then he wants to enjoy his daughter's wedding.." (Daughter, teacher, engaged, 24 and mother, housewife, 47).

Tensions between personal well-being and social pressure also arose among the highly conservative couples whenever daughters fought or experienced difficulties with their fiancés or their husbands. Hoping to avoid any problem that could lead to a break-up or divorce, mothers in highly conservative families instructed their daughters to be patient. The moment the relationship became public, and specifically, after the couple's wedding, the conservative mother strove to keep the husband's temper at bay, at the expense of her daughter's satisfaction. While the married daughter attempted to affirm an equal footing with her husband, the mother feared the social consequences of such confrontation. In one example, the daughter in family 11 complained that her mother always sided with her husband. She said:

[36] Daughter: "If a problem happens, she sides against me. If she sees something, and she feels that my husband is right, she immediately tells me 'you are wrong.' I tell her 'no, I am not wrong, and all,' but she insists 'you are wrong.' She follows me and convinces me. It works out in the end."

Interviewer: "Doesn't she blame him for example?"

Daughter: "Yes, sometimes. For example, she tells him listen.. But she never says it in front of me. She says it when I am not here so I do not feel too self-important."

(Daughter, graphic designer, married, 20).

In such cases, the daughter sometimes reframed her mother's intervention on behalf of her son-in-law as evidence of her love for him. The mother, on the other hand, sought to convince her daughter that being patient toward the husband made her look wiser than he was. She explained that marriage required flexibility, which was a trait women enjoyed more than men.

### **Connection Versus Separation**

Mother and daughter converged over the necessity of marriage for women. They both looked forward to the daughter's marriage. At the same time, both mother and daughter valued their relationship and wanted to preserve it.

To avoid their parents' pressure, especially regarding contact with the other sex, daughters often tried to speed up their marriage process to separate themselves from authority at home. As the wedding preparations accelerated, however, another sort of mother-daughter tension arose: the anxiety of separation. After months of pushing her daughter to become a wife, the mother finally realizes that she was going to be separated from her daughter: that she was giving her daughter away. The mixed desires for connection and separation during the daughter's wedding process produced mixed feelings of sadness and joy.

This tension became specifically apparent with the photo-elicited questions during the third mother-daughter interviews, as the two members of the dyads discussed the two wedding pictures. In the first picture, the father walked the bride toward her husband-to-be. In the second one, the newlyweds held hands in the middle of the crowd. The dyads saw in the first, father-

daughter photo, a scene of separation and discussed it with a heavy sense of agony; in two dyads, the mother and/or the daughter had tears in their eyes. On the other hand, the second picture of husband and wife holding hands generated excitement, especially among the dyads that included engaged daughters. The daughter in family 3 described the first picture with obvious emotion:

[37] “I think this is the most difficult of moments, during which he is giving away his daughter. The way he looked at her and all.. His daughter, he will give her away, and that’s it. She will be with someone else. It’s definitely difficult.” (Daughter, teacher, single, 23).

The transformation of a young woman from daughter to wife was often accompanied by deep anxiety experienced at several points during the arranged marriage process. Sometimes, the daughter panicked the day she started receiving candidates at home. At that point, her mother and other family members suddenly looked at her as an eligible wife, who they were pushing into adulthood. As the daughter in family 4 put it:

[38] “The way I remember it is that.. We knew.. I didn’t feel it.. It was the first time.. I was hesitant. You know you’re always the little baby and then this thing.. Someone comes in suddenly.” (daughter, college student, single, 21).

The day a daughter got engaged, she often experienced the social pressure of being part of a couple, making her a “project” wife. Fearing marital responsibility, she got into fights with her mother when she avoided the latter’s lessons of housekeeping. The opportunity for the biggest crisis happened right before the day of the wedding, when the daughter finally realized that assuming this marital responsibility was inevitable. Only then does she call for her mother’s help, asking for advice and slowly bridging the gap toward convergence. By the time the daughter is married, she would typically have converged with her mother. As the daughter in family 12 explained:

[39] “She took care of me month after month... When I gave birth[by cesarean], she stayed over at my house for forty days. She completely took care of me. She took care of the house, of my husband, of my son, she was always there. I felt.. You know, I used to

feel that I liked my father more. I did like my mother but I liked my father more... Today, if she asks for my heart I'd give it to her, my soul.." (Daughter, housewife, married, 25).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the stance analysis of mother-daughter conversations revealed the underlying structuration process of the daughter's marital experience, and the mother-daughter relational dialectics that are taking place during structuration.

Analysis of the stance objects showed the tripartite function of the arranged marriage for young daughters. Marriage is a social necessity for the woman that helps her achieve three objectives: 1-to manage her interactions with men in a socio-religiously appropriate manner, 2-to ensure a continuity of protection and care from her father's to her husband's house, and 3-to mature into motherhood status by producing a family with children. Consequently the socially fragile and dependent woman needs the arranged marriage to secure her reputation (provided by the first structuration line), her physical and emotional protection (the focus of the second line), and her social identity (constructed through the third line).

Analysis of mother-daughter stance alignments uncovered four main relational tensions: real-ideal, powerful-powerless, individual-collective, and connection-separation dialectics. The examination of daughters' strategies to cope with those relational tensions helps to understand their effort in resisting and negotiating the rules of the marital structuration. To cope with the real-ideal tension, some daughters neutralized (Baxter, 1988) the arranged encounters in line with the romantic experience by insisting on seeing the candidates, one-on-one (as a date) outside the family house. To neutralize their mothers' power and maintain control over their relationship, some daughters stopped sharing with their mothers details about their relationship(s). They managed their privacy by avoiding self-disclosure or limiting their

communication to generalities. To reduce the individual-collective tension, a few daughters were assertive about their personal preferences, while less confrontational daughters used the selection strategy (Baxter, 1988) by opting for the collective considerations and reframing their selection as an act of wisdom and patience. Finally, some daughters managed their connection-separation tension by using a cyclic alternation strategy (Baxter, 1988). They sought their autonomy when they were single by deciding to get married (using the structure of marriage), and then they balanced their separation from their mothers after marriage by constantly seeking marital guidance, material assistance and emotional support.

In the following chapter, I will review the above findings in respect to the development of mother-daughter relationship, and the fundamental cultural component involved in the structuration of arranged marriages.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **DISCUSSION**

This dissertation employed a two-step triangulation approach to the study of mother-daughter communication about arranged marriages among the religious Sunnis of Beirut, Lebanon. The study investigated the process of marital socialization by first conducting dyadic data analysis (Kenny et al., 2006) where 199 mother-daughter dyads were surveyed, representing 398 individuals. In the second step, 12 families were randomly selected out of the surveyed pairs for in-depth stance analysis (Du Bois, 2007) of mother-daughter reported conversations related to daughters' romantic and marital interactions.

The survey adapted Stephen and Markman's (1993) Relationship Worldview Index (RWI-2) to account for new cultural conditions and arranged relationships. The dyadic data analysis tested for the overall level of mother-daughter interdependence by computing the dyad's Distance in marital worldviews (Stephen & Markman, 1993), as an index of dissimilarity between mothers and daughters in relation to marriage-related issues. The mother-daughter Distance was then regressed on the duration of the daughter's marital experience to check for the variation of mother-daughter interdependence across the different stages of the arranged marriage. Findings revealed that mother-daughter interdependence moved in a curvilinear fashion. The dyad gained more interdependence at the beginning of the daughter's marital relationship. The mother and her daughter converged in their marital views, then slightly diverged as the daughter's relationship with her husband progressed.

The research applied an innovative use of stance analysis (Du Bois, 2007) of reported speech and actual mother-daughter conversations to provide concrete quantifiable and qualitative evidence of the socialization process and the underlying relational dynamics. The selection of the reported speech as the focus of analysis was theoretically informed. It articulated mother-

daughter interactions that were encouraged, but not scripted, by the interview protocol. The stance analysis of reported speech helped identify speakers' own understanding of the socialization process and the turning point in the relationship, in addition to the researcher's interpretations. Finally, the stance analysis of the mother-daughter conversations during the third interview allowed for the examination of the actual, day-to-day communication practices related to marriage.

The stance analysis examined the structuration of arranged marriage (Giddens, 1979; 1984) as observed in mother-daughter negotiations of constitutive and regulative rules of gender relationships among the religious Muslim Sunni community in Beirut. The analysis of stance alignments also exposed the underlying relational dialectics (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a) between mothers and daughters during the arranged marriage process. Those dialectics corresponded to the fundamental tensions and the power resources that influenced both the daughter's marital structuration and her relationship with her mother during the marital process. In addition to the relational dialectics of real versus ideal, powerful versus powerless, and connection versus separation, that surfaced in studies conducted on Western populations (e.g., Miller-Day, 2004), the analysis of the stance alignments revealed a context-specific tension, individual versus collective, that relates to the very nature of arranged marriage and of the religious Sunni community in Beirut.

