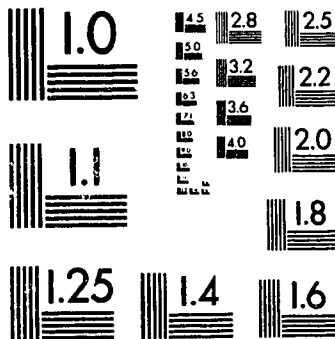


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THEORETICAL AND CLINICAL INTEGRATION OF LURIA'S THESIS OF  
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

BY



MOHAMED BEKKARI

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1991



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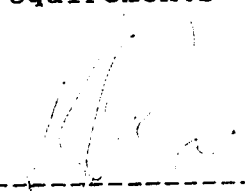
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## ABSTRACT

The ideological gap between Western and Marxist psychology is of paradigmatic proportions, and few attempts were made to bridge it. However, recently, Vygotsky's/Luria's cognitive psychology has overshadowed Piagetian psychology, but in spite of this new prominence, Vygotskean psychology continues to suffer from a shortcoming: Its underplaying of personality factors. Simultaneously, Erikson's psychosocial thesis also gained prominence over traditional Freudian theory, but it too suffers from another shortcoming: It does not account for cognitive development. Since Luria and Erikson's theses are perhaps two of the most widely recognized conceptualizations of cognitive and personality development today, and since they belong to radically different worldviews, they were included in this theoretical and clinical integration. The objective of this integration is to bridge the gap between these two models in order to obtain more comprehensive psychological knowledge.

In order to check the validity of Luria and Erikson's theses individually and also as part of the integration, Grounded Theory, a qualitative method used to develop theories directly from the data, was used. A sample of Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults from Edmonton, Alberta, participated in this study. This

research shows that substantive theory is very comparable to Luria's and Erikson's formal theses. The value of the integration and its implications for future research, and especially for developmental and cross-cultural psychology, are discussed.



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## PART ONE

Developmental psychology has traditionally given special attention to cognition and personality. More recently, Vygotsky and Luria's cognitive psychology gained prominence. At the same time, there is a renewed interest in the more current versions of psychoanalysis such as Erikson's psychosocial stages. It is obvious that, together, Erikson's thesis of personality development and Vygotskian cognitive psychology can provide a model for a better understanding of the person-in-context. This review of the literature on cognition and personality is centered around these two theoretical perspectives. By analyzing them together, it is possible to evaluate their theoretical validity and clinical value.

This dissertation deals with the theoretical and empirical integration of Alexander Luria's "cognitive" thesis and Eric Erikson's "Psychosocial" thesis. The basic lead to this integration comes from Vygotsky's "law of sociogenetic development" which states that:

An interpersonal process is transformed into an intrapersonal one. Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals (Vygotsky, 1978, p.57).



Bain (1984) proposed that this Vygotskian intermental dialogue, in its "inner face," becomes the affective tone of the self, while the "outer face" of this dialogue becomes at least in its behavioral measures the cognitive realm. These dynamics could be compared to the interplay between Freud's pleasure and reality principles. Erikson recognized the former, but missed the latter. Vygotsky/Luria had the merit to recognize both aspects, but left the former quite underdeveloped. Therefore, a theoretical-cum-clinical integration of Vygotsky/Luria and Erikson's theses would be very pertinent to what I consider as the more holistic nature of cognition and personality. This dissertation has two specific objectives: (1) a theoretical and conceptual integration; (2) a Grounded theory study of cognitive and psychosocial/identity claims about the self as the empirical support for the theoretical integration.

Part One of this dissertation is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is about Luria's cognitive thesis; the second, Erikson's psychosocial thesis; the third, proposes a theoretical integration of both theses; and the fourth proposes a research methodology used in this analysis of the cognitive development and the identity statuses of minority children.

The first chapter traces the idealist, and especially the Marxist background of Luria's cognitive thesis, then

looks at the characteristics, and finally discusses the merits, limitations and relevance to the cognitive development of minority children. In the discussion of the idealist background of the theory, a comparison is done between Vygotsky's and Piaget's theses of cognitive development. The second chapter traces the Marxist and especially the Freudian background of Erikson's psychosocial thesis, then looks at its characteristics, and finally discusses its merits and limitations. The third chapter is a discussion of the proposed integration of Luria and Erikson's theses. The fourth chapter discusses Grounded Theory as the basic qualitative method used for the systematic development of theory.

## **CHAPTER I: LURIA'S THESIS OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Vygotsky (Luria's teacher and colleague) came into the psychology arena in 1924, at a time when there were serious disagreements between the schools of Idealism (e.g., Wurzburg, Gestalt) and Associationism (e.g., Pavlov's Reflexology, Watson's Behaviorism). Vygotsky's ambition was to reconcile the positions of these two major schools of psychology. However, he and especially Luria became major proponents of Marxist psychology.

Therefore, in order to understand Luria's cognitive thesis, it is important to have an appreciation of his idealist and particularly his Marxist thought.

#### **B. MARXIST BACKGROUND**

Marx (1906, 1961, 1977) did not develop a systematic psychological theory, but the conceptual elements present in his writings are sufficient to form a Marxian psychology. The major categories of Marx's interpretation of the psyche are "action", "work" and "consciousness", conceived in their dialectical relationships. The other important psychological dimensions such as "language", "thought", "needs" and "imagination" result from the dialectical exchange between these three categories.

Marx's theory of the development of human society was derived from Hegelian concepts. The "transformation" of Hegel's logic of concepts into a logic of social reality presupposes that it is the productive activity of living human beings which constitutes social reality. The importance of Marx's theory derives from his conception of the nature of social change and the historical process. Marx's theory provides the basis for the development of a cogent explanation of the nature of the systemic contradictions of capitalism and hence the possibility of a transition to socialism. Thus, in this view, Marx's

theory finds one of its justifications in a theory of crisis. Marx claims that he revealed a fundamental understanding of the nature of capitalism. He believed that economic crises create opportunities for the articulation of a political strategy which leads to socialism.

Crucial to Marx's analysis of the process of capitalist exploitation is the concept of "alienation". According to Marx, the alienation of the laborer under capitalism has four aspects. They are alienated from the products of their labour, their work process, their human essence and from their fellow human beings and the product and the object of labour of other human beings. Alienation is the consequence of the "universal extension of salability", of turning everything into a commodity, a basic characteristic of capitalism. This universalization of salability is a reflection of the contradictions inherent in capitalist private ownership.

"Freedom" or the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action, is also a category which serves to unify Marx's theory of history and social development. Freedom is impossible in primitive societies, since it is constrained by the existence of an underdeveloped natural environment. Feudalism and capitalism serve as a means of removing constraints on production, but denying freedom by institutionalizing social

relations which permit the persistent dominance of a minority of property owners over society as a whole. Socialism constitutes an important first step towards abolishing exploitative relationships. This is achieved by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the withering away of the state itself is necessary for the attainment of freedom. It is under communism that "free social individuality" (an individuality emerging from a more fundamental social context) is achieved, for in this period of human history, social relations become non-antagonistic because of the total conquest of the physical environment and the social ability to satisfy all "legitimate" human needs.

Given the importance of the category of social consciousness within the Marxist system, it is essential to explain why and how individuals become advocates of a given social perception. Their roles as elements within the matrix of "productive activities" constitute human society. What is the relation of self-consciousness to self-realization and what role can "productive activity" play in inducing the individual to make the correct (in the Marxist sense) historical choice?

Marx, like other post-Enlightenment philosophers (e.g., Hegel and Feuerbach) believed that planning is the conscious subjugation of nature and social relationships to an

omnipotent human will. He also thought that he belonged to the scientific tradition of the 19th century in which strict determinism was the methodological ideal for all sciences, physical or social. However, Marx never thought or asked whether it was possible that there were individuals capable of such comprehensive planning. An individual capable of exercising infallible conscious control over nature, an individual in whom self-conception and self-expression are identical, can in the Marxist vision only be a member of the "true society", a society where the true resolution of the conflict between existence and being, between objectification and self-affirmation actually occurs. Marx believed that, as a social scientist, he identified the historical conditions for the emergence of such a society. Since he was a firm believer in the social construction of reality, he did not think it was necessary to develop a separate discourse concerned with the description of the "true individual" and his/her moral life. Vygotsky and Luria's project was supposed to provide a psychological theory about such an individual.

The importance of Marx's analysis for psychology resides in his historicizing of social sciences. He represents a true Kuhnian paradigmatic shift and followed the pattern of the early 19th century Radical Revisionism which challenged Newton's static conception of time. Marx radicalized

Hegel's dialectic by giving prominence to social phenomena and particularly to class phenomena which he saw as the levers of revolutionary change. Contextual factors such as sociohistorical conditions were assumed to be primary and individual intentions secondary. Marxist analysis forced psychology to abandon its individualistic, rational, and speculative stance. Psychology became psycho-sociology, i.e., psychology will be conceptualized in terms of the relation between the individual and the collective within society.

The critique of Marxism should not discredit these important achievements. It should be conceived as a means to revise, update and advance Marx to the 20th century. But it should also be noted that Marxism has serious shortcomings. For instance, Marxist determinism gives a limited role to the individual, and more importance to political economy. In psychology, this means undermining phenomenological and developmental variables. Moreover, by making the proletariat a universal class, Marx put socialism on the road to totalitarianism. In particular, he insisted that socialism is a scientific endeavour which definitely is not associated with the ecumenical, the aesthetic and the axiological.

This attitude contributed to a gap between theory and praxis. However, today, it is impossible to eliminate

Marxism from the new synthesis of human knowledge. Along with psychoanalysis, phenomenology and the critique of ideology, Marxism can contribute to the emancipation of human beings through the use of a new language suitable for the ecological age.

### **Marxist Grounding of the Cognitive Psychology of Vygotsky and Luria**

Vygotsky was a Marxist psychologist, but he was also under the enduring influence of idealism. He owes to idealism its emphasis on the symbolic-mediational role of language vis-a-vis cognition. This idealist position, also known as the "Humboldtian Tradition", assumes that language shapes the individual's Weltanschauung. This tradition is similar to neo-Kantian philosophy. Other major representatives, besides Humboldt (1969), were Herder (1969) and especially Cassirer (1944, 1973) who defined the human as "animal symbolicum". This aspect of idealist philosophy was incorporated into Marxist psychology, and in a sense redeemed it by providing it with a philosophical and psychological thesis of the individual.

Vygotsky was influenced by Marxist dialectical-materialist psychology. Consistent with materialist objective psychology, Vygotsky's theory of internalization postulated that the source of human consciousness is located



outside the individual, in intermental exchanges and in social history. Vygotsky claims that the development of consciousness in general and of specific cognitive functions in particular occur through mediation gave him the opportunity to retain the concept of the material basis of behaviour and at the same time to analyze human psychological functions as occurrences of complex mediated acts. In addition, Vygotsky's cultural-historical approach to consciousness attempted to explain the human psyche as the product of sociohistorical evolution.

Vygotsky was also influenced by Pavlov (1927). He included a new dimension to Pavlov's second signal system: the explanation of higher mental functions being no longer confined to a stimulus-response type of reflex. For Vygotsky, the second signal system provides the means whereby the human creates a mediator between himself/herself and incoming stimuli so that he/she can respond to them according to his/her own symbolic conceptions.

Moreover, Vygotsky adopted a developmental approach in his studies of cognitive development. He used phylogenetic comparisons to study primitive problem-solving activities; sociohistorical studies to analyze the cognitive development of less advanced cultures; and clinical analyses to study higher cognitive functions. In this regard, he points out that separate lines of development come in contact,

transform one another, and thereby reorganize the process of development. The first major reorganization results from the introduction of social forces into a form of development which was formerly biological in nature. This is the social reorganization of development. It corresponds to the intermental pole of Vygotsky's law of cultural and psychological development. The second reorganization involves the emergence of individual consciousness, especially higher mental functions. This is the psychological reorganization of development or the intramental pole of Vygotsky's law of cultural and psychological development.

Vygotsky also adopted a sociohistorical approach in order to understand cognitive development. A central tenet of this method is that every psychological phenomenon has its own history, and that this history is characterized by both quantitative and qualitative changes, i.e., changes in structure and function through time, experience, and dialectical transformations. For example, Vygotsky applied this line of reasoning to explain the transformation of elementary psychological processes such as perception into complex ones like abstraction. Even the gaps between the natural scientific study of elementary processes and philosophical reflection on cultural forms of behaviour might be bridged by tracing the qualitative changes in

behaviour occurring in the course of development. Vygotsky and his supporters saw in this developmental approach the central method of psychological science. Opponents question the very basis of this method, that is, the so-called second law of dialectics. This law postulates the continuity of quantitative and qualitative changes, and the transition from a lower level to a higher level through a dialectical leap which adds something new to each higher level of development.

A unique feature of Vygotsky's cognitive theory is that it is built around semiotic mediation. He emphasized the fact that all human cognitive processes are mediated by symbols. This symbolic mediation of cognitive processes is seen as transforming and reorganizing biological, intermental and intramental processes. It affects consciousness in a fundamental way. One such instance can be seen in the analysis of the ontogenetic stages of conceptual development. Whereas adults and adolescents are capable of sorting out blocks on the basis of stable categories, and are capable of reasoning abstractly (i.e., in a de-contextualized way, independently of a concrete set of referents), children are often tied to the concrete context the blocks provide.

Moreover, in terms of the social means of cognition and particularly self-concept, Vygotsky argued that these

symbolic mediated processes in humans are also historically formed and socially transmitted from parents/caregivers to children, and from one generation to the other. All higher cognitive functions originate on the social level, and through internalization, become progressively psychological phenomena. It is only at the intramental level of self development that a child is able to engage in self-dialogue as part of his/her own developing repertoire of mental activities. These acts propel the child to a psychological plane in which cognitive activities become more complex. However, it should be stressed that Vygotsky's emphasis was on how individual human consciousness, i.e., higher mental functions and personality derive from social history. Like Marx, Vygotsky argued that the social dimension of consciousness is primary in time and fact, and that the individual dimension of consciousness is derivative, secondary and based on the social dimension. Luria also adopts this sociogenetic perspective in his discussion of cognitive development. His merit resides in researching Vygotsky's cognitive theses and his extending their scope.

#### **Vygotsky/Luria and Piaget's Cognitive Psychology**

Vygotsky was less accommodating of Piaget than Pavlov's associationism. He criticized Piaget's (1923) cognitivist stance, and particularly his views on egocentric speech.

While Vygotskian cognitive psychology is post-Hegelian in a Marxist sense and thus deeply sociohistorical and developmental with a strong emphasis on the symbolic realm of existence, Piagetian cognitivist psychology is deeply Kantian, individualistic, a-historical and has no room for a semiotic realm. The clash between Vygotsky and Piaget is virtually of paradigmatic proportions.

Piaget's developmental psychology surfaced in the sixties. Piaget was involved in a remarkable range of investigations including aspects of intelligence, cognition and moral judgement. His ultimate goal was to create a genetic epistemology specifying how humans come to know their world, how their thought processes and interactions with the world gradually evolve, and how they achieve an approximate correspondence between their inner self and the actual structure of reality. In a way, if Freud is famous for his analyses of psychosexual processes, Piaget's name is associated with descriptions of cognitive stages from birth to adolescence.

For Piaget, cognition is the process of knowing. Cognition is seen as a natural given for survival and a mechanism of adaptation. The cognitive system is defined as a multi-dimensional, hierarchical system that transforms information in order to detect environmental invariants. As such it involves the whole organism. To survive, the

child has to be aware of what is around him/her. Piaget's stages of cognitive development are illustrations of this progressive adaptation to reality.

The sensori-motor stages correspond to the pre-verbal period of intellectual development. The child elaborates schemata to reduce the complexity of incoming stimuli and to assimilate new stimuli to schemata already known. This process of adaptation involves assimilation (reception of stimuli) and accommodation (transformation of stimuli).

The qualitative change between sensori-motor intelligence and the next pre-operational stage begins when the child no longer relies totally on his/her action systems and starts using symbols and particularly language. This symbolic formation allows the child to invoke objects which are not perceptually present, and this leads to object permanence. The pre-operational stage also deals with concepts. The child starts to organize the multitude of elements and experiences and to systematize them into more generalized experiences, expressed in an economical way. However, the child is still attracted to immediate perception, remains egocentric, and is still not able to completely master the dimensions of space, time, arithmetic and geometry. He/she can not solve problems of reversibility as yet, because the operations at his/her disposal are still concrete in nature.

At the stage of concrete operations around seven to eight years, the child is ready to deal with symbols without reference to concrete reality. At the stage of formal operations around 11 or 12 the child can reason on the basis of hypotheses and propositions. During this last stage of intellectual development, he/she achieved what constitutes the fundamental instrument of adult intelligence. Symbols become substitutes for concrete reality. According to Piaget, this constitutes the ultimate in intellectual development.

Piaget was a controversial researcher, but he inspired affection, because, unlike Freud, he proposed a flattering model of human development. He conceived of humans as perfectly logical beings. They are neither robots nor sexual deviants. These ideas give a good feeling about the human race. But, is it possible to develop a major psychological theory from a single human dimension such as cognition? Wouldn't affect and personality exert some kind of influence on cognition? Not at all, according to Piaget: cognitive phenomena determine all aspects of psychological development. Piaget presents his work as a global psychological theory centered on cognition.

Piaget's theory, although impressive, is limited. He emphasized the cognitive aspect of development and ignored the other aspects. A more realistic theory would certainly

deal with cognitive development and the progress made during each period, but would also ground cognition in the total life of the child. However, Piaget insists that cognitive structures determine the affective life of the child. Piaget's excessive rationalism might be acceptable in a philosophical discussion of reason, but a theory of human development cannot be built on reason alone. Moreover, Piaget does not take into consideration socioeconomic variables, and gives the impression that development takes place in a social vacuum. It can be said without exaggeration that the major thrust of Piaget's research is how to explain the relation of the child with the world of things and ideas rather than with the world of people. Social life hardly exists for him. The child must know the objective world and its functioning before he/she is admitted to the social life. Piaget might be an interactionist, but gives little importance to the influence of the environment.

Piaget was often accused of intellectualism, of the arbitrary isolation of cognitive activities, and of paying little attention to the relationship between intellectual life and affective life. Intelligence cannot develop without affect, because the first internalizations of the external world are based on affect. From the very beginning there exists a primary symbiosis, a primary participation



to the other.

The human child does not begin his life as an isolated organism but in a close, almost symbiotic relation with his mother. He is not alone in his interaction with the world. He not merely perceives and cognizes but does so in cooperation and interaction with his mother. What is cognized will depend not only on the needs of the organism qua organism and the selective filtering of sensory input by the reticular activating system but also on the alerting of the infant by the mother and on what one might call the **coresponsive participation** of mother and child in a common world (Schmidt, 1973, p.116).

The infant is not affectively separated; he/she lives in an atmosphere. Therefore it is a type of intellectualism which marks Piaget's conceptions. Moreover, affect is a motivating force for the process of adaptation whether intellectual or social. But for Piaget, affect does not create structures; it represents only the energetics of behaviour while structures come from cognitive functions. Affect is a necessary condition in the constitution of intelligence, but it is not sufficient. Affect explains accelerations or retardations but is not the cause of structure-formation. Acceleration of the formation of structures is possible in the case of interest, and retardation when affective states are obstacles to intellectual development, as in the case of Spitz's (1972) hospitalism.

Piaget's conception of affect is opposed to the psychoanalytic conception of (affective) unconscious

structures. Psychoanalytic theory assumes that affects are inborn safety valves to discharge excess tension. Psychoanalysis further assumes that structures for defense may be formed against massive affect discharges. Affective experience is not a necessary accompaniment of every cognitive structure, although all ideations have an affect charge attached to them. For Piaget, this unconscious affectivity exists only as an energy without form. The relation between affect and cognition is that, in all behaviour, the structure is cognitive and the force is affective. Therefore, affect can not be the cause of a cognitive structure, anymore than cognition can be the cause of affect, because a structure is not the cause of its energy or its form, and vice versa. In other terms, between the two there is a relation of correspondence and not of causality. Concerning Piaget's conception of structures, he sees them as forms of equilibration towards which development tends. A structure is closed, completed, momentarily stable, and capable of auto-regulation. Development goes from one structure towards another.

Piaget also looks at language development in this way. No language development is possible before children develop schemata of actions and achieve object permanence. That is, children are capable of creating symbolic images out of their motor activity, and these symbols are the roots of

language. All children go through a stage during which they create their own symbols. Only after this stage are they able to communicate using a social language. Children under the age of eight years think and speak in an egocentric way even when they are in a social context. After eight years, their thought and language are socialized and this will develop true communication. Therefore intelligence precedes language. Children master symbolic thought before they can speak. When they are ready to speak, they have a conceptual apparatus which allows them to learn the common language.

One basic assumption in Piaget's theory of cognitive development is that children have what could be termed a "need to understand". This need overshadows all other human achievements including affective, psychosexual, and psychosocial development. Even moral development is subsumed under this cognitivist stance as moral judgement (Bekkari, 1983).

Piaget argues that, beginning early in sensorimotor development, much of what children do can not be motivated by primary needs like hunger, but must rather be motivated by a need to understand. But just what children need to understand can be specified only by reference to the conceptual structures which are the basis of their understanding. With such conceptualization of these functional needs, Piaget has come a long way from any

biological model concerned with the energizing of behaviour. What he has instead is a form of cognitive consistency theory in which intellectual activities are motivated by the need to establish the accord of thought with things and the accord of thought with itself. This is a fundamental departure from many major child development theories. No wonder that Piaget, in spite of a quasi universal admiration for his important contributions to developmental psychology, was criticized by many scholars.

Wallon (1949, 1956) was one of the first psychologists to point out the reductionist nature of Piaget's intellectualist stance. His dialectical view precludes any form of isolation of biological and social aspects of early development. He refuted Piaget's conceptualization of affect as a simple facet of cognition. He had the merit to maintain that it is impossible to distinguish in children an interoceptive knowledge of their body from a knowledge of the outside world. He also emphasized the social context, and considered that child psychology is from the beginning sociology, and that its origins should be sought in the body's functions. During successive stages of development, there is on one hand the maturation of the central nervous system which open up new physiological possibilities to children, and on the other hand the social pole. He saw developmental crises as moments when the

evolution of these two factors bring them to such a point that a new system of interaction is elaborated. This conceptualization of child development is very close to Vygotsky's sociogenetic thesis.