Theoretically, this research was innovative in its rapprochement between two frameworks: the structuration theory and the relational dialectics. The purposes of the two theories might at the surface seem contradictory. Giddens' structuration theory analyzes individuals' practices in order to understand the macro social level. Baxter's Relational Dialectics, on the other hand, is concerned with interactions in order to locate the everyday

micro-level tensions affecting the development of relationships. Yet, the two theories combined provide a wider scope on the relation between culture and individuals, individuals and their relationships, relationships and their socio-cultural context. Arguing for the marriage of personality and culture in theories of personality, Markus (2004) writes:

Models of how to be a person are the tacit cultural matrix within which personalities take form, and it is likely that the content and function of personality will reflect these models. Looking at personality within a cultural perspective leads then to a much more social and contextually sensitive view of personality... A marriage between culture and personality and the comparative perspective it affords illuminates the presence and influence of these culture-specific models (p. 81).

By combining the macro-micro approaches of the two theories, the objective was to obtain a deeper assessment of the construction in communication of the cultural, the cognitive, and the relational.

The combined results of the two studies, the dyadic and the stance analysis, revealed two important findings about the socialization of arranged marriages among the religious Muslim Sunni community in Beirut. The first one relates to the development of the mother-daughter connection during this process. The second finding corresponds to the core cultural schema (Quinn, 2005) about gender, which is reinforced during the structuration of arranged marriages.

### **The Development of the Mother-Daughter Connection**

Results revealed that the daughter's marriage eventually brings her closer to her mother. The arranged marriage constitutes a turning-point in mother-daughter relationship. While daughters were resistant during earlier stages, they tended gradually to converge toward their mothers right before their wedding, and after they got married. This convergence was possibly due to three factors: mother-daughter chronotopic similarity (Baxter, 2004b), their symbolic interdependence (Stephen & Markman, 1993), and the resolution of some of their relational



dialectics (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2004a). All demonstrated through the dyadic data analysis and the stance analysis of reported speech.

Baxter (2004b) argues that dyads develop a sense of commonality, or a chronotopic similarity, with the amount of activities and interactions they share together over a particular period of time. During the arranged marriage process, a mother and her daughter are drawn closer together through their daily conversations about the daughter's marital relationship, and the family preparations of social ceremonies, such as the engagement and the wedding. The sheer number of stances collected from the 36 in-depth interviews of the 12 families (a total of 2417 stances), and the spread of stance objects, i.e. the topics discussed (136 stance objects) suggest that the interactions between the mother and her daughter are of great frequency around this period. The results show that in arranged marriages mothers are heavily engaged in the process. Conversations between mothers and daughters include small talk, gossiping about other people's marriages and conflicts, discussions of the daughter's future plans, the daughter's self-disclosure about her relationship with her fiancé, and the mother's assistance and guidance regarding housework, pregnancy, and child rearing; all of these contribute to mother-daughter close connection after marriage.

The frequent interactions between mother and daughter around the arranged marriage constructed not only a shared relational memory (Goldsmith & Baxter, 1996), but also led over time to the daughter's convergence with her mother in terms of marital worldviews. In line with Stephen's (1986) argument about symbolic interdependence, mother-daughter daily interactions during the period of engagement and marriage create "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) about the dyad's relationship and their views on the marital experience. Mothers share their

marital experience with their daughters during the time when the latter are experiencing theirs. As a result, the marriage-related perspectives of the two women tend to merge.

As the dyadic analysis shows, the Distance index of mother-daughter marital views tended to develop in a curvilinear fashion along the daughter's marital experience. The Distance of dissimilarity was wider when the daughter was single, having no relationship experience. Single daughters tended to have a more romantic and idealistic perspective on marital relationships than their mothers did. The Distance decreased as daughters entered the nuptial relationship. Daughters converged to their mothers during late engagement and early marriage periods. Inexperienced daughters relied on their experienced mothers in order to decipher the complexities and account for the responsibilities of the marital relationship. Daughters also relied upon their mothers in order to understand their new partners. But as the nuptial relationship progressed, or –from a symbolic interdependence perspective– as daughters built another set of shared meanings about marital life with their husbands, their marital views began slightly to diverge from their mothers'. Yet the Distance did not increase beyond the levels experienced prior to the pre-arranged marriage period. The marital viewpoints of the mother and her married daughter remained largely similar. As the stance analysis of the structuration rules revealed, this might be due to the fact that husbands in arranged marriages are carefully selected to match the socio-religious values of the daughters' families. The arranged marriage process does not merely match two individuals to each other but also two families. For this reason, the prospective husbands are selective to have values that are not very different from those of mothers, and those the mother inoculates into the daughter.

The above analysis of mother-daughter interdependence during arranged marriage supports the premises of the relational dialectics theory that considers relationships as

continuously developing, but not necessarily progressing toward an ideal, stable status (Baxter, 2004b). The theory argues that this process of becoming a wife is affected by the interactions with other participants in the relationship. Conversations are the stage for centripetal and centrifugal flux and for the realization of fleeting aesthetic moments (2004a). In their interactions, mothers and daughters achieve interpenetration of their voices by joining their different perspectives and tendencies (achieving connection). Meanwhile, daughters are participating with their husbands in merging their voices to form their own marital relationship (achieving separation).

Another explanation that accounts for this turning-point in the mother-daughter relationship is the resolution of relational dialectics after marriage. Two tensions are relatively reduced when a daughter marries, contributing to mother-daughter closeness after the daughter's marriage: the mother-daughter power distance, and the connection-separation tension.

A mother's power resources (Giddens, 1979) gain more prominence during the marital process her daughter goes through. The mother's legitimate power as a caregiver is reinforced by her continuous guidance and assistance on marital issues. She gains more emotional power by becoming a grandmother when her daughter gives birth. Daughters identify with their mothers and understand the sacrifice and difficulties their mothers went through when they raised their children. In addition, the mother's religious power granted by the Islamic notion of *Rida al Walidayn min Rida al-Allah* (pleasing one's parents is pleasing God) is guaranteed as long as the daughter is religious. By arranging the marriage of their daughters, mothers reaffirm their motherhood status.

Daughters also gain more power resources when they marry. They become wives and mothers. This change of social role bestows on them an equal footing with their mothers, by

improving their legitimate power. The mother-daughter parent-child relationship, consequently, shifts into one more closely resembling that of a friendship. This shift was apparent in the family interviews, where married daughters noted their mothers' change of attitude toward them after their wedding. Mothers started self-disclosing more about their private marital issues.

Another consequence of the daughter's transition into a wife is the change in her mother's approach toward her actions. The day a daughter moves to her marital house marks the end of her parents' direct authority over her relationships with men. The married daughter structures her approach to social and gender relationships with her husband. The marital rules are negotiated between the married couple. Consequently, mothers' comments on daughters' actions change from their emotionally bounding capacity as constitutive rules before marriage (in a bid to preserve the daughter's virginity) into expert advice in the form of regulative rules that daughters consider as they deal with their husbands. Communication changes from "this is appropriate!" or "this is wrong!" to "this is how I would do this if I were you." Daughters are not bound to abide by those comments, because as wives, they are held accountable before their husbands, not their mothers. The daughter's marriage therefore creates a gain-gain situation where mothers enjoy their elevated status of experts/mothers/friends and daughters acquire a marital and adulthood status and the liberty to maneuver and accept the mother's advice without feeling oppressed, or guilty.

The second relational tension that is negotiated during the daughter's wedding is the connection-separation dialectic. According to Miller-Day (2004), both desires are fundamental to mother-daughter relationship. As the stance analysis revealed, mother and daughter experience a separation anxiety while preparing for the wedding. The mixed desires for connection and separation, during the daughter's wedding, produce mixed feelings of sadness and joy. Although

daughters look forward to being married, they also fear the new role of a wife and the responsibilities it entails. For the first time in their lives, the parent-dependent daughters will be left to make important marital choices on their own. This is aggravated in particular when daughters move abroad with their husbands. The sudden independence (or changed dependence upon husband) is a frightening transition for the daughters of conservative families. Mothers as well experience mixed feelings. Although the mothers are happy to see their daughters move into a suitable marital relationships, they fear this separation, interpreted as an act of giving away their daughters. To reduce their anxiety, mothers and daughters increase contact after marriage. Daughters often call their mothers, asking for the three types of social support: instrumental (in the form of marital assistance), emotional (being close at crucial times), and informational (providing guidance and tips) (Pecchioni, Thompson & Anderson, 2006). As a result, mothers and their married daughters get relationally closer than they were before the daughter's wedding.