A more recent conceptualization was offered by Riegel (1978) who proposed a critique as well as an extension of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. He objected to Piaget's view that the organism is always the active participant and that objective reality is passive. Concerning his extensions to Piaget's theory, he argued for "dialectical operations" which rid the theory of its difficulties and open new vistas to cognition. Dialectical operations are complements to the four levels of operations described by Piaget. There is also a fifth level in which all the other operations are synthesized. Moreover, dialectical operations prevent ceaseless equilibration striving towards abstraction and alienation. They provide for multistage options within and between individuals and thus, introduce social understanding and mutual appreciation. Multistage options will explain why individuals might operate at the formal level when they solve scientific problems, at the concrete level when they fix their car, at the pre-operational level when they appreciate art, and at the sensori-motor level when they savour their favorite dish.

Other scholars, particularly writers with materialist dialectical leanings, criticized Piaget's subject-dominated perspective and argued that for Piaget, reality is entirely an individualistic construction in which the social and historical contexts are ignored.

For Piaget, mentation substitutes entirely for real world action and people manipulate in their heads, hereby leaving objects and reality untouched other than by their conception of it. The end result is reification and acceptance of the existing agreements about power and domination in society (Bain, 1984).

In summary, Piaget's conceptualization of child development (especially the interaction between cognition and affect) shows that, in spite of his interactionist stance, Piaget remains an idealist theorist of cognition, and those who accused him of an intellectual bias were justified in doing so. For example, all his interpretations of the interactions between cognition and affect are clearly consistent with his account of cognitive development as a process of equilibration, in which the subject adopts strategies to cope based on prior schemata. The role of affect and personality in all this is insignificant. Piaget's cognitivist position appears to be arbitrary.

The examples we have chosen of early cognitive activity illustrate yet another fundamental point about cognition in general that we are apt to forget when we look at the logical characteristics of thought rather than at the psychological processes of cognition: Whatever is cognized is something that in some way "affects" the infant closely and arouses affect, or emotion ... The process of cognition is

embedded in affect; an affective awareness (German: *Zumutesein*) is prior to full cognitive awareness (Schmidt, 1973, p.113).

The ultimate in this Piagetian process is the stable equilibrium of logico-mathematical thought or convergent thinking. Piaget is not interested in divergent thinking which has a special focus on creativity in literature and art. This philosophical bias explains why Piaget is not concerned with affect and personality. This is surprising for a student of Jung and Bleuler, and for a proponent of the clinical method.

Piaget and his tradition of cognitive psychology have adopted one particular interest, the technical one, as their model of human knowledge and objectivity. Piaget's logico-mathematical technical animations make objects that are contextual social products appear to be literal, trans-social and trans-historical (Bain, 1984).

### C. LURIA'S THESIS OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Luria's most important work which is pertinent to cognitive psychology, is Cognitive Development - its Cultural and Social Foundations. This work contains the results of a series of studies conducted in 1931-1932. Its importance lies in developing Vygotsky's ideas, particularly his claim that mental processes are shaped by sociohistorical development. Luria wanted to address the question of whether changes in sociohistorical structures or changes in societal activity result only in an expanded

experience and accumulation of new knowledge, or whether they produced a fundamental reorganization of cognitive processes. Luria's conclusion, after testing peasants living in remote areas of Central Asia, was definitely in support of the reorganization claim. Even more dramatic was his suggestion that there is evidence of change at the structural level of consciousness and the acquisition of new mental systems. Such a radical conclusion was reached not only when one considers Luria's complete research, but also individual tests analyzing higher mental functions.

#### **Analysis of Higher Cognitive Functions**

Luria emphasized that, once perception is recognized as a complex cognitive activity employing auxiliary devices and involving the intimate participation of language (and other symbolic systems), then it must radically alter the classical notions of perception as an un-mediated process depending only on the relatively simple laws of association. The issue then is how to characterize the perception of people like the Ichkari women (illiterate women from remote parts of Central Asia) who do not have the conceptual faculties acquired through schooling and the perception of barely literate male collective farm activists and women at a teachers' college.

In the areas of designation and classification of colour



hues and colour groupings, to name the classification of geometrical figures and to experiment with optical illusions, Ichkari women showed a clear preference for concrete operations over abstract operations. In their sociohistorical conditions life experiences were conditioned by a less advanced socioeconomic system, and consequently, the reorganizing influence of schooling was not effective. The encoding process is different because colour and shape perception fit into a different system of practical experience. They are denoted by a different system of speech, and are subjected to different laws.

Vygotsky's work on concept-formation is based on the assumption that the psychological processes which govern the use of words are subjected to change mainly through sociohistorical conditions. For example in a more advanced society where literacy and schooling are integral features of sociohistorical conditions, even preschoolers will try to group together objects such as a small blue circle (colour), a small blue triangle (form), a small green square (size), a small green cube (colour) and so on. The psychological processes governing this way of encoding, a characteristic pattern, are based on a word that would ultimately allow one to single out a common attribute and denote a category that logically subsumes discrete objects. As they become adolescents, children develop a hierarchical

conceptual scheme expressing increasingly greater "degrees of communality" (for example, rose, flower, plant, organic world). Obviously, once a person has made the transition to this mode of thought, he/she focuses primarily on the "categorical" relationships between objects, not their concrete mode of interaction. For the Ichkari women, the determining factor in classifying objects into complexes is graphic perception or graphic recall of the various interrelationships among objects.

Should more concrete methods of generalization prevail in societies where less advanced, non literate types of activity predominate? Ichkari women repeatedly introduced a concrete situation in which the objects could function together in terms of grouping and classifying objects, and in the area of detection of similarity and of understanding the meaning of generic terms. Their thoughts were primarily concrete and practical. On the other hand, young people who had a year or two of schooling, or served in the army, or became collective farmers, presented an entirely different picture. They focused primarily on the categorical relationships between objects and ignored their concrete relationships. These young people had no problem when classifying objects according to some abstract attribute.

Therefore, in the realm of generalization and abstraction, people living in less advanced socioeconomic

conditions characterized by illiteracy and lack of formal education that would allow systematic intellectual development, regarded the logical procedures of categorization and abstraction as irrelevant and of no practical value. Hence their perceptual organizations, however personally meaningful, were pre-reflective. They analyzed an object according to its relevance to a "functional" situation. This operation took precedence over verbal expression and thought which undergoes a radical transformation when the social conditions are improved. At this point, people dispense with graphic thinking and codify ideas primarily through conceptual schemes.

With syllogisms, three factors substantially limited the illiterate group in terms of theoretical and verbal-logical thinking capabilities. The first factor is a mistrust of an initial premise that does not reproduce personal experience. The second factor is the unacceptability of the premises as universal. The third factor involves a disintegration of the syllogisms into three independent and isolated propositions. There was no unified logic and therefore no access for thought to be channelled within this system.

Subjects from the illiterate group were also incapable of solving even the simplest problems whose contents correspond exactly to their practical experience. The basic

difficulty was how to separate the conditions of the problem from extraneous practical experiences, how to reason within the limits of a closed logical system, and how to obtain the appropriate answer from a system of reasoning determined by the logic of the problem rather than by graphic practical experiences. In solving hypothetical problems whose contents contradicted the subjects' experience, the solution usually exceeded the capacities of the people from the illiterate group. On the other hand, subjects who had relatively short-term school instruction, performed hypothetical and theoretical operations.

In the area of imagination, studied via experiments with free questioning to gauge the people's interests, as expected the illiterate people experienced pronounced difficulties in disengaging from the immediate experience and formulating questions that go beyond it. On the other hand, people actively involved in collective farms and who had short-term instruction, and especially young people with one or two years of schooling and active involvement in collective farm life were able to formulate questions actively, and their questions were distinctly questions of knowledge, addressing themselves primarily to pressing problems of social life and related to acquired knowledge or associated stable cognitive interests.

Concerning the illiterate peasants' ability to single

out particular psychological traits in themselves, to analyze their interior world and to evaluate their intrinsic qualities, it was observed that to analyze their own psychological features or subjective qualities was beyond their own capabilities. As a rule, they refused to name positive or negative qualities in themselves when questioned. Instead they described concrete and material aspects of their lives. In the case of young people involved in progressive social life with at least some education, a process of singling out and evaluating personal qualities is discerned. The range of qualities and situations engaged here in attempting to evaluate human positive and negative qualities differs radically from the references to material shortages and personal needs that comprised the content of self-evaluation for the first group of people. Thus, we are dealing with fundamental shifts or the formation of new psychological systems, capable of reflecting not only the external reality but also the world of social relations and ultimately one's own inner world as shaped in relation to other people.

In summary, the facts presented in this research show quite convincingly that the most important forms of cognitive processes - perception, generalization, deduction, reasoning, imagination and analysis of one's own inner life-

vary as the social conditions change and the rudiments of historical knowledge are mastered. As the forms of activity change, as literacy is mastered and a new level of social and historical practice is realized, major shifts occur in the quality of human mental activity. These, Luria claims, are not limited simply to the expansion of the human's horizon, but involve the emergence of new motives for action which radically affect the structure of cognitive processes.

Thus a fact hitherto underrated in psychology becomes apparent: socio-historical shifts not only introduce now new content into the mental world of human beings; they also create new forms of activity and new structures of cognitive functioning. They advance human consciousness to new levels (Luria, 1976, p.163).

#### **Evaluation of Luria's Research on Cognitive Development**

Luria's research indicates that relatively low levels of education or a short exposure to a more advanced system of social relations whether in collective farming or the military, can influence an individual's mode to respond to verbal-logical problems. Luria believes that even low levels of education will change the fundamental structure of cognitive processes because there are remarkable differences in the performance level of groups with minimal literacy training versus those with no training at all. Assuming that the verbal-logical process is a fundamental aspect of cognition, it is hard to reconcile to the fact

that this process can undergo a radical change as a result of only one to two years of literacy training. The striking similarity in both qualitative and quantitative results obtained with illiterate people across different cultures, suggests that it is not the "etic" culture experiences per se, but the exposure to the "emic" culture experiences with their formal educational experiences which are crucial for solving verbal-logical problems. Does this mean that illiterates are not poorer on logical reasoning, but cannot apply their logical skills to verbal materials? Illiterates do not treat the problem as a self-contained logical unit which must be answered only in the context of the information presented within the problem. Therefore, the source of difficulty may not be logical reasoning, but rather the inability to carry on a context independent form of thinking. In other words the illiterate person's logic is different and is suited to a different context which is characterized by a practical approach.

Another difficulty of Luria's research concerns the nature of the contact between cultures. A closer analysis of the protocols of the Central Asian peasants suggests that there was considerable disagreement between the experimenter and the people studied with regard to what should be accepted as the truth.

Rogoff (1981), a researcher with interests in cognitive

consequences of schooling and cross-cultural psychology within a Piagetian framework, remarks that the subject insists that the truth should be based on firsthand knowledge, or perhaps on the word of a reliable and experienced person. For example, when one subject replies: "What the cock knows, how to do, he does. What I know I say, and nothing beyond that" (Luria, 1976, p.109), such a conversation suggests that there is a distance between the subject and the experimenter, and indicates that the subject was not willing to accept the experimenter as an authority.

Rogoff (1981), also cites a personal communication by Triandis, a student of Wallace E. Lambert and Don Hebb, who did cross-cultural psychological studies in countries such as Greece, Germany, Japan, India and the Black communities of the U.S.A., where it is pointed out that: "the peasants' replies may also reflect a conflict between Russians and Central Asians, who were conquered by Russians" (p.254). The full dimensions of this problem reside in centuries-old conflicts between Russian Christians and Central Asian Muslims. These conflicts intensified under the state's official policy of "scientific atheism" which meant political repression against the Islamic worldview and culture.