While other studies located the turning-points in mother-daughter relationship during daughter's transition to adulthood (e.g., Fisher & Miller-Day, 2006; Guerrero & Afifi, 1995), daughter's pregnancy and childbirth, her change of residence (e.g., Miller-Day, 2004), and her caregiving to her sick or aging mother (e.g., Cicirelli, 1992), the current research identifies the daughter's arranged marriage as another opportunity for mother-daughter bonding, mainly for the community under study. Interestingly, the current study reveals the embedded dichotomy in mother-daughter relationship. The dyad's connection is reinforced by the process of differentiation, and their affirmation of their respective selves during the process of the arranged marriage. As Miller-Day (2004) argues,

the intersubjective meanings, the multiple perspective of participants, and connections are necessary to truly understand the mother-daughter relationship ... It is through mutually responsive communication that mothers and daughters establish patterns of relational communication that link them to one another, shaping each woman's sense of self (p. 10).

### **A Cultural Schema about Gender**

The stance analysis of the mother-daughter reported speech showed that the structuration of marriage was a direct product of the marital experience itself. Each structuration line occurred at a particular stage of the daughter's marital relationship. The daughter learned about the appropriate and the inappropriate behaviors relating to male-female contacts when she was "at risk" of developing romantic relationships. She learned about an ideal husband's qualities and responsibilities while she filtered and selected candidates, and interacted with her fiancé. She then learned how to become a good wife and mother as she got married, and dealt with her husband and his family on a day-to-day basis. In other words, the socialization of the daughter into matrimony was rarely prepared in advance. It emerged in ongoing family conversations as the daughter experienced the arranged marriage process.

This social construction of the marital experience institutionalizes the understanding, or the cultural schema (Quinn, 2005) of being a woman among the female members of the religious Muslim Sunni community in Beirut. The three lines of structuration of arranged marriages together construct a cultural perception of women as fragile beings, constantly in need of protection. This cultural schema of protection represents the underlying basis of the community's perception and treatment of women. Moreover, this cultural schema of "women in need of protection" is reconstructed, confirmed and relayed to the following generation, along with the experience of the arranged marriage. Explaining the link between cultural schemas and people's experience, Quinn (2005) states:

A schema is a generic version of (some part of) the world built up from experience and stored in memory... Although schemas can change, those built on repeated experiences of a similar sort become relatively stable, influencing our interpretations of subsequent experiences more than they are altered by them. To the degree that people share experiences, they will end up sharing the same schemas – having, we would say, the same culture (or subculture). The social world is constructed in just such a way that many

of our experiences – the language we speak, for example, or the way we are brought up as children, or the built environment we inhabit – are indeed shared. Hence, many, many of our schemas are cultural ones (p. 38).

The interactions between mother and daughter relating to the daughter's marriage reinforce the latter's conception that she, as a woman, needs protection against life's perils, in particular against male aggressors. Marriage, in this case, is presented as a guarantee for a permanent safety shield, where a young girl moves from her parents' to her husband's sanctuary. Mothers genuinely worry about their daughters' vulnerability as single women mixing with men, and consequently strive to marry them to a carefully picked candidate. Outside the arranged marriage framework, men are framed as sexually-driven predators. Through the arranged marriage process, these same men become eligible guardians.

Marriage in this context is a social necessity for women as it helps them protect themselves and allows them: 1-to manage interactions with men in a socially and religiously appropriate manner, 2-to ensure the continuity of protection and care from the father's to the husband's house, and 3-to maintain their husbands' protection by being good mothers and wives. The fragile woman needs the arranged marriage to secure her reputation and manage her virginity, to gain and maintain material and emotional comfort, and last, to get access into the motherhood membership.

The three structuration lines discussed in the findings reflect this cultural schema of women in need of protection. The regulation of male-female contacts, for instance, is meant to preserve a woman's virginity and reputation. The rules surrounding cross-sex interaction only relax when a woman weds because the test of virginity takes place at that point; from then on, the rules are negotiated between husband and wife. The danger that young women could have a pre-marital affair was perceived by mothers as real because of the cultural beliefs about

predatory males and because many of the daughters have little to no experience with men given their conservative upbringing.

Finding the ideal husband is also meant as a protective measure to ensure a daughter's happiness and security after marriage –hence the focus on a rational, versus emotional, approach to husband selection. The ideal man is the one who can provide the daughter with material comfort, emotional stability and who is characterized by respectful authority and hardworking independence. Daughters tended early on to focus on a candidate's appearance, while mothers cared more for his character, material resources, and similarity in social-religious family background. The ideal husband is the person who ensures for the daughter the kind of protection and happiness she enjoyed at her parent's house. It is in this sense that the requirement for the husband to own a home can be understood; the house husbands own is the protective shelter ensuring stability for daughters.

The standards women learn about how to become a good wife and mother are also designed to protect daughters from possible marital conflicts and eventual divorce. To maintain her marriage successfully, a young woman learns to be patient and act maturely and to rationally absorb and endure hardships, such as financial limitations and relational conflicts. Mothers, in this context, advised their daughters to fulfill their husbands' physical and emotional needs, endure their whims, and avoid getting confrontational with them. The insistence upon the daughters' getting an education is also understood as a protective measure against the uncertainties of life. In case of divorce or the husband's death, a woman with an education would have the means to find a job and persevere –especially if her parents are absent or unavailable at the time.



The cultural schema of women in need of protection places men in the social role of guardians, and institutionalizes an order that potentially impedes women within Beirut's Muslim Sunni conservatives. In line with Debold, Wilson and Malave's (1993) argument, mothers sometimes become accomplices in reinforcing the dependence of women on their male counterparts by socializing their daughters into conventional female roles. The role they play is however often unintended.

Yet, the findings of this research show that these roles are not static; today's daughters negotiate with their mothers with greater flexibility than the mothers did during their own marital arrangement. The socialization of protection does not rule out the daughters' agency (Giddens, 1993). The latter sometimes insisted on seeing the candidates, one-on-one (as a date) outside the family house, managed their privacy by avoiding self-disclosure or limiting their communication to generalities, were assertive about their personal preferences, or sought their autonomy from their parents by getting married.

### **Limitations and Future Studies**

Because this study was limited to arranged marriage cases and because the sample was largely taken from social and religious Islamic non-profit organizations and universities, mother-daughter dyads in question tended to be conservative. It would be interesting, in the future, to work on the relationship between Lebanese mothers and daughters where the latter are involved in romantic relationships. Would the connection between mother and daughter vary in the same way? And would the cultural schema of women in need of protection still be dominant? Religious Muslims in Lebanon are a minority and their cultural values may or may not represent those of the entire population.

Another limitation is related to the research design. Because the study is not longitudinal, we could not follow the same woman throughout the different stages of her marital relationship. What we examined was a cross-sectional sample based on independent groups at various phases of the arranged marriage. A more accurate study in the future should study the same dyad from the time a daughter starts receiving candidates to the stage where she becomes a mother herself.

This study does not take into consideration the role of third-parties such as fathers and siblings. The findings of this study suggest that mothers were the main channel of all authority but they still made use of other family members –mainly an older daughter– to influence and pressure the brides-to-be. Where applicable, the experience of older sisters played a role in the initiation of daughters to the arranged marriage process. Looking at such influences in the future will add more nuance and complexity to the study of mother-daughter socialization of arranged relationships.

Finally, this research does not address the influence of mothers on their sons, the husbands-to-be. It would be interesting to compare the type of socialization that males go through as they engage in arranged marriage, and how they experience the entire process in relationship to their mothers. Will they be initiated to become the protectors of their “fragile” other halves?

In spite of the limitations, this study revealed that arranged marriages make up a turning-point in the mother-daughter relationship. During the process, daughters are initiated into womanhood and become the friends of their mothers. This convergence trains the daughters into absorbing the socio-cultural norms of their parents, learning in the process to adopt the status of “fragile” women in need of protection.

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## **APPENDIX A SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

### **Mother Questionnaire**

All materials were translated into Arabic, but are presented in English here to accommodate the committee members who do not read or speak Arabic.

#### **Marital Relationship Questionnaire**

The following questions are about marital relationship. Your input is very important. It will help us understand the development of relationships. All the information you're going to provide will be used for scientific research only and will be kept confidential.

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_

Your nationality:    \_\_\_ Lebanese        Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Your education level:

\_\_\_ Didn't finish school    \_\_\_ Finished school    \_\_\_ University student    \_\_\_ Graduated from university  
   Other \_\_\_\_\_

Your current country of residence: City/Village \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Your social status:        \_\_\_ Married        \_\_\_ Divorced

**Opinion about Marital Relationships** (Adapted from the Relationship World Index – 2; Stephen & Markman, 1983)

The following statements are about your opinion regarding marital relationship in general. Please answer by how much you agree or disagree with below statements. Please rate each item using the following 5-point scale. In the blank that follows each item, put in the number corresponding to how much you agree or disagree with the item.