According to Cole (1971), a student and interpreter of Luria, the tasks given to uneducated subjects should be



ecologically valid before any meaningful inferences can be drawn about their cognitive characteristics. In addition, one of the characteristics of the developmental perspective of Vygotsky, Luria, Greenfield, Bruner, and Olson, especially as it applies to cognitive development in an intercultural context, is that it specifies the effects of literacy as the emergence of abstract thinking and logical operations rather than specific skills. In a similar line of argument, Scribner and Cole (1978, 1981) criticize this perspective on two grounds:

(1) It does not distinguish between the intellectual effects produced by school and non-school literacy.

(2) It assumes that literacy is likely to have the same psychological consequences in all cultures irrespective of the context of its use and the social institutions in which it is embedded.

Moreover, they remark that:

The assumption that "logicality is in the text and the text is in the school" can lead to a serious underestimation of the cognitive skills involved in non-school, non-essay writing and reciprocally, to an overestimation of the intellectual skills that an essayist text "necessarily" entails (Scribner & Cole, 1978, p.24).

Van der Veer and Ijzendoorn (1985) criticized Vygotsky's distinction between lower and higher psychological processes. They argued that he separated these processes too sharply, and that his conception of lower processes as

"natural" and "passive" is questionable. They suggested that these shortcomings can be overcome within the cultural-historical framework.

Bain and Yu (1990), in a study of literacy in rural China, also questioned the basic claim of Vygotsky/Luria that improvement in social conditions, and particularly in literacy, results in a fundamental progress in cognitive development.

Without challenging Vygotsky's idea that changes in social organization, specifically that changes in ownership of the means of production, the introduction of schooling, communication with others through literature or directly in the outside world, and other signs of social progress, give rise to new needs for symbolic technologies, Scribner and Cole (1981) began to question some of the implicit aspects of the idea that improvement in social conditions and symbolic technologies brings with it unqualified progress in all modes of cognition (p.1-2).

In summary, the interpretation of the empirical evidence presented by Luria (1976) was challenged in some respects. As a whole, this short review of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and especially the effects of schooling and literacy suggests that there are a few problems and some general guidelines to this field of research. Generally speaking, schooling was shown to consistently facilitate performance on various cognitive tasks. In considering the specific mechanisms of schooling, various explanations have been proposed. Schooling and to a lesser degree literacy were influenced by the emphasis on the written mode of

language. Unfortunately, Luria did not fully analyze schooling and ideology, two crucial dimensions which may play a significant role in the type of cognitive restructuring which he is talking about. Therefore, it is not surprising that the one aspect of Luria's research which was criticized is his ideological and ethnocentric biases. He overwhelmingly praised the Marxist Russian society for its technological and civilizing qualities. In the field of cognitive or intellectual assessment this can result in a racist attitude towards other cultures. This is why studies of cognition should be supplemented by studies of non-cognitive dimensions such as personality. Then the development of whole human beings will be fully appreciated.

#### **D. RELEVANCE OF LURIA'S THESIS TO THE COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINORITY CHILD**

Luria's thesis of cognitive development, with its strong emphasis on symbolic mediation and particularly language, is relevant to cross-cultural psychology. In Canada, the official policy of bilingualism and multiculturalism, and the new awareness among social scientists of the importance of language to build and encourage a more just society, have focused attention on Luria's thesis of cognitive development. This section will discuss briefly pertinent conceptualizations of the language adjustment of minority

children. It will focus on the case of Muslim Lebanese children living in Alberta.

### **Cognitive Development of Minority Children**

Children of ethnic minorities in Canada consistently experienced difficulties in school. Educators, policy-makers and even parents had a tendency to think that they are intellectually inferior, slow-learners, and generally incapable of achieving average and above average academically. Their poor academic performance was often attributed to English language deficiencies and to their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Educators firmly believed that English language efficiency and the desirable Anglo conformity among minority children were only possible if they were totally immersed in English only programs, and if their linguistic and cultural background were de-emphasized. Thus, minority children became the victims of two competing cultures, each making specific demands on them. At home, the parents tried to keep their cultural and religious values intact, while at school, teachers and administrators were doing their best to enforce the values of the new society.

These social problems facing minority culture groups in Canada were identified since the 1960's and early 1970's by social scientists such as Porter (1965) and Hall (1971).

The poor and minority culture groups -including the French-represented the lower rungs of the economic system. Porter (1965, 1972, 1975) attributes this low status of ethnic minorities basically to the failure of the Canadian educational system. Rather than solving this serious problem, as was successfully done in the case of immersion education for middle class children, the Canadian establishment instead imported cheap labour or skilled manpower whenever necessary. This was done primarily to keep an increasingly American-dominated economy rolling so that the Canadian middle and upper classes could benefit economically without any effort or inventiveness. The inequities of this elitist social system and the failures of the education system are largely responsible for reduced educational and occupational opportunities for ethnic minorities.

Greenfield (1976, p.xxvi), another social scientist with a keen sense of social justice, provided one of the early reflections on bilingualism, multiculturalism and what he termed "the crisis of purpose in Canadian culture". He pointed out the close relationship between the question of language instruction, cultural identity, social equality and political stability in Canada.

But the questions about the destiny of Canada's many immigrants do not end with whether they become speakers of English or French. The broader question concerns their place in Canadian society generally.

As polemicists (Vallieres, 1968) and issue-oriented sociologists know (Porter, 1965; Hall, 1971), language, occupation, and the order of society are closely linked. The question, therefore, is not simply what language new immigrants will speak, but what their place in our society will be (p.x).

Greenfield also addressed the question of what works in second language teaching. He cited Paulston's (1975, p.9) argument that language instruction should not be regarded as an independent variable, but as an intervening variable, itself dependent on the child's cultural context. This is exactly the position taken by Luria in his sociogenetic thesis of cognitive development. In this regard, the evidence indicates that second language instruction for minority children should first help them to master the mother tongue (L1) and later the second language (L2), that is an L1/L2 order. More recently many researchers are taking this position.

Elite and working-class versions of bilingualism have different values and social outcomes. Transition programs, as opposed to immersion programs, aim at replacing the minority child's mother tongue with the second language. Minority children in these programs are usually identified with language problems. If such programs are continued in this indiscriminate and unimaginative way, the situation of minorities in Canada will ultimately be similar to that of the guest workers of Western Europe. As Appel (in Bain, 1983, p.517-526) has shown in the case of the Netherlands'

minorities, bilingual education is promoted only to contain sociopolitical conflicts. Social problems such as high unemployment and job discrimination are seldom seen as a direct result of a poorly conceived second language education. On the contrary mother tongue teaching is not encouraged because it is believed to foster additional sociopolitical conflict by strengthening the cultural and political identity of minority groups.

Bain and Yu (1986), working within the parameters of a sociogenetic model of language, lamented the fact that the 20th century appreciation of close links between the individual, language and social relations is not yet integral to the study of ethnic bilingualism in Canada. Social scientists readily recognize the importance of the psychosocial context in the study of elite bilingualism, but chose to ignore it when they study minority bilingualism. Bain and Yu (1986) stated that this attitude is responsible for a dysfunctional second language instruction for ethnics and other minorities and fosters new forms of social inequality. To overcome this, bilingual programs should first facilitate the mastery of the mother tongue so that it can be used later to learn the "lingua communis." In their view, many minority children need a different pedagogical model. They suggest that, during the early years, the amount of classroom time allocated to

schooling in the mother tongue would predominate. The "lingua communis" would be introduced initially as a subject matter but not as the language of instruction. Once a reasonably good mastery of the mother tongue has been achieved, the situation could be reversed and the heritage language would become only a subject matter.

Besides the crucial role of parents/caregivers, political decision-making and education policy are also indicators of cultural processes and priorities as well as of some of the problems inherent in them. Therefore, it is important to recognize that language policy and school practices have a full impact on the minority child. The aspirations of many minority cultures indicate a very strong desire to eliminate the rapidly disappearing facility in their mother tongues and the decline of the ancestral language with each successive generation born in Canada. Many ethnic minority groups have intuitively recognized the long term effect of an outright assimilation, and can see that it is a direct attack on their definition of themselves.

Moynihan and Glazer (1970) argued that minorities have always favoured "economic-structural assimilation", but rejected cultural assimilation in favour of cultural pluralism. Whenever indiscriminate assimilation is practiced, there is loss of the mother tongue, and sometimes



what was called either "double semilingualism" (Toukomaa & Skutnab-Kangas, 1977) or "psycholinguistic limbo" (Lambert, 1981). The case of the ethnic minorities of the Netherlands and Sweden are now classical in this regard. On the other hand, the case of the Hispanic population of the Southwestern U.S., where they were able to acquire some degree of economic-structural assimilation and cultural-educational pluralism, is now recognized for its economic and political power (and is no longer seen as a threat to the economic opportunities of the Americans, or advocating political subversion). On the contrary, there is evidence that the American majority has started to come to terms with the reality that someone can speak Spanish and still be part of the American way(s) of life.

#### **Language and Cognitive Development of Minority Children in Alberta**

In Alberta, the language policies for ethnic minorities are relatively more progressive than in the rest of Canada. Two types of programs were implemented depending on the importance and vitality of the ethnic group involved. In the case of small ethnic groups or new arrivals, the standard approach is English as a Second Language. Although time and effort were spent to take into consideration the special needs of the children involved, such programs were

conceived as transition programs and therefore the expectations from them remained assimilationist in nature. The other type of program, adopted by the better organized and more established ethnic minorities, is the bilingual school. Conceived on the assumptions that ethnic minority children deserve the same attention as majority children in French immersion, and that the mastery of the mother tongue is fundamental to such a learning, these programs offer instruction in L1 during the elementary school period and only a few periods of English as a subject. The culture of the ethnic group is also given equal importance as the language. This seems to be sufficient to make a difference in terms of language learning and consequently successful academic achievement.

One of the oldest bilingual programs is the Edmonton Ukrainian-English Bilingual Program which is managed quite successfully for more than 15 years. According to the Edmonton Public School Board 1979 Research Report, Ukrainian-English bilingual program students by grade 5 performed better than their counterparts in monolingual classes. Moreover, students who were relatively fluent as a result of L1 spoken at home were significantly better able to detect ambiguities in English sentence structure than unilinguals or bilinguals from predominantly English-speaking homes. Similar results were reported by Hebert

(1976) in a similar study of the Francophone students in Manitoba. Both studies appear to be methodologically sound.

This implies that teaching through the medium of L1 for minority language children is just as effective, if not more so, in promoting English language proficiency as well as overall conceptual abilities than instruction in English alone, provided L1 is the language of instruction and L2 is only a subject. This is done for a relatively long period of time, preferably during the entire period of elementary school. As has been demonstrated by Cummins (1981a, 1981b), it is expected that such an improvement in the mastery of L1/L2 will have positive consequences for the overall cognitive development of ethnic minority children.

#### **Language and Cognitive Development of Muslim Lebanese Children Living in Alberta**

The bilingual English-Arabic program in Edmonton was conceived in the same way and with the same intention as the older successful bilingual programs. The program started in the 1983-84 school year, and enrolment reached 190 students in 1986-87, the year of the first review of the program. Although this review showed that the parents fully support the program, tests indicated that student achievement results were considerably lower than those of the school and the district's mean, and regardless of the

subject considered. In language arts, the Test of Language Development (TOLD), a commercially developed test assessing students' oral language development in English, showed that the majority of year one to year three students performed below average. For instance, 44% of the year three students scored below average. One wonders about these students' standing on the more difficult aspects of the English language such as reading, writing, comprehension, or the fundamental functions necessary for the mastery of language, especially "the symbolic and the control functions" (Bain, 1980).