1 = Strong disagreement, 2 = Mild disagreement, 3 = Neither agreement nor disagreement,  
4 = Mild agreement, 5 = Strong agreement

1. Marital relationships should provide pleasure and enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Sex is not important to a marital relationship \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The wife should feel free to be herself in a marital relationship \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In marriage, the husband should provide tenderness and support \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Love is a prerequisite for marriage \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Being married can provide purpose for one's life \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Being married means giving all of oneself to one's partner \_\_\_\_\_.

8. It is important that the woman have a strong commitment to her personal growth that is not lost when she gets married\_\_\_\_\_.
9. A marital relationship should maintain a balanced mixture of sexual attraction, friendship, understanding, tenderness, and concern for the spouse\_\_\_\_\_.
10. A marital relationship should be smooth and constant--not all ups and downs\_\_\_\_\_.
11. One has to make great efforts to get the most from a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
12. One should not try to control one's partner in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
13. A marital relationship should be more under the control of one's will and less under the control of one's emotion\_\_\_\_\_.
14. Fighting can actually lead to a better marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
15. People who have the most freedom in their marital relationships are those who allow their spouse freedom and privacy\_\_\_\_\_.
16. A marital relationship provides stability in life\_\_\_\_\_.
17. It is important that partners get to know each other's families well before their marriage\_\_\_\_\_.
18. Money matters are never a problem in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
19. A husband should be loyal, devoted, and loving\_\_\_\_\_.
20. In a marital relationship it is very important that the couple share the same ideas about religion\_\_\_\_\_.
21. Nothing should be left unsaid in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
22. Marriage works best when both spouses have similar hobbies and interests\_\_\_\_\_.
23. Marriage should not stand in the way of a woman's career\_\_\_\_\_.
24. Differences in partners' backgrounds do not matter in building a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
25. The spouse's family should not be allowed to influence the marriage\_\_\_\_\_.
26. A good marital relationship is one in which both spouses enjoy sharing their deepest feelings about all aspects of life\_\_\_\_\_.
27. In marriage, spouses should spend as much time as possible together\_\_\_\_\_.
28. Both partners should contribute equally to the marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
29. If one relationship member puts a lot into the relationship, the other should do as well\_\_\_\_\_.
30. Married couples seem to develop understandings about things without ever talking about them\_\_\_\_\_.
31. Sometimes it is necessary for the wife to hide some facts from her husband\_\_\_\_\_.
32. Partners don't have to talk about their relationships in order for it to be a good one\_\_\_\_\_.
33. At home, the husband should not be expected to do housework\_\_\_\_\_.
34. The wife's most important job is to raise her kids\_\_\_\_\_.
35. Men should make the important decisions in the life of the family\_\_\_\_\_.

**Do you mind being contacted for further questions about your experience with marriage?**  
**If you don't mind, please provide us with, your name and a telephone number to reach you:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your assistance.**

## Daughter Questionnaire

The Daughter's questionnaire is similar to the Mother with an addition of the set of questions regarding type and stage of daughter relationship.

### **Marital Relationship Questionnaire**

The following questions are about marital relationship. Your input is very important. It will help us understand the development of relationships. All the information you're going to provide will be used for scientific research only and will be kept confidential.

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_

Your nationality:    \_\_\_ Lebanese        Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Your education level:

\_\_\_ Didn't finish school    \_\_\_ Finished school    \_\_\_ University student    \_\_\_ Graduated  
from university            Other \_\_\_\_\_

Your current country of residence: City/Village \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Your social status:        \_\_\_ Single            \_\_\_ Unofficial Relations        \_\_\_ Engaged  
\_\_\_ Married

### **Opinion about Marital Relationships** (Adapted from the Relationship World Index – 2; Stephen & Markman, 1983)

The following statements are about your opinion regarding marital relationship in general. Please answer by how much you agree or disagree with below statements. Please rate each item using the following 5-point scale. In the blank that follows each item, put in the number corresponding to how much you agree or disagree with the item.

1 = Strong disagreement, 2 = Mild disagreement, 3 = Neither agreement nor disagreement,  
4 = Mild agreement, 5 = Strong agreement

1. Marital relationships should provide pleasure and enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Sex is not important to a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
3. The wife should feel free to be herself in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
4. In marriage, the husband should provide tenderness and support\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Love is a prerequisite for marriage\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Being married can provide purpose for one's life\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Being married means giving all of oneself to one's partner\_\_\_\_\_.
8. It is important that the woman have a strong commitment to her personal growth that is not lost when she gets married\_\_\_\_\_.

9. A marital relationship should maintain a balanced mixture of sexual attraction, friendship, understanding, tenderness, and concern for the spouse\_\_\_\_\_.
10. A marital relationship should be smooth and constant--not all ups and downs\_\_\_\_\_.
11. One has to make great efforts to get the most from a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
12. One should not try to control one's partner in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
13. A marital relationship should be more under the control of one's will and less under the control of one's emotion\_\_\_\_\_.
14. Fighting can actually lead to a better marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
15. People who have the most freedom in their marital relationships are those who allow their spouse freedom and privacy\_\_\_\_\_.
16. A marital relationship provides stability in life\_\_\_\_\_.
17. It is important that partners get to know each other's families well before their marriage\_\_\_\_\_.
18. Money matters are never a problem in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
19. A husband should be loyal, devoted, and loving\_\_\_\_\_.
20. In a marital relationship it is very important that the couple share the same ideas about religion\_\_\_\_\_.
21. Nothing should be left unsaid in a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
22. Marriage works best when both spouses have similar hobbies and interests\_\_\_\_\_.
23. Marriage should not stand in the way of a woman's career\_\_\_\_\_.
24. Differences in partners' backgrounds do not matter in building a marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
25. The spouse's family should not be allowed to influence the marriage\_\_\_\_\_.
26. A good marital relationship is one in which both spouses enjoy sharing their deepest feelings about all aspects of life\_\_\_\_\_.
27. In marriage, spouses should spend as much time as possible together\_\_\_\_\_.
28. Both partners should contribute equally to the marital relationship\_\_\_\_\_.
29. If one relationship member puts a lot into the relationship, the other should do as well\_\_\_\_\_.
30. Married couples seem to develop understandings about things without ever talking about them\_\_\_\_\_.
31. Sometimes it is necessary for the wife to hide some facts from her husband\_\_\_\_\_.
32. Partners don't have to talk about their relationships in order for it to be a good one\_\_\_\_\_.
33. At home, the husband should not be expected to do housework\_\_\_\_\_.
34. The wife's most important job is to raise her kids\_\_\_\_\_.
35. Men should make the important decisions in the life of the family\_\_\_\_\_.

**If you are in a relationship, please answer the following questions about your partner.**

Your Partner's Current Place of Residence: City/Village \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

1- When was the first time you saw him? (select the right answer)

Less than a month ago	1 to 6 months ago	6 to 12 months ago	More than a year
--------------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	---------------------

2- Did you see him in the intention of getting married?      \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No

3- Who introduced you to each other?

Family  
member

friend

No One (met  
in person)

Other (specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

4- Where was the first time you saw him?

At  
your  
house

At  
partner's  
house

At School/  
University

At  
work

Other  
(specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

5- For how long have you been together?

Less than a  
month ago

1 to 6 months  
ago

6 to 12  
months ago

More than a year  
(please indicate the  
number of months)

6- How frequently do you see or talk to each other these days?

Everyday

Twice or  
three times a  
week

Once a  
week

Once every  
two weeks

Once a  
month

7- If you are still not married, when are you planning to get married?

In less  
than a  
month

In 1 to 6  
months

In 6 to 12  
months

More than  
a year

I don't  
know

**Do you mind being contacted for further questions about your experience with marriage?**

**If you don't mind, please provide us with, your name and a telephone number to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Thank you for your assistance.**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

#### **First Interview: Mother Interview Protocol**

All materials were translated into Arabic, but are presented in English here to accommodate the committee members who do not read or speak Arabic.

#### **Section A: Oral History Interview (Buehlman et al., 1992)**

##### **Part I: History of the Mother's Marriage**

Question 1. Why don't we start from the very beginning....Tell me how you and your husband met and got together?

Do you remember the time you met for the first time? Tell me about it. Was there anything about (spouse's name) that made him stand out? What were your first impressions of each other?

Question 2. When you think back to the time you were engaged, before you got married, what do you remember? what stands out?

How long did you know each other before you got married? What do you remember of this period? What were some of the highlights? Some of the tensions? What types of things did you do together?

Question 3. Tell me about how you decided to get married.

Of all the people in the world, what led you to decide that this was the person you wanted to marry? Was it an easy decision? Was it a difficult decision? (Were they ever in love)?

Question 4. Do you remember your wedding? Tell me about your wedding. Did you have a honeymoon? What do you remember about it?

Question 5. When you think back to the first year you were married, what do you remember? Were there any adjustments to being married?

What about the transition to being parents? Tell me about this period of your marriage. What was it like for the two of you?

Question 6. Looking back over the years, what moments stand out as the really good times in your marriage? What were the really happy times? (What is a good time like for this couple)?

Question 7. Many of the couples we've talked to say that their relationships go through periods of ups and downs. Would you say that this is true of your marriage?

Question 8. Looking back over the years, what moments stand out as the really hard times in your marriage? Why do you think you stayed together? How did you get through these difficult times?

Question 9. How would you say your marriage is different from when you first got married?

## **Part II: The philosophy of marriage, love, and gender roles**

Question 10. We're interested in your ideas about what makes a marriage work. Why do you think some marriages work while others don't? Think of a couple you know that has a particularly good marriage and one that you know who has a particularly bad marriage. (Let them decide together which two couples these are). What is different about these two marriages? How would you compare your own marriage to each of these couples?

Question 11. Do you think that love is essential for people to get married? Is it essential for the marriage to work?

Question 12. How do you perceive the role of the wife in a marital relationship? What is the role of the wife in her family? Her duties, her needs?

Can you describe the day of a good wife?

Question 13. Do you think the traditional way of getting married is better than the love-at-first-sight style of wedding? Why or why not? Do you think a traditional way of getting married is bound to succeed? Why or why not?

## **Section B: The story of the engagement of her daughter (Comparison)**

Question 14. Can you tell us in details the story of your daughter's engagement? How your daughter got engaged from the time she met her fiancé to this date?

Tell me how, when and where the two met and got together? Who introduced them to each other? What were their first impressions of each other?

If the daughter is not yet engaged: I ask if they received candidates at their home and if the answer is yes, what happened with them. Why things didn't work?

Question 15. How different is your marital experience from your daughter's today? Do you feel any change in the way people are marrying today? Do you feel negative or positive about this difference (if there is any)?

Question 16. Do you share with your daughter your personal experience? Do you give her some advices?

Could you give us some examples of advices?

Question 17. Can you share with us a recent discussion between you and your daughter about her relationship? What happened? What did you talk about?

## **Section C: Mother-Daughter Communication Pattern**

The following set of statements will be discussed with the mother to get her opinion about them. They will not be presented to her as a questionnaire, but rather as points of discussion to see how much they apply to her communication with her daughter.

**From: The Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990)**

### **Conversation-Orientation:**

- My daughter and I often talk about topics like relationships and (sex?) or religion where sometimes we disagree with each other.



- I believe that every member of my family, including my daughter should have some say in family decision.
- I often ask the opinion of my daughter when I have a problem.
- I encourage my daughter to challenge my ideas and beliefs.
- I believe and tell my daughter that “one should always look at both sides of an issue.”
- I usually tell my daughter what I am thinking about things.
- I discuss with my daughter almost anything (even private topics).
- My daughter and I often talk about our feeling and emotions.
- My daughter and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.
- I really enjoy talking with my daughter even when she doesn’t agree with me.
- I like to hear my daughter’s opinions even when she doesn’t agree with me.
- I encourage my daughter to express her feelings.
- I tend to be very open when my daughter expresses her emotions.
- My daughter and I often talk about things we have done during the day.
- My daughter and I often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.

**Conformity-orientation:**

- I often say to my daughter something like “You’ll know better when you grow up.”
- I often say to my daughter something like “My ideas are right and you should not question them.”
- I often say to my daughter something like “A child should not argue with adults.”
- I often say to my daughter something like “There are some things that just shouldn’t be talked about.”
- I often say to my daughter something like “You should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad.”
- When anything really important is involved, I expect my daughter to obey without question.
- In our home, the parent usually has the last word.
- I feel that it is important to be the boss.
- I become sometimes irritated with my daughter’s views if they are different from mine.
- If I don’t approve of it, I don’t want to know about it.
- Until she leaves the house, my daughter is expected to obey her parents’ rules.

## **Second Interview: Daughter Interview Protocol**

### **Section A: Oral History Interview (adapted from Buehlman et al., 1992)**

#### **Part I: History of the Daughter's Relationship**

##### **A-How, when and where you met**

- 1-Why did you decide to get married?
- 2-Tell me how, when and where the two of you met and got together.
- 3-Who introduced you to each other?
- 4-Do you remember the time you met for the first time? Tell me about it
- 5-What were your first impressions of each other?

##### **B-How, when and where they developed the relationship (stages)**

- 1-Briefly outline the stages of your relationship from the moment you met and until today.
- 2-When you think back to the time you were engaged, what do you remember?
- 3-How long were you engaged before you got married?
- 4-What were some of the engagement period highlights? What were some of the tensions?
- 5-When did you decide to make *qiran*? Why?
- 6-How did you know that this person was the one?
- 7-Tell us more about the *qiran* stage (highlights and tensions).
- 8-Did you take your parents' opinions into consideration?
- 9-When you think about your wedding and the preparations to that wedding, what do you remember?
- 10-What were the highlights and tensions of that period?
- 11-How do you view/remember your wedding?
- 12-When you think back to the first year you were married, what do you remember?

##### **C-Role of parents**

- 1-Did any member of your family encourage you to get married (in general, not to a specific person per se)?
- 2-Did any member of your family encourage you to marry your current partner?
- 3-What was the role of your mother in this relationship?
- 4-When you first met, what was the opinion of your parents? Did they voice their opinion openly? What about your mother?
- 5-How did this opinion develop as your relationship with each other developed?

#### **Part II: The philosophy of marriage, love, and gender roles**

- 1- We're interested in your ideas about what makes a marriage work. Why do you think some marriages work while others don't? Think of a couple you know that has a particularly good marriage and one that you know who has a particularly bad marriage. (Let them decide together which two couples these are). What is different about these two marriages? How would you compare your own marriage to each of these couples?
- 2- Do you think that love is essential for people to get married? Is it essential for the marriage to work?

- 3- How do you perceive the role of the wife in a marital relationship? What is the role of the wife in her family? Her duties, her needs? Can you describe the day of a good wife?
- 4- Do you think the traditional way of getting married is better than the love-at-first-sight style of wedding? Why or why not? Do you think a traditional way of getting married is bound to succeed? Why or why not?
- 5- How different is your marital experience from that of your mother? Do you feel any change in the way people are marrying today? Do you feel negative or positive about this difference (if there is any)?

### **Section B: Mother-Daughter Communication Pattern**

The following set of statements will be discussed with the daughter to get her opinion about them. They will not be presented to her as a questionnaire, but rather as points of discussion to see how much they apply to her communication with her mother. The daughter will be prompted to give real life examples of her interactions with her mother.

**From: The Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990)**

#### **Conversation-Orientation:**

- My mother and I often talk about topics like relationships and (sex?) or religion where sometimes we disagree with each other.
- I believe that every member of my family, including myself should have some say in family decision.
- I often ask the opinion of my mother when I have a problem.
- My mother encourages me to challenge her ideas and beliefs.
- My mother often tells me that "I should always look at both sides of an issue."
- I usually tell my mother what I am thinking about my relationship.
- I discuss with my mother almost anything (even private topics).
- My mother and I often talk about our feeling and emotions.
- My mother and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.
- I really enjoy talking with my mother even when she doesn't agree with me.
- I like to hear my mother's opinions even when she doesn't agree with me.
- My mother encourages me to express my feelings.
- My mother tends to be very open when I express my emotions.
- My mother and I often talk about things we have done during the day.
- My mother and I often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.

#### **Conformity-orientation:**

- My mother often says to me something like "You'll know better when you grow up."
- My mother often says to me something like "My ideas are right and you should not question them."
- My mother often says to me something like "A child should not argue with adults."
- My mother often says to me something like "There are some things that just shouldn't be talked about."
- My mother often says to me something like "You should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad."

- When anything really important is involved, my mother expects me to obey without question.
- In our home, the parent usually has the last word.
- My parents feel that it is important to be the boss.
- My mother becomes sometimes irritated with my views if they are different from hers.
- If my mother doesn't approve of it, she doesn't want to know about it.
- Until I leave the house, my parents expect me to obey their rules.

### **Third Interview: Mother-Daughter Interview Protocol**

The following is a sample set of third-interview questions and notes/comments that I provided the interviewer after listening to the first and second interviews. I kept the text in its original, rough form (in English) to give the committee an idea about my communication with the team of interviewers during this process. The daughter's name was changed into X to ensure anonymity.

---

IMPORTANT: Dima,<sup>6</sup> please inform them before you start the interview that we want as much details and examples as possible. The study is about the little details that happen. So we need them to be as specific as possible. They need to give real examples, and stories. All information will be kept confidential.

#### **Question 1**

(To Mother)

Please tell us 2 to 3 examples of recent stories that you have recently shared with your daughter, stories that relate to marital issues, and could be about your personal experience with X's father, a religious story, or stories about relatives from the family or neighbors...