Shoush (1988), a professor of Islam, Arabic language and Arabic culture, contributed significantly to this report. He identified many areas where improvement is needed, especially the adoption of standard literary Arabic, the language of education and the media in all Arab countries, the extension of the present time allocated to Arabic at the level of grade one from 50% to 100% and grade two from 50% to 75%, the creation of an Arabic cultural milieu in the school and increased participation of the parents and the community to arrange extra-curricular activities with Arabic as the spoken language. Shoush also recognized the need to share experiences and to coordinate efforts with the more established bilingual schools as well as with the more recent programs such as the Chinese

Bilingual program.

Shoush also recommends an increase in the use of L1. Although it is unlikely that he linked the mastery of L1 to a better learning of L2, he appeared to be quite concerned that the students are not able to master L1 and especially L2. The parents see their children's early exposure to L1 exclusively as the only guarantee to safeguard a receding mother tongue. They realistically evaluate the strong influence of the majority language and culture on their offsprings, and realize the real danger is that their children will be unable to communicate with them in Arabic.

Another type of schooling for Muslim/Lebanese children is the Islamic school concept. Conceived the same way as the separate school, and promoted mainly by the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) for the last ten years, the major goal here is to foster the healthy development of the Islamic personality by providing education in an Islamic context. Although the Sister Clara Islamic schools, owned by the Nation of Islam (known as the Black Muslims until the 1970s), were in existence in the U.S. for more than 50 years, the phenomenon of the Islamic school in Canada is very recent. However, there is now an Islamic school in every major Canadian city. The Islamic school of Toronto just completed its sixth year of operation and the first group of elementary school children graduated in 1990. In

spite of financial difficulties and limited human and educational resources, the level of education appears to be comparable to that of the other schools. In Edmonton, Al-Rashid Mosque started its own Islamic school in the 1988-89 school year.

The Islamic school appears to be the most suitable solution to the educational needs of Muslim children. From the standpoint of developing an Islamic personality, the creation of an Islamic environment, within a Canadian context, where children can enjoy Islamic practices without inhibition, goes a long way to strengthening their identity. From the standpoint of academic achievement, the local school boards curricula are adopted and the same attention is paid to choose qualified teachers, and use suitable teaching aids and methods. Academic achievement is monitored to make sure that performance is comparable to public schools.

Language education is also considered to be important because most of the children are from bilingual homes. However, a more systematic approach to language education is needed. It seems that the Islamic school could implement the bilingual school model even more successfully than the bilingual school. In an Islamic/Arabic cultural milieu, it will be more feasible to foster fluency in the Arabic language. During the early grades, education should be

exclusively in Arabic, with English/French introduced progressively as more mastery of Arabic is achieved. In the case of children whose mother tongue is English or French, an immersion type of program to learn Arabic as a second language is recommended. This type of language education is feasible and could be successful. However, parents should be reassured that the mastery of the English or French language will not suffer. Many parents do not understand the close relation between the mastery of L1 and L2.

In summary, Luria's thesis of cognitive development is very relevant to ethnic minority children and could be valuable for the proposed integration with Erikson's psychosocial thesis. Since Luria has explicit views about the relationship between Marxist psychology and psychoanalysis, a brief summary of his views is provided here before discussing Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages.

#### **E. LURIA'S VIEWS ON PSYCHOANALYSIS**

According to Luria (1925), there are meeting points of Freud's theory and the theoretical Marxism which was prevalent at the University of Moscow at the time. While recognizing the fact that in its early stages Marxism did not have a complete and pure psychological theory of

personality because its interests lay elsewhere, mainly in the problems of society, Luria advised that:

We need only look a bit more closely at the premises of the Marxist approach to personality to see that with respect to problems of the mind, this approach really does postulate an integral, concrete person as its subject matter, not isolated functions of the mind, as had been the practice in general psychology (In Cole, 1979, p.11-12).

In Luria's view, psychoanalysis is incomparably more in line with the methodological requirements of positive science than traditional psychology. This is why psychoanalysis is close to dialectical materialism which formulated these methodological requirements of positive science in their clearest form. Instead of studying discrete, isolated "elements" of mental life as in general experimental psychology, psychoanalysis attempts the study of the whole personality, the whole individual, his/her behaviour, inner workings and motive forces. The first point of reference in psychoanalysis was the ill personality, the person out of touch with social expectations. Its paramount task was the active treatment of this person. This practical, activist orientation is perhaps what caused psychoanalysis to construct its unique system of explanatory psychology:

We may take this as a fundamental and primary postulate of psychoanalysis: psychoanalysis is primarily an organic psychology of the individual; its major objectives are: to trace the determining factors of all aspects of the concrete individual living under definite sociocultural conditions and



to explain the more complex structures of that individual's personality in terms of more basic and more primary unconscious motive forces. (In Cole, 1979, p.14).

Another aspect is its view of mental activity as an energy process not different in principle from somatic processes. Thus, psychoanalysis provides us with a purely monistic, developed conception of this energy, stipulating that it may quite easily assume psychic forms of patently somatic forms. This "psychic energy" is wholly subjected to the laws governing any other form of energy. According to Luria, this is surely a tremendous step toward a materialist, monistic psychology, and a decisive break with the metaphysics and the idealism of old psychology.

Luria's positive evaluation of psychoanalysis shows the close relationships between the two systems, especially in terms of the development of materialist psychology. However, Luria advised that psychoanalysis must now integrate the organism into a system of social influences.

If the system of psychoanalysis is to measure up better to the requirements of dialectical materialism, however, it must develop fully the dynamic dialectic of mental life and take a third step toward a holistic approach to the organism: it must now integrate the organism into a system of social influences (In Cole, 1979, p.31)

I believe that no one has done this better than the neo-Freudian, neo-Marxian psychoanalyst Erik Erikson.

## F. CONCLUSION

Chapter I provided the review of the literature of cognitive development as seen by the proponents of the Vygotskian tradition, and especially by Luria. The importance of Luria's cognitive thesis lies in:

(1) His emphasis on semiotics, and especially language, and their role in mediating cognitive processes, and;

(2) Considering "ontogenesis within sociogenesis." For Luria, semiotics, and especially language, play a central role in cognitive development. All cognitive processes, from the simple perception of colour to the most abstract human thought, are mediated by semiotics. This perspective has important implications for education. In the case of ethnic minority children, Luria's cognitive thesis is very pertinent to the issue of what kind of language education is suitable for them in a multicultural and multilingual society such as Canada.

Luria sees "ontogenesis within sociogenesis". This is a novel approach to human development, which is usually considered to be the other way around. However, this perspective is crucial for understanding the person in context. By focusing on the progressive internalization of social practices, it avoids the idealists' tendency to view the person outside his/her concrete reality.

These two features of Luria's thesis of cognitive development are important for the proposed integration. The objective of Chapter II is to discuss Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development, the other facet of the integration.

## CHAPTER II: ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THESIS

### A. INTRODUCTION

Erik Erikson is one of the most important figures of the post-Freudian psychoanalytic school. Although he showed an allegiance to Sigmund Freud, his departure from his psychosexual perspective is significant. Today, his name is associated more with the epigenetic tradition and with psychosocial development. His own school of thought is represented by such prominent researchers as James Marcia and is presently one of the most researched traditions in developmental psychology and the psychology of personality. In this chapter, Erikson's Freudian background is presented first then his psychosocial thesis and its extensions are discussed.

### B. FREUDIAN BACKGROUND

In order to understand Erikson's psychosocial stages thesis, it is essential to first discuss the way he was influenced by Freud. Freud (1856-1939) is one of the most important figures in psychology. His theories influenced many fields of human endeavour and were by no means limited to psychology. His theories of the unconscious mind, and his sexual explanation of human conduct have drastically changed the way human behaviour was interpreted. In spite

of strong reactions against Freud, and the emergence of other psychological models, Freud's theories still have an effect on individuals as well as societies. They continue to generate constant heated debates. However, this exceptional success does not mean that Freud has always been right in his views, or that his theories do not have some fundamental problems. His theories contain a good dose of subjectivity, which makes it necessary to know his personal life and his sociocultural background. For a better appreciation of his contributions, it is also necessary to keep in mind the historical development of ideas: What were the factors which contributed to the elaboration of Freud's psychosexual theory? What truly were his original contributions? And what were the limitations of his theories?

Freud started his scientific career in a hostile environment. After returning from Paris where he attended the presentations on hysteria by Charcot (1825-1893), his findings were attacked by Vienna's scientific establishment which did not appreciate Charcot's understanding of hysteria. In 1896, he gave up neurology and started to develop his own system. Thus, his scientific career was very brief. Actually Freud, a man of great literary talent, was more prone to register all his thoughts and impressions than to follow scientific rigour. He also possessed the art

of making the most controversial judgement into an absolute truth. Fromm (quoted in Ellenberger, 1970, p.467) observed that Freud had "an unresolved problem between having to remain in the opposition and his craving to be fully recognized".

### **The Discovery of the Unconscious**

Freud repeatedly stressed the importance of the unconscious mind, and maybe without realizing gave mortal blows to Rationalism by demonstrating that reason does not control thought or behaviour. However, attributing to Freud the discovery of the unconscious is a historical inaccuracy. The concept of the unconscious mind was discussed by philosophers at least since the 17th century. But Freud was the first one to conceive of the unconscious in this fashion.

Ever since Descartes (1596-1650) defined reason as consciousness, he provoked a European reaction which led to the discovery of the unconscious. Even rationalists such as Spinoza (1632-1677) and Leibniz (1646-1716) recognized the existence of the unconscious. Leibniz went so far as to suggest the idea of calculating a quantitative threshold for unconscious mental activity. The realm of what he called "small perceptions" (of which we are not conscious) is larger than that of perceptions. Hume (1711-1776) also

proposed that human behaviour is the result of instinctual and physical contingencies acting on us without our knowledge. Goethe (1749-1832), a philosopher widely read by Freud, thought that both consciousness and the unconscious explain the actions of the spirit. Thus, it is not legitimate to credit Freud with the discovery of the unconscious. As Whyte (1970, p.15) explained:

Ideas are not discovered once and for all and passed on like museum objects. They must come to life, be kept alive and made productive in the process of human minds and the activities of individuals.

However, the real issue is not the unconscious, but Freud's structure, which is problematic. For him, the unconscious defines the true human condition because consciousness corresponds to an artificial human condition imposed from outside. Such conception of the unconscious is a new thesis, but it is also a controversial one. Gratton (1955, p.61) argued that:

Le moi devient un dérivé du ça. Toute sa (Freud) conception de l'homme devait se ressentir de cette vision par l'envers. Sûrement biologiques, bien que formellement psychiques, les investissements du ça dans des activités spécifiques du moi (et du surmoi) devaient lui obscurcir l'aspect primordial et positif de ces instances supérieures.