- If she doesn't remember, you can ask about any story or event that happened in the past days, since the last time you did the first interviews.

(To Daughter)

How did you react to those stories? Did you feel that she was sending you indirect messages, or giving you an advice related to your relationship.

#### **Question 2**

(To Mother)

We need specific details from your relationship with your daughter. Could you give us examples of advices you used to tell X at each of the following stages:

- When X entered the university (to do her BA) and about the importance of education.
- When she was receiving candidates at home
- When her fiancé and his parents asked her hand (Tleebeh period)
- When she got engaged. For example, did you tell her to go out with him to test his character outside home?
- About the search for house in Lebanon

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<sup>6</sup> Dima is one of the seven interviewers.

- About the kateb kteib. For example, Why you want to push the quiran till marriage? did you tell her that there is no quiran before you find a house? Did you discuss the dawry (maher)? If yes, when did the two families discuss this issue?

(To Daughter)

What sort of specific advices or information did you ask your mother or did you seek her help during each of the above mentioned periods?

IMPORTANT: Your mother in the first interview said that you used to talk to her more before your engagement. She said, now you are not talking to each other much. What do you think? Why do you think she feels this way?

What do you think of the generation difference between you and your mother? Can you elaborate on this point regarding its influence on your communication between each other? (maybe you don't ask her some questions because you feel she is coming from a past generation!).

What does the word tradition mean to you? When do you follow the tradition of your culture/parents and when you don't?

IMPORTANT: You said in the first interview that you like the way your fiancé and his family behave toward each other. Can you explain how they behave? What is the difference between your family way of behavior (culture) and your fiancé's family behavior?

How do you want to raise your kids? Following which culture?

### **Question 3**

(To Both of them)

What's the role of the other family members in sharing advices with X related to marriage?

In other words, to whom does X most listen to or talk to relating to her marriage? Does she talk more to her father, to her brother/sisters ... ? And please elaborate on the role of each one of them? Give us specific examples of the communication that happened between each one of them. For example, who does X ask when she needs: financial, religious, sexual/biological...

### **Question 4**

(To both of them)

Please tell us, according to you, what is the meaning of "Rida or Ta3at al Walidayn"?

(To X)

Do you feel sometimes pressured to obey your mother in order to respect those words? Do you think your mother use "Ta3at al Walidayn" in order to make you accept her decisions? Does this happen directly (e.g. the mother says "Ana manneh radyeneh 3alaykeh") or indirectly (e.g. the mother acts like she is really upset when X doesn't respect her decisions).

In general, how do you think the religious teaching of your mother, or the religion of others around you has influenced your decisions related to your marriage/relationships?

### **Question 5**

(To both of them)

When was the last time you had a conflict between each other related to your fiancé? Could you tell us what was the tension about? And give us some details about the conversation that happened? And how did the conflict end?

(To Daughter)

Does your mother tell you “ma tza3leh khatibik” when you have a conflict with him? Or on the contrary, she asks you to face him?

In the first interview, she said that she is afraid he might impose his will on you, “bisaytir 3alaykeh”?

(To both of them)

What do you think of the idea that the woman should always obey her husband? If you agree why? If you don't agree also why?

### **Question 6 (VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION)**

(To both of them)

Turning-point question:

Dima, ask each one of them to list on a piece of paper the major turning-points (= important events that happened to X or to people around her from the time she was receiving candidates at home until now, and that affected the way X thinks or behaves toward her mother or her relationship). – *Example. A conflict between both of you that resulted in a change of behavior could be an example of turning-points.*

After each one separately lists those turning-points let them discuss them and talk about the conversation that happened between them during those events. Let them compare their answers (many times the daughter's list is different to some extent from the mother's list).

### **Question 7 – The wedding pictures**

(To both of them)

Dima, show them the pictures of the wedding and ask their opinion:

- What do those pictures mean to them?
- What are the values, rituals, cloths, expectations and dreams involved in those pictures?
- How are they preparing for this event? – in details!

Important: Let them discuss the event. Try not to interrupt them for a period of time.

(To mother)

Imagine that X is marrying tomorrow, what do you tell her? What do you want her to always remember, keep doing, or don't do? Shu wassiytik la ila?

What do you tell her fiancé?



Figure 4  
The first wedding picture used for photo-elicited questions during the third mother-daughter interview. The father is handing his daughter to her husband-to-be.<sup>7</sup>



Figure 5  
The second wedding picture used for photo-elicited questions during the third mother-daughter interview. The new couple holds hands in the midst of a cheering crowd.

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<sup>7</sup> The bride's features are shown here with blurring upon her request. Although she was not veiled at the time of her wedding, the bride today wears the *hijab* and consequently cannot show her hair to the public for religious considerations. Because the interviews were conducted solely with women, interviewees saw the pictures without the blurring.



## APPENDIX C

### TRANSCRIBED QUOTES IN COLLOQUIAL LEBANESE

1

أمرار مثلاً من فوت عالمطبخ "أبدأ أبدأ" هيك بتصير هيدي، أنا وماما مثلاً "أبدأ" أو مثلاً "لا لا!"

2

ما هي بالإقناع، بضلّني يوم يلي أنا بعصّب عليهن، "بدنا نعمل، بدنا نروح رحلة مع رفأتنا، في رحلة،" "لا لا لا لا،" "ليش؟" وكذا.. برجع ثاني يوم "ماما لا لأتو ما بجوز تروحوا شباب وبنات، يصير في شوية، .. بدو يصير، بذك تألدي رفياتك،" "ما حنأعد مع شب يصطفوا هني!" "إلتلا" "إلا بذك تألدي رفياتك، لما تلاثي رفياتك كلن أعيدين مع شباب بذك تألديهن، مستحيل يعني.. "إرجع إلا" "يا ماما، إنتي إنسانة، الإنسان إلا ما يآلد، بس إنتي لما بتحفظي حالك وما بتروحي على هل أشيا هيدي يلّي إنتي عم بتشوفيها، خلص، يعني ما بتعودي إنتي تغلطي، بتضلّي حافظة نفسك يعني.. "إي الحمد لله بإقتناع يعني بياتنعوا."

3

إلتلا.. كيف لما الوحدة بتبلّش بالrègle وكيف تنتبه على حالا تنتبه ما تواع تنتبه من إنو يعني فانت عل تواليت ما تخليّ حدا يعني.. كانت هي ورفيئة لأ بدّي فوت أنا بالمدرسة بفوت مع.. بئلا لرفيئتي تنطرنني برّة.

4

أنا ما بئلا تكون ممحونة، لأ، بس بئلا "mommy سايري، إحكي، كوني هيكي طرية."

5

هيذا ما منيح وكذا.. بكرة بياخذ طلبو وبيرميكي. أنا دايماً بئلا إنو الشب المنيح ما بيحي من الشباك، بيحي من الباب. بفوت بكل إحترام "والله أنا معجب بهالبنات، أنا بدّي ياها."

6

أول ما فانت أول سنة كنت حكيت معا بكل شي وفهمنا إنو الإنسان بدو بيني على.. إزا ما كان الإنسان عارف حتى ما يعلا عاطفتو، يعلا عاطفتو، بتكون غلط، يعني العاطفة.. فكري دايماً كل شي بعالك أبل ما تخلي عاطفتك تشتغل.

الأم: أنا جرّبت إفتلا نظرها أكثر من مرة إئو "لما يكون عن جدّ شب بدو ياها وعن جدّ مواصفاتو top، وأنا بعتمد إئو إيام الوحدة لما تبلّش تكبر ما يعود إئو أدّ ما هي وز غيرة إئو بتكون ال opportunities الزواج بتكون أوسع وأكبر وييجي الأحسن.. بصيرو هيدا.. هي ما عم بتردّ لهالشّي..

الفتاة: بعدينا أنا بلاني إئو أبل ok يمكن هي وأزغر أحسن للبننت بس هلاّ بطلّ هيك. هلاّ صار البننت بدّا تتخرّج وبتشتغل..

الأم: طبعاً هيدا مطلوب

الفتاة: وبتتعرف، عرفتني؟ إئو صار عمرا 25، 26 بتتعرف عادي. بطلّ إئو هي بي كبيرة مثل أبل.

الأم: إي لأ.. أنا بلاني.. شوي لما تبلّش تكبر، لأ.. إئو خلص تخرّجي من الجامعة ok. لازم تبلّشي تطلّعي بشكل serious عالزواج.

الفتاة: إي مزبوط.. لأ هي مزبوط، بس مش إنتي وبالجامعة. إئو بعد بدك.. بعدك عم تتعرفي.. بعدك بتشوفي شباب حوليكي، بعدك بتتعرفي.. ما فيكي ضغري تؤولي إي يعني..

أبل كانت ماما تجبلي عرسان، وكنا نحنا أنا وأختي "يبي، أكيد حيكون عريس ما بعرف شو!" دايماً نلانيلو علّة، ودايماً نلانيلو أصّة، ما منتأبل هيدي الفكرة. بتعرفي نحنا ال generation بدنا نتعرف على حدا حتى نتجوّز.. إي بيوم من الإيام ألتلي "جاية رفينتي وإبنا" إلتلا "شو رح يكون شي زيادة؟ متلو مثل غيرو يعني.."

أنا بسألها إئو أدّيش عمرو؟ شو بيعمل؟ كزا.. بس من باب المسايرة.. إئو أنا interested

مرّة تيسّست ما بدّي شوف حداً، أم إجو. أنا ما كان بدّي، أم مدرّي شو ماما استحتت تتلّن لأ أو شي هيك. إلتلا "بدّي إلبس كعب عالي عالي" [تضحك]. أنا أصلاً منّي أصيرة، بس إئو تيسّست. إلتلا "لو شو ما كان، لو طويل، لو شو ما بدو يطلع، بدّي إلبس كعب." كان عندي سكرينة كعب عالي عالي.. على فكرة ماما ما بتحبّني إلبس كعب بس ساعات بتتلّي "لأ لبسي كعب، عادي، بالعكس إئو أنوسة" لإلي أنا طويلة ما إطلع جبل، ما ضروري.

11

إلتلّو "ليك أنا ما حاتدخّل أبداً أبداً. ما بآ حاسألكن ولا سؤال. آخر زيارة بتحبّوا إنتو تعلنوا، إنتو أولولي أنا بدّي إعلان  
"يلا بلّشي عزمي لننرا الفاتحة."

12

أنا إلّا "بس يشتري بيت، بس يشتري بيت تكرم عينك." أهلو "بعد بغير شو بدك تشتري بيت هلا؟" هي لمّا صار  
خمس ست اشهر، طبعاً مع إتقاء معو، إنتو "أنا بدّي إضهر أنا واياكي." حسّو حالن طبعاً محصورين. حوّن طبعاً  
حوّن.

13

هنّي دائماً أسرع. هنّي دائماً ال plan إنتو يّلي براسن إنتو كلّ شي يلا يلا يلا. هنّي هيّك. هون بجي إنتو لحظة شوي. إنتو  
خففنا ال pace. مشي هيّك بصير، فيكي تبحسي بالموضوع step by step

14

أول فترة كانت عم بطول. عملنا مشكل يعني إنتو ما بصير هيّك وكزا يعني.. هو شغلو بيتأخّر لأنّو عرفتي كيف..  
طيب أنا بنتي ما مكتوب كتابا ما بخلي مجال. "جيبني إمك معك."

15

هلا أكيد أريح لمّا يكون مكتوب كتابك، أريح لإلك ولإلو ولأهلو ولأهلك. يعني مش إنتو "بترجعي الساعة عشرة،  
بترجعي الساعة تسعة، بترجعي الساعة تمانى" إنتو هيّك تأيّدات.

16

بكون إلي كلام مع بنتي "يا ماما شوفي قد يضغط عليك بأمور بدك تكوني انتي واعية لأنّو ياما قبل العرس بيوم  
بصير مشاكل وما بصير في زواج منا مضطرين نواع نحنا بشي مشاكل انتبهني ما عندي مانع لأي شي بؤربكن من  
بعض الا بالزواج."

17

الفتاة: إي أنا بفهم..

الأم: إي بتفهمي، بس ما بس إنتي يلي بتفهمي

الفتاة: إنتي إختيارك كان صح بالحياة؟

الأم: إختياري أنا؟

الفتاة: إي

الأم: إي.. صح

الفتاة: لكن ليش كان بدك تتركي من يومين؟! بدك تهربي؟

الأم: لأنو.. لأنو.. [مرتبكة]

الفتاة: لو كان إختيارك صح ما كنتي تراجعتي عنو لو..

الأم: إي روعي! شو كل شي لازم يكون كامل؟

الفتاة: إي لكن..

الأم: لأ ما لازم يكون كل شي كامل!

الفتاة: لكن ما في.. ما حدا كامل.. أنا بختار الأنسب لإلي، أنا يلي بنظري بأدر إتحمّل عيوبو مدى الحياة!

...

الأم: [تتكلم عن أهلها] ما كان إلنا رأي ولا إلنا بطيخ.. ما متلكن.. إنتو لسانكن طويل!

الفتاة: لكن وصلنا للنوطة يلي بدّي أوصلها.. لكن الرأي لمين؟ لكن مين لازم ياخذ قرارو بالمواضيع؟ أنا! أنا! أنا!

الأم: اسمعي.. كانوا يشاورونا نسكت، يا إي يا لأ.. إنو ما في قرار

الفتاة: هي آلت إنو نحنا ما كان إلنا رأي، يعني نحنا إلنا الرأي كلو.. شفتي!

الأم: هلاً هنّي شاورونا مش إنو ما شاورونا.. بس إنو ما إلنا.. يا إي يا لأ..

الفتاة: طيب يعني إنتو نفس الشئ عم تعيدو الكرّة!

الأم: لأ فشرتي!

الفتاة: والله بتعيدو الكرّة

الأم: لأ فشرتي!

الفتاة: لكن لازم أنا آخذ القرار

الأم: شو نحنا ما عم نستشيرك؟

الفتاة: لَكُن لازم أنا آخذ القرار. !Me and only me

18

بنتي صارت بعمر ال 29 أو 30.. بعمر ناضج. ما بآ بعمر إئو بس آخدلا عألها إئو مثلاً.. بنتي أول ما كان يجيها عرسان يمكن كان في واحد مثلاً هي شكلاً ما عاجبها.. يعني أنا مرّة سألنا هالسؤال ما من زمان. إلتلاً "دخلك بس هيك أوت بؤعد بفكر إئو معؤولة مثلاً فيه ناس إنتي رفضتيهن هلاً لو رجعوا إجوا كنتي ممكن ترجعي.. ممكن تثلي فيهن؟ مش رجعوا بس لو هني زاتهن رجعوا إئو إجوا ممكن إئو تثلي فيهن؟" ألتلي ما بعرف.. يعني مثلاً مثل فلان [تذكر الفتاة إسم أحد الأشخاص] لأ.. بس غير ناس ممكن كنت جربت."

19

أنا عطول بالها "بدنا ناخذ مثل بيئتنا، مثل جو بيتنا أكثر شي. يمكن فيه كثير ناس أحسن منّا، فيه كثير ناس أوطا منّا، يعني غير طريئة عيشة، غير طريئة تفكير، غير طريئة حياة. حتى مادياً، خلينا نكون وسط. ما نطلع كثير لفوء و ما نطلع لتحت كمان. مثل ما عايشة بالبيت ما فيكي تعيشي أعلّ، وما ضروري نطلع كثير لفوء يعني. يعني يمكن تتعب إذا تطلعت كثير لفوء كمان. ووسط بالدين كثير يعني. كثير شديت عاصة الدين، لأنو عندي الزواج أول شي ديني، يعني زواج عيلة، زواج أسر، عرفتي؟ فيه أشيا هيدي ومن عمرا 15 سنة بحكيها فيها وأيلتلا إئو أصّة العيلة والدين وجو البيت والمستوى الاجتماعي هيدول أشيا أساسية.

20

يعني مثلاً أول ما نضهر مشوار بدّا تؤلو إئو هي ضاهرة. "يا ماما ما ضروري.. ما ضروري.. بعدك خاطبة.. هيدا.. فيه cellular بدقّلك وين ما كنتي موجودة بتحكيه." يعني لا مكتوب كتابها ولا مجوزة. ما بحبّ أنا كثير التشديد هلاً هالمرحلة هي خطبة. ما ضروري، صح؟

21

إي أكيد أنا مرّات بئلاً، بنصحها يعني. هلاً هي أكيد بتنلّي "مزبوط إي" لأنّ كل مرحلة عم تمرؤ فيها عم تكون غير يلي أبلأ. مثل ما أنا بئلاً إئو "كلو خطوات.. هلاً خطبة بعدين كتب كتاب بعدين زواج بعدين ولاد بعدين بدك تفتحي بيت مثلاً، بدك تصيري مسؤولة عن بيت." بلشت تعطل همّ من هلاً، بلشت تسألني، لحالها هلاً، حسّت بالسخن يعني.. [تضحك]

22

مرّة مثلاً كُنّا عم نحكي عن couple ما متّفنين و هيّك، تنلّي إنّو "طبيعي إنّو أوّل الزواج دايماً بصير فيه مشاكل، لأنّو عم بعيشوا مع بعض، بحياتنّ ما عايشين مع بعض."