First, Freud identified mental activity with the impulses of desire, then with unconscious repressed impulses, and finally identified both with sexual impulses which became his ultimate and unique explanation of mental activity. Darwin's influence on Freud is much in evidence

here. Humans become natural beings and from then on, the resemblance in biological functions will be construed as a similarity in mental make-up. The Freudian conceptualization of the human condition is developed according to this analogy with animal life. When Marx's determinism is added to Darwin's, humans become totally frozen in economic and instinctual necessities. They are incapable of transcending these new absolutes. Whyte (1970, p.55) argues that both Marx and Freud had nobler purposes in mind but did not have the proper understanding or the tools to formulate more adequate theories:

A reasonably balanced recognition of the inescapable immediacy of change, in contrast to the imposing static abstractions of exact reason was first expressed by Herder ... Both Marx and Freud seemed to be aiming at this, but neither possessed an adequate understanding of the fundamental process with which he was concerned, and each had to employ static abstractions which appear unsatisfactory today: separate, supposedly unchanging economic classes, and persisting entities or regions (superego, ego, id) unto which the mind is assumed to be divisible.

### **Freud's Psychosexual Theory**

Freud's psychosexual theory has been criticized because of his insistence on explaining all human activity by sexuality. Critics reproached him on his over-generalization from abnormal cases to all other people. Other critics questioned the rigour of his procedures to make his observations and did not accept the value of the



myths he introduced to psychology. But the first critique that should be made to Freud is his conception of humans. He viewed them purely as material beings incapable of transcending the immediacy of experience. In this fashion, humans were reduced to biological impulses.

What is striking in the European attitude towards sexuality is the sudden passage from one extreme attitude to a completely different, but also extreme attitude. An attitude of sexual repression was prevalent and puritan customs corresponded to the attitudes encouraged by priests, who adopted celibacy as a way of life. At the beginning of the XIXth century, a new attitude toward sexuality became apparent. The industrial revolution, accompanied by the development of large cities and nascent capitalism contributed to a new conception of sexuality. A more liberal attitude replaced traditional values. The structure of the family started to change as women were forced to work to help support themselves and their families. Gradually, the sexual act was seen without its moral connotations. Men and women came to the conclusion that the more sexual freedom, the less repression and thus a better lifestyle for all. Freud contributed largely to this new attitude. In a way, the so-called sexual revolution could be dated back to 1908, the year his Three Essays on Sexuality were published.

In 1896 Freud successfully presented his seduction thesis of hysteria, and consequently, by 1908 he became the sole authority on sexuality. But it is important to keep in mind that the historical development of ideas and the sociocultural and historical context played an important role in Freud's theory. Ellenberger (1970, p. 508) argues that:

Freud's Three Essays appeared in the midst of a flood of contemporary literature on sexology and were favorably received. Freud's main originality was to synthesize ideas and concepts, the majority of which lay scattered and partially organized and to apply them directly to psychopathology.

Freud tried to explain the human condition solely by sexuality. After, we noticed an enormous widening of the concept of sexuality, which brought it to the level of a fundamental aspect capable of explaining all human activity. Freud looks at sexuality in a linear and horizontal fashion, and at the same time considers it to be capable of regulating the economy of pleasure and beyond, which is achieved according to the simple Fechnerian principle of homeostatic stability. Mental life is reduced to sexual activity or to an energy of a sexual nature called libido. Human behaviour in its many forms takes on a sexual coloration. Humans engage in any activity, however insignificant it may be, because it gives them some pleasure. Sexual activity is present at all levels of human activity: feelings, thoughts, imagination and spirituality.

Sexuality becomes the equivalent of being specifically human. Although Freud recognized that the need for self-preservation is more primary, he reasoned that sexuality becomes more important in civilized societies because these societies protect the ego against practically any danger. However, as it is well-documented in primitive societies, sexual activity can become a luxury. For example, recent anthropological studies have shown that warring tribes give less importance to sexual activity than more peaceful tribes.

Freudian pan-sexualism is an attempt to explain human behaviour by a single factor. Even though it is conceivable that sexuality is one of the great human capabilities which colours the totality of human life and at times appears in the form of a powerful imperative, however, it does not mean that it is everything. Once this need has been satisfied, humans do not think about it for some time and turn to other important activities. They will certainly feel renewed sexual desire and will try to satisfy it in order to reduce the tension which goes with it. However, there is a difference between feeling the imperative of sexual desire and being essentially sexual.

Freud (1908) also introduced the idea of infantile sexuality. Traditionally, the term sexuality was the equivalent of genitality, but with Freud, sexuality also

came to encompass the erotic aspect which precedes the sexual act proper. This is a useful differentiation, and Freud will maintain that the behaviour of children has a largely erotic coloration. Thus, the various stages of child development are characterized by the localization and the kind of sexual (that is erotic) desire that the child experiences.

Moreover, Freud introduced mythological speculations, and argued that the human child, especially the male, has a real sexual desire for his mother. He found in the myth of Oedipus an illustration of this phenomenon. He made, without reservation, a big step from the domain of science to that of myth. He ignored the fact that sexuality is an ability which appears late in childhood because physical and psychological maturation are not yet complete. This does not mean that children do not know anything about sexuality. On the contrary, they become interested in their body, including their sexual parts at an early age. But this knowledge is not of a sexual nature; it is mainly a need to satisfy their curiosity. And even if a child engages in sexual activity in an adult fashion, this does not mean that it is a real sexual act. It is simply imitation. The child engages in sexual acts in an imaginary way, but does not understand anything about the sensations and the feelings which accompany adult sexual acts.

Moreover, it is highly unlikely that such an ability appears so suddenly. Sexuality develops gradually with age and attains a stage of complete or near complete development only during adolescence or shortly thereafter. Therefore, trying to fit sexuality to childhood is an exaggeration which does not have any biological or psychological basis.

The idea of sexual desire directed towards the mother is a myth, because real life suggests something else. Children have strong feelings of possession toward their mothers. They dislike any kind of competition, even if it comes from the father. In reality, older children dislike younger siblings who enjoys a privileged place: the breast and the attention of the mother. On the other hand, the relation of the daughter with her mother can not be of a sexual nature unless it is explained in terms of homosexuality. The daughter has the same feeling of possession towards her mother and resents any form of competition. These speculations are the weakest elements of Freud's theory.

Freud also introduced the concept of sexual repression, a concept closely linked to his idea of sexual desire directed towards the mother. Because of fear of the father, the child strives consciously to stop this desire from manifesting itself and represses it in his unconscious mind. In this fashion, the desire is transformed into moral and

religious sentiments. There is, therefore, a difference between sexual desire and sexual activity. The human is capable of controlling sexual desire and sublimating it in order to get involved in other activities. Sexuality is not an absolute, in spite of its imperative character.

Animals use all their energy to satisfy their desire. Their contribution to life comes through sexual activity in the form of reproduction. They do not create new possibilities or improve their lifestyle. On the other hand, humans give a purpose to their sexuality. They refuse to live it in a purely physical way. Maybe it is even the one single activity where human originality is most apparent. Because of the fact that human sexual activity extends over the whole year and is not limited to a certain period of time like in the animal kingdom, it has become a permanent feeling. This explains the feelings of love and peace associated with sexual activity, as well as the moral and legal injunctions instituted to protect love and family life.

Humans are therefore clearly different from animals because of their ability to control their sexual desire. Animals are controlled by natural laws which do not allow them to be preoccupied with sex outside of certain periods, but humans have the ability to control their sexual desire, or at least a certain freedom of choice in this regard.

Sexuality has become one of the greatest human motivations. Art, literature, music and dance often contain sexual elements. In this way, humans are able to express different sexual feelings ranging from strong sexual desires to romantic feelings. Some of these feelings are essentially physical in nature while others are more emotional. Maybe, it was this great variety of feelings which gave Freud the reason to say that humans are basically sexual beings.

Freud believed in sexual freedom because he interpreted some forms of human behaviour as repression instead of simple control. This is the reason why he thinks that morality, even in its most natural form, is characterized by harshness. He seems to say that either humans accept sexual freedom or they are doomed to suffer from sexual complexes. However, modern experience clearly shows that sexual freedom does not solve all the problems. On the contrary, today modern society enjoys a great freedom in the area of sexuality and at the same time is going through a sexual crisis. It seems that the more sexual freedom, the more sexual deviation, and the less satisfaction experienced.

In addition, the generalization that Freud makes from abnormal populations to all people is questionable. Even if there is a certain resemblance between normality and deviation, it is only a resemblance in form, while

functionally the two remain different. Contrary to normal behaviour, sexual deviation is a function which threatens the person's adaptation.

Freud's other conceptualizations of sexuality were better appreciated, especially in the area of psychopathology. His analyses show the contribution of sexuality to the etiology of certain psychological problems.

The neuroses are based on sexual instinctual forces. This hypothesis, Freud argued is itself supported by evidence. If we now combine this with the further hypothesis, which is also taken to be well grounded, that the neuroses reveal ... infantile impulses, then we have strong evidence, though indirect, for infantile sexuality (Wollheim, 1971, p.111).

Freud maintains that people do not remember infantile sexuality because of the amnesia which characterizes this period of life. He sees a great parallel between this type of amnesia and the amnesia found in hysterics which he invariably linked to the repression of sexual instinct.

#### **Evaluation of Freud's Psychosexual Theory**

Freudian psychosexual theory had given sexuality a larger sphere of influence. For the first time sexual freedom will become the philosophy of the masses because many people thought that Freud's ideas were based on scientific research. However, the Freudian methodology was questioned.

Many of the distresses of our age are due to the



impatience of self-conscious man in treating his own personally preferred ideas or conception of order, as final and universal (Whyte, 1970, p. 46).

At times it is not the truth which matters so much, but how it is presented to the masses. The possibility of an ideological deformation of scientific knowledge is always present. Freud's ideas are largely responsible for the reversal in the general attitude towards sexuality. Generations of people were raised ignoring any legitimate relation between sexuality and morality. Sexual freedom became the norm. Very often, it was forgotten that reducing sexual activity to simple physiological reactions will entail personal and social consequences. Those who control the economic and political life of society encouraged this movement because of power and profits. Fashion, cinema, television, literature and art became the tools of a systematic sexual sur-excitation. This new freedom was also tied ideologically to irreversible progress. Only recently were these assumptions questioned.

Conceptual analysis, a philosophical school committed to a humanistic and non-reductionistic social science which views human actions in terms of intentions, purposes and reasons, strongly objects to Freud's theories. Freud's adopted reductionist ideal is seen as a means to gain the status of being "scientific" and enjoying the explanatory power of a mathematico-deductive model. To achieve this

status, the portrayal of humans as determined by mysterious powers beyond their control, while their consciousness is reduced to an epiphenomenon, is a small price to pay. Therefore, this "scientific" stance of Freudian psychology presumes that humans are determined by extra-experiential processes which make them look like irrational beings.

Freud is a trained research neurologist. Medicine is concerned with theories about and therapy for the body: Freudian psychology involves theories about and therapies for the mind. It was an attempt to establish the concept of a science of the mind, and was never intended to be ultimately compatible with scientific medicine. Initially, Freud succeeded in explaining hysteria in terms of the traumatic sexual experiences of his subjects. But this explanation was undermined by making these experiential processes unconscious, only a short step from translating them into neurophysiological theories.

Hampshire (1959), a philosopher associated with conceptual analysis argued that Freudian therapy is a conscious form of liberation from the Unconscious. Although philosophers from other traditions such as Critical Theory [e.g., Habermas (1972)] have made the same point, Freudians could well object that this is not the case at all. The human's conscious ego is not strong enough to overcome the irrational forces within it with one rational decision or

a sort of New Year's resolution. Rather, the patients must undergo long hours of therapy with the help of their analyst in order to recondition them to accept the previously unacceptable sexual wishes as their own. Still, this cure is effective not so much because it is true or rationally convincing, but because it is persuasive and emotionally rewarding. Resistance might be an expression of the patient's dislike to be subtly indoctrinated.