23

"جوزك مثل ما بتعوديه وإبنك مثل ما بتربيه. يعني كلّ مرا عظيمة عندا رجال عظيم، ما فيه رجال عظيم وإلا من وراه فيه مرا عظيمة." بنصحها "دايماً دير بالك عليه، أومي بواجباتو، خلّصيلو، حيّيه، احتراميه. أهمّ شي الإحترام بين التّنين، ولو كان ولد وهيدا، عرفتي؟ ما تتماذي معو بالحكي. احتراميه بيحترمك وبصير بحبك أكثر كمان."

24

هلاً يمكن معها حق، بالها معك حق بس بذات الوأت بألّها لأ هالطريئة أنسب من هالطريئة ، هلاً يمكن الرجال لما يكون فاير يمكن ما يستوعب، لما يروء ، بالّو أنا وجهة نظري كذا كذا كذا، لما الرجال بكون فاير لو شو ما حكيتيه كأنّو غشاء أسود على عيونو ما شايف شي.

25

انا هلاً يلي بحاكيا ياه إنّو بدك تطوّلي بالّك ماما معلّشي عم بشقّ طرينو ما مشكلة يعني هيدا كلّو إنّ شاء الله بتحكوه لولادكن بكرة إنّ شاء الله بتحكوه لولادكن "والله يا ماما مرقنا بمرحلة.." بتجي تقولي لولادك إنّو "والله يا ماما لو ما صبرنا ما صرنا. الإنسان بدو يطول بالو." وبعدين سايريه، وبعدين بعلمها إنّو مثلاً إذا ما كتير هوّي أخذ قرار جدّي إنتي خدي القرار الجدّي. أوليلو "بدّي هيّك بدنا نوأف عاجرينا بدنا نصير." ما كمان هوّي زغير كمان..

26

ما هو أنا دايماً en contact معها على Skype. شو ما بدّي أعمل بتنلّي ياه. Strogonoff مثلاً؟ بتنلّي online كيف وأنا بطبّنها.

27

الفتاة: لأ ما حكيتيني شي.. جيتي لعندي على تختي تاني نهار إلتيلي "مشي الحال؟" هيدا كلّ شي طلع منك بس. كلمة "مشي الحال."

الأم: إي شو بدّا تسأل الوحدة لكّن؟

28

أحياناً منمرّق يعني "والله الرجال بعوز كزا". مش إئو داخلياً، داخلياً كثير ما بجوز. إئو كيف بتعامل مع جوزي لأ ما بجوز. هيدي أسرار داخلية. بس إئو منحكي عامّة يعني. إئو "أحياناً الزوج بحبّ مثلاً منتهيالو". إئو مثلاً "الفسطان كزا بيعطي التفات نظر مثلاً". إئو هيك منحكي أمور سطحية.

29

لما قرروا يتزوجوا قبل ما تاخذ البكالوريا كان أهم شي نمّي فيها وبأختنا نفس الشي إئو "ولو تزوجتوا وإنّو ما مكفايين جامعة انا مسؤوليتي ما بتنتهي إلا لما تخلصوا جامعة. أنا يوم يلي بتخطّوا برنيطة التخرج حتكون خلصت مهمّتي تجاهكن".

30

أنا من النوع إئو لازم حبّ لإتجوز. بتنّلي ماما مثلاً "نحننا ما أخذنا.. إئو .. إئو إجا هو عريس عالبيت وتعرّفنا ع بعض و هيك بس ما كان فيه حب من الأول، إئو شوي شوي حبيّنا بعض". بس أنا ما بتخيّل، ما في هيك يعني.

31

الأم: إلتلا، إلتلا أنا بستحي إلن "لأ لأ.." إئو بركي شي واحد إجا منيح بيناتن؟

الفتاة: أنا وقتا كنت متيّسة ما بدّي شوف حدا.

الأم: وعّا اتّفأنا إئو إزا حدا تلفن، لحتى نعرفو إزا متلنا ولّا لأ

الفتاة: تأريباً!

الأم: بالّو بتاخذ تلفونا للبيت بتحكيها، بتنّفأ إنت ويّاها إئو تشوفوا بعضكن، ساعتا ok بعطيك النمرة و ok. وإلا نحننا ما منستأبل. اتّفأنا على هيك وخلص، بس ما عاد حدا تلفن من وعّا [تضحكان].

32

أنا بحياتي ما بزعلها لماما، يعني لو نصحتني وأنا ما بتأبل النصيحة، بحكيها بطريئة كثير هيكي برواء. بالّا إئو "أنا ما أدرة" مثلاً أو شي هيك. إي برضى منّا كلّ شي. شو ما بدّا تحكي برضى منّا، ولا ممكن.

إلن "أوعى ها! إذا ما راضية عليكن أنا، الله ما راضي عليكن. إذا بدكن تعملوها عملوها بس أنا منّي رضىانة!" إي ما يعملوها ساعتها يخافوا.. ما يعملوها لأنّ عارفين أنا ما رضىانة.. إلن "ماما إذا أنا ما شايفتك، الله شاهدي الله ناظري."

لأ ما بؤلا كلّ شي أبداً أبداً. ولا بتعرف إذا فيه relationship أو لأ. لأنّو ما بتتأبل الموضوع. جرّبت وما تأبّلت الموضوع.. إنّو أول شي "ممنوع تحكي عالtelefون" و "شو حكيتوا؟ شو عملتوا؟" ممنوع تضهري، ممنوع كزا.. يعني صار فيه تشديد كثير.

الفتاة: إنّو مين بدنا نعزم بعدين. إنّو أنا أكيد أنا من وجهة نظري أكيد بدّي أعمل العرس وبدّي يكون فيه عالم بس يعني مش هدفي إنّو المهم إنّو كانوا 300 و 400 و 500. إنّو يلا مين ما منعرو منعزمو منجيبو ومنحطو بالعرس! يّلي أبعد شوي إنّو يمكن يكون فيه خالو لبابا مثلاً، حتى الأشخاص يّلي أبعد شوي، بس إنّو مش ضروري مدير هالبك اللي عزم مدري مين ومدري مين يّلي عزم مدري مين.. لأنّو العرس مش عرض عضلات.

الأم: هلاً أنا مشووفة أنا يعني.. لأ هلاً بحسّ.. بحترم رأيها. و هيدا المطلوب هيدا ال idealistic وكل شي. بس كمان بحسّ مع أبوها لأنّو هياي عم تحكي بس كمان أبوها عندو معارف.. إي معارف كثير وبعدين هوّي غير إنّو كثير ناس عازمينو. وأنا بحسّ حق معو.. بعدين هو بدو يفرح فرحو ببنتو.

الفتاة: بتجي ضدّي، إذا مثلاً شافت شغلة وحسّت إنّو زوجي على حق دغري "رانيا إنّتي الغلط"، بنّلها "لأ أنا ما غلط وما بعرف شو." خلص بتقلي "إنّتي الغلط." بتصلّ عليي وبتفهمني وما بعرف شو.. بيرجع بيمشي الحال.

المحاور: وما بتوبّخو لالو مثلاً؟

الفتاة: مبلا أمرار، مثلاً بتقلّو "يا محمد"، بس ما بتحكيه حدّي، بتحكي بينا وبينو عشان ما تكبرلي راسي.

أنا بلائي أول شي هاي أصعب لحظة، يّلي عم يسلم بنتو فيها. كمان هيك كيف عم يطّلع فيها وهيك. بنتو رح يسلمها وخلص. حتروح وتصير مع شخص تاني.. أكيد كثير صعبة.



حسب ما بتوكر إنو.. أبل.. إنو.. كنت إنو عرفنا.. ما حاسة إنو.. كانت أول مرة بس كنت شوي مرّدة إنو مثل خاصّة بتكوني the little baby.. إنو شو هيدا الشي بيحي حدن فجأة؟!!

تابعنتي شهر بعد شهر.. حتى وأت ولادتي [ولادة قصيرة] أربعين يوم وهي عندي. يعني شالنتي شيل مثل ما بئولوا. نشلنتي ببيتي، بجوز، بإبني. هي على طول تهتم. صرت حاسة حالي.. إنو أنا أبل كنت حسّ إنو أنا بحبّ بابا أكثر. أنا بحبّ ماما كثير بس بحسّ إنو dose أكثر شوي لبابا. اليوم لو بتطلب ألبى بعطيها آياه.. روجي.

## **VITA**

Born in Lebanon, Khaled Nasser did his undergraduate studies in communication arts at the Lebanese American University in Beirut. He then moved to the United States in 2000 to pursue a master's degree in advertising at Boston University. Upon graduation, he worked in Saudi Arabia as media planner, and account manager until 2006 when he moved back to the United States to work on his doctoral studies in communication theory at the Department of Communication Studies, Louisiana State University. Nasser's research focuses on the cultural influence on interpersonal relationships, social identity and intergroup emotions, and the visual communication in Lebanese political discourse.