According to Peters (1958), Freud proposed his theory on the unconscious mind as an overall deterministic theory which was overwhelmingly based on physiological factors. He thinks that it is wrong to confine Freud's deterministic and non-humanistic accounts to peripheral and pathological forms of behaviour, and to say that Freud never meant to explain the normal conscious and purposeful forms of behaviour. Ultimately the Id's drive is an instinctual one, deriving from the human biological and sexual constitution. Similarly the various Ego-functions, which censure and repress the workings of the Id, according to Freud, will ultimately have their basis in facts about the human neurological system.

Freud conceived of the nervous system in "mechanistic and even hydraulic terms" (Jones, 1964, p.10). He later came up with a psychological theory which viewed the continuous flow of subconscious wishes emerging to encounter

consciousness and to express themselves in consciousness in a camouflaged and symbolic manner. The nerve impulse metaphor as well as the topical organization of the brain, cannot be any clearer. This later theory is a kind of decorum of the earlier theory of the energy flow. It was merely the statement, in psychological terms of an energy and excitation flow which, in principle, could be pinned down primarily in neurophysiological terms. Thus Peters (1958, p.65) believes that Freud "never really abandoned Hobbes' heavy hypothesis ... that psychical states were reflections of material elements subject to the laws of motion". MacIntyre (1960, p. 22) writes:

It is my contention that Freud preserved the view of the mind as a piece of machinery and merely wrote up in psychological terms what had originally been intended as a neurological theory.

He sees that "the whole structure of Freud's theory leads him to see an omnipresent causation exerted upon conscious life by the unconscious" (p.90).

MacIntyre prefers a specifically human psychology which shows that humans are completely different from things or animals. These human phenomena reside in the ordinary language and concepts with which we talk about human intentions and actions.

Existential phenomenologists believe that the universal and distinctive feature of humans is their freedom and

consciousness. They argued that the famous distinctions between 'phenomena' (which can be known) and 'noumena' (the ultimate reality which cannot be known in the usual way) which were interpreted by Kant as only regulative principles of knowledge were later seen by Freud as distinctions between substantial modes of reality. They think that building an explanatory system on the model of a post-hypnotic suggestion is not realistic. It is no longer an innocuous description but an interpretive system which is not straightforward but altogether devious. The mental processes suggested in hypnosis are those of subjects whose actions are caused by unknown factors. The subjects may try to rationalize their actions without ever suspecting the real cause. This traps them in a hopeless situation which can only show their utter ignorance and at the same time the omnipotence of the analyst. Moreover, the attraction of this model gave Freud the reason to invoke the phenomenon of 'resistance' whenever the subject rebels against this pseudo-reality.

Sartre (1962) uses on a Cartesian-type of argument to establish not only that consciousness is the distinctive feature of humans, but that they also have the potential for self-consciousness. According to Sartre (1962, p.51):

The psychoanalytic interpretation conceives the conscious phenomenon as the symbolic realization of a desire repressed by the censor. Note that, for consciousness, the desire is not implicated in its

symbolic realization.

Sartre explains that, for psychoanalysis, the conscious phenomenon is subsumed under the unconscious, and it is the unconscious which determines every aspect of the conscious phenomenon. For example, an unconscious wish such as the son's wish to have sex with his mother is transformed (for instance sublimated) into the conscious wish to run errands for her. According to Freud, the unconscious desire causes the conscious desire and the latter desire symbolizes the former. The role of the psychoanalyst is to decipher the unconscious wish from the conscious one.

Although Sartre stressed that self-deception is a comprehensible project of the human personality, he refused to accept that a conscious desire could stand for an unconscious one. For him, "it would be better to recognize frankly that whatever is going on in consciousness can receive its explanation nowhere but from consciousness itself (Sartre, 1962, p.55)." Therefore, for existential phenomenology, Freudian psychoanalysis leads only to the understanding of a myth of its own creation. The person's unconscious distracts him/her from understanding his/her being-in-the-world.

The best analyses of this tradition may be found in Merleau-Ponty (1965). In his discussion of the sexual 'spaciality', he stated that sexuality is a conscious mode

of existing and acting. It is not the "be all and end all of everything", as Freud presumed, but nonetheless it is a vitally important dimension of existence in terms of how people think, act and relate to each other. Sex is an existential fact as well as a physiological one, and therefore, according to Merleau-Ponty, it is wrong to force the explanations relevant to physiology in order to understand this sexual mode of existence. What is required is not a physiological explanation but phenomenological descriptions of existential states and facts. "Sexuality, if it is 'in' anywhere, is in existence, it is in that Body-Mind fusion, that is a human's being-in-the-world." However, Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.158) tried to minimize Freud's reductionism, and maximize his humanism.

In summary, Freud's theory had revolutionized society's attitudes towards sexuality and consciousness. On the positive side, it could be argued that Freud viewed a liberated and integrated self as totally detached from the primary libidinal object (the security of the uterus and the caretaker's breast), which is invested in an ideal through the use of sublimation. This liberating operation has to involve parricide because the father represents the first and last ideal to his son. This psychic state is managed by the fear of castration, an essential element of the Oedipean dynamic. The substitutes for the primary libidinal

object, namely women, children, money and wealth can become absolute truths in themselves. These objects are necessary because they are the foundations of culture. Their unconscious dissimulation elevates them to become powerful symbols and allows the person to develop a projective identification through these objects. This will ultimately lead to a loss of freedom vis-a- vis these objects. The person no longer possesses these objects, but rather these objects possess him/her. It is a form of alienation, a neurosis. This type of dissimulation reinforces repression. The patient is helped through free association and the interpretation of dreams.

On the negative side, Freud's theory remains questionable because of its numerous exaggerations and its non-scientific nature. Freud wanted to underscore the importance of sexuality, so he enlarged this concept beyond its normal scope. He incorporated the so-called child sexuality, putting it on the same continuum as abnormal and normal sexuality and an unconditional position for sexual freedom.

Erikson comes from this Freudian psychoanalytic background. He was able to build on the more positive aspects of Freud's psychosexual theory. What he proposes is a psychosocial thesis which is closer to the framework of the ego-psychologists than to Freud.



### C. ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THESIS

Erikson is primarily from the psychoanalytic tradition. As a student of Sigmund and Anna Freud, he developed a strong commitment to Freudian psychology. However, at the time he began writing, the trend in psychoanalytic thought was to grant more autonomy to the ego vis-a-vis the id [Hartmann (1958), Loewenstein (1966)] and to view the ego's functions as extending to adaptation rather than mere defense. Erikson (1963) emphasized the unifying function of the ego and measured its strength by the range of conditions that an individual's ego is able to unify. He saw the ego as mediating between outer events and inner responses, between past and future, and between the higher and lower selves.

Another aspect of Erikson's concept of ego development, one which reflects his neo-Marxist leanings, is that it is impossible to isolate humans from their social history. Erikson's concept of the ego, like that of Vygotsky and Luria, is in many ways a social one. Reflecting in a fundamental way, the zeitgeist of his time (e.g., the views of psychoanalysts of the sociocultural and neo-Marxist schools like Fromm (1947), Sullivan (1953) and other so-called Freudo-Marxists of the Frankfurt School), Erikson's view of ego development leads to a much greater emphasis on

social processes and their influence on the developing personality than had previously been the case in Freudian psychoanalytical theory. This is why, when judged from this particular angle, Erikson's personality theory is basically psychosocial in nature and only to a lesser extent a representative of classical Freudian theory.

Some scholars (e.g., Evans, 1969) actually believe that Erikson's contributions were qualitatively different from those of Freud. Erikson's self-imposed mission has been to extend and refine Freud's notions of personality development, with particular attention to child development. Because he could not openly challenge the views of the psychoanalytical establishment, he focused his work on those aspects of psychoanalysis which he believed should be extended, and to some degree revised. His most important proposals were related to: (1) The healthy personality; (2) The psychosocial stages; (3) The identity crisis.

#### **Focus on the Healthy Personality**

Freud elaborated a dynamic theory of personality development from a psychopathological point of view. According to Erikson (1963), the era of enlightenment of which Freud was the last great representative, left us with the illusion that sufficient insight into pathology would lead men and women to be better adjusted. Freud realized

that psychopathology could make a fundamental contribution to normal psychology. And actually it did; psychoanalysis revealed the kind of irrational thinking which hinders reality testing. However, when personality is looked at from the point of view of normal psychology, as Erikson did, it may appear in a rather different light. Normality and pathology change with sociohistorical contexts, and each period contributes new insights. For example, modern technological societies are less concerned with the hysterical disturbances which characterised the Viennese society of Freud's time than with the existential problems of living in the 1990's.

For example, consistent with modern humanism which sees hope as a consequence of historically conditioned relations between people, Erikson also looks at hope as a "virtue" or human strength which is a basic ingredient present in the epigenetic plan. This need or evolving set of needs find structures which are essential to living in today's changing and challenging world. Nuttin (1968, p.175-176), another strong advocate of a humanistic *elan vital*, states that:

The "repressive" force is no longer a superstructure of a purely social origin inhibiting man's constructive forces, or only allowing them to manifest themselves in a distorted way. The tension in question is itself the most positive and the most constructive force in man. It is as we have the dynamic force which tends, by realizing our specifically human potentialities, to transcend the automatic development of the psycho-physiological organism. Its influence is directly constructive;

contrary to Freudian theory, it stimulates the higher activities, and gives birth to cultural values, not by a transformation of libidinous forces but by an actualization of a specific potentiality.

Nuttin's perspective reflects, not only a current existential concern of the atomic age, but also a theoretical and methodological perspective of fundamentally different consequences than Freud's theory.

Erikson (1968) felt that Freud's formulation of developmental stages was incomplete in at least one respect: socialization and acculturation. He recognized the importance of the genetic principle and its fundamental irreducibility to environmental influences. However, he extends this genetic principle to social-psychological growth, proposing that personality also appears to develop in steps:

... predetermined in the human organism's readiness to be driven toward, to be aware of, and to interact with a widening radius of significant individuals and institutions (Erikson, 1968, p. 93).

Thus, Erikson recognized the sociocultural differences, but -this is fundamental- he saw that personality growth follows a sequence of "inner laws". These inner laws set the potentialities for the kind of significant interactions between children and the people and institutions they encounter in their particular culture. In this sense, Erikson remains firmly within the psychogenetic model. He is not part of the interactionist or the radical Marxist

models. In other terms, actual behaviour is not considered to be the result of an irreducible interaction between individuals and the situation they encounter. The important element is the person and not the person by situation-interaction unit. The assumption is that there is a basic personality core which serves as a predispositional basis for behaviour in all situations. Like Freud and other psychoanalysts, Erikson emphasizes that individual behaviour is manifested as the phenotypic expression of underlying genotypic propensities within the person.

#### **Developmental Perspective**

The core of Erikson's concept of personality development is the formulation of the eight stages of ego development which were epigenetic in thrust, yet psychosocial as played out or structured by social relationships. In a mute echo of Freud, Erikson believes that human development consists of moving from non ego identity to ego identity and that growing up is a process of achieving ego identity, that is: (1) An inner focused aspect of self-sameness and continuity in time; (2) An outer focused aspect of recognition and identification with the ideals of one's culture.

The developmental process involves "conflicts, inner and outer, which the vital personality weathers, re-emerging from each crisis with an increased sense of inner

unity, good judgement and capacity "to do well according to his own standards and the standards of those who are significant to him" (Erikson, 1968, p.92).

Erikson's conception of the developmental stages is that they include both a sequence and a hierarchy of stages. In the early stages, fundamental strengths (e.g., trust/hope, autonomy/will) develop without which a later mature human capacity cannot develop. These rudiments of the final character pattern develop more in each stage. They become more differentiated and complex and therefore undergo renewed crises. The potential for the development of ego strength emerges from the successful completion of all the earlier developmental processes. However, according to Erikson, you could speak of a fully mature ego which plays a pivotal role between childhood and adulthood only after adolescence.

Thus, Erikson looks at the development of personality in terms of physical and social growth within a social structure. He also sees development in terms of decisive encounters with the world of human relations. Freud was concerned with the intrapsychic aspects of ego development and viewed the environment as a kind of shadowy outer world. Erikson sees more of a mutual relationship between the individual and society, and insists on the social sources of ego strength. Ego psychologists also considered the

social and environmental bases of the ego. Erikson, however, gave more recognition to the social genesis of the ego. The school of ego psychology was still acceptable after dissociating itself from Freud. Erikson's neo-Marxist emphasis on the social aspects is almost as daring as Lacan's (1977) semiotic reinterpretation of psychoanalysis.

### **Erikson's Psychosocial Stages**

A fundamental aspect of Erikson's psychosocial thesis around which all the stages revolve is ego identity. Erikson (1963, 1968) also made the identity crisis of adolescence the pivotal stage in his thesis of psychosocial development. He claims that its manner of resolution depends on what it was in the past and it will also determine much of what follows. Marcia (1964, 1966, 1967, 1970) elaborated on Erikson's theses by adding new dimensions and also explained the full meaning of Erikson's theses, especially the psychosocial dimension. In this part of the study, Erikson's psychosocial stages will be examined first, followed by Marcia's elaborations, and then by an evaluation of these contributions.

Infancy is marked by a sense of basic trust, which is the psychosocial accomplishment to be derived from the

first year of life. This earliest sense of identity develops from the encounter between the infant and the mother/caretaker which includes mutual trustworthiness and recognition. A characteristic of ill mental health which may develop from this stage is basic mistrust, the tendency to withdraw into one's self when things go wrong.

Early childhood is characterized by children's experience of their autonomous will during the second and third years of life. As children begin to coordinate conflicting action patterns, characterized by tendencies of "holding on" and "letting go", they start to experience the need/will to be themselves or a sense of the self as worthy. Erikson sees the contribution of this stage to eventual identity formation as the courage to become an independent individual.

Childhood years are marked by initiative. Children three to six years must emerge with a sense of initiative as a basis for ambition and purpose. The contribution of this stage to later identity development is to free their initiative and sense of purpose for adult tasks. A danger at this stage is that children will develop guilt feelings and their conscience will become punitive.

Between six years of age and puberty, the major task is the development of a sense of industry. Children at this



stage should be able to make things and make them well and learn to win recognition by producing things. The contribution of this school age to the sense of identity seems to be: "I am what I can learn to make work". The danger is that children develop a sense of inferiority, e.g., nothing they learn to do well so far seems to satisfy their peers or teachers, or they never learn to master anything really well. Another danger is that they may accept work as the only criterion of worthwhileness and simultaneously suppress their imagination and playfulness.

Adolescence is marked by the development of a sense of identity. If trust between the individual and others was established in the first stage, the adolescent now looks for men/women and ideas to have faith in. If the sense of autonomy is developed during the second stage, the adolescent now looks for a more realistic autonomy supported by the opportunity to decide on a suitable avenue of duty and career. If the heritage of the play age is unlimited imagination as to what one might become, then adolescents will turn to peers and leaders who can provide scope for their aspirations. Finally if they achieve the desire to make things work properly during school, then to choose an occupation becomes something more than just a question of status and remuneration. Erikson (1968, p.130), points out that:

In the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.

Erikson thinks that the ideology (the religious and political beliefs of a culture) is the most important social institution which is also the guardian of identity. Ideology represents the basis upon which all the other institutions are built, and in turn, these institutions will help raise individuals who will embody the ideals of this ideology. Although ideology can be a source of encapsulation, it is also the guardian of personal identity.

The next developmental task of is to achieve intimacy. It is necessary to be sure of one's own identity before attempting to have a close relationship with another person and achieve intimacy. The seventh stage involves generativity where individuals are asked to give of themselves to others, as a partner, a parent, a professional and as a member of society. The inability to do so leads to self-indulgence and maybe to social and psychological impoverishment. Erikson's eighth and final stage of developmental outline involves coming to terms with what one's life has been and is, and achieving a sense of ego integrity, world order and spirituality.

In summary, Erikson's view of identity formation suggests that a sense of identity is realized when the psychosocial tasks of each of the first five stages of development are mastered, and that this accomplishment then

prepares one to face the challenges of the last three stages of development. The process of identity formation seems to depend on the unique growth pattern of the individual. This includes constitutional givens and maturational processes. These two processes interact with the environment, mother and father, neighborhood and culture, and the traditions and wisdom of past generations.

#### **Marcia's Elaboration of Erikson's Psychosocial Thesis**

Erikson's theory is psychosocial in nature. Many of those who interpreted his theory had difficulties in measuring the interpsychic aspects of the theory. Consequently they did not examine its societal aspects, i.e., the continuing mutual adaptation between the individual and society. Marcia devoted time and effort to provide empirical support to Erikson's theory of identity development, and was one of the first researchers who focused on the psychosocial aspect of identity. He developed a semi-structured interview which ascertains the occurrence of crises alternatives and periods of active decision-making. He also included the presence of commitment or the degree of personal investment which the individual expresses in a course of action or belief in the areas of occupation and especially religion and politics taken to comprise the concept of ideology.

More generally, however, an ideological system is a coherent body of shared images, ideas, and ideals which, whether based on a formulated dogma, an implicit weltanschauung, a highly structured world image, a political creed, or indeed a scientific creed (especially if applied to man), or a "way of life", provides for the participants a coherent, if systematically simplified, overall orientation in space and time, in means and ends. (Erikson, 1968, p.189-195).

These four statuses are based on the presence or absence of crisis or commitment, which represent different ways of coping with the identity crisis. They consist of Erikson's polar alternatives of Identity Achievement and Identity Diffusion and the two additional intermediate statuses of Moratorium and Foreclosure.

The Identity Achievement Status individuals went through a period of seriously considering occupational choices and ideological alternatives and made a commitment on their own to an occupation and a set of beliefs. The Moratorium Status individuals are currently in an active crisis period and are engaged in a real struggle to make commitments. The Foreclosure Status individuals did not seem to experience any crisis period and are committed to an occupation and ideology. They seem to have assumed an identity rather than achieved one on their own. The Identity Diffusion Status individuals seem to be unconcerned about commitments.

#### **Evaluation of Erikson/Marcia's Psychosocial Theses**

Research on identity statuses indicated that the

Identity Achievement individuals were able to cope with their world, and to deal with sudden shifts in environment or unexpected burdens of responsibility (Marcia, 1966).

The Moratorium Status college males experienced some difficulties. Compared to the Foreclosure and the Identity Diffusion status college males, the Identity Achievement and the Moratorium Status groups are less vulnerable to self-esteem manipulation, more reflective in their decision-making styles, and more internal in locus of control. Research findings for the females statuses were similar to those of the male identity statuses, but the status groupings were different. The status groupings for men were the Identity Achievement and the Moratorium individuals; for women, the usual pattern seemed to be the Identity Achievement and the Foreclosure versus the Moratorium and the Identity Diffusion status individuals.

For example, on a number of variables such as field dependence, locus of control, conformity, difficulty of college majors and anxiety, the Foreclosure status females perform more like the Identity Achievement women, while the Moratorium status males perform more like those in the Identity Diffusion status females (Marcia and Friedman, 1970; Schenkel and Marcia, 1972; Toder and Marcia, 1973). Marcia and Friedman (1970) suggest that the Foreclosure status may be particularly adaptive for certain women.

Traditionally, there was major social support for females as the culture bearers, because they allowed their parents to choose their careers. For a long time, theoretical and empirical writings on female development stressed the preeminence of the interpersonal sphere and interpersonal identity (e.g., Douvan and Adelson, 1966)

Waterman, Buebel and Waterman (1970) investigated the relationship between the resolution of the identity crisis and the outcomes of previous psychosocial crises in two studies for college males. In the first study, the authors used Marcia's interview technique, the Internal-External Locus of Control (I-E Scale, Rotter, 1966) as an indicator of the degree of autonomy and the Interpersonal Trust (I-T Scale, Rotter, 1967) as a measure of basic trust. They found a significant difference between identity groups on the I-E scores ( $F=3.21$ ,  $df$  2/85,  $p.05$ ) but not on the I-T scores ( $F=.96$ ,  $df$  2/86). In the second study, they tested the implication that the level of ego identity is related to the degree of success in resolving the first four psychosocial stages. They found significant correlations between identity and each antecedent stage ( $p.05$  for initiative and industry and  $p.01$  for trust and autonomy).

Ciaccio (1971) tested two basic postulates of Erikson's theory (1) ego stage progression with increasing age and (2) ego development as it meets with different crisis elements

of the ego stages with a sample of 120 boys (5-8 and 11 years old) using a projective instrument designed by Boyd (1964). Ciaccio found that with the exception of autonomy, psychosocial strengths emerge in the stage sequence postulated by Erikson, but the conflicts did not follow a sequential progression. The 5 years old children were mainly concerned with autonomy and initiative. The 8 and 11 years old showed peak interest in initiative and industry. Both groups showed more conflict for autonomy, as suggested in earlier findings (Ciaccio, 1969) that autonomy may be the focal crisis of the first five ego stages.

Although it is difficult to draw other than general conclusions from the above studies, due to the variety of measures and samples used to study ego identity and other psychosocial stages, it would appear, however that:

(1) In at least one study (Waterman et al., 1970) the successful resolution of previous psychosocial stages correlate with the successful resolution of identity for college males. (2) There seem to be a developmental progression in ego stage issues for the positive aspects of crisis resolution but not for the negative aspects (Ciaccio, 1971). Therefore, it is safe to say that none of these studies challenged the validity of Erikson's psychosocial stages and their direct relation to ego identity.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Chapter I dealt with cognition, the first element in the proposed integration. Luria's thesis of cognitive development is important to this integration because of his emphasis on semiotics and language and because he viewed development in a sociogenetic framework. These two aspects of his thesis of cognitive development are considered to be important to understand the person in context. However, while Luria discussed the person's cognitive development in detail he did not elaborate on his/her personality development, and the intrapsychic dimension was underdeveloped. This is why Erikson's psychosocial thesis was included in this integration

Chapter II examined Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development. His thesis of psychosocial development is considered to be a leading thesis in the psychology of human development. It is currently enjoying a high status in research, and many extensions to the theory have been added, particularly by Marcia. Moreover, the various aspects of psychosocial development, namely sexual adjustment, career and professional identity, self-definition and ego-strength, have become the subject of a great interest among researchers. It appears that Erikson's emphasis on healthy psychological development, coupled with an appreciation of



environmental influences, made his thesis more suitable to the study of the person in context. A logical extension of Erikson's thesis to the cognitive/intellectual realm is now feasible. Rather than simply limiting the thesis to the affective or emotional sphere, the addition of cognition will help clarify the underpinnings of individual psychosocial development.

The next chapter proposes the synthesis of Luria and Erikson's theses.

**CHAPTER III: TOWARDS THE INTEGRATION OF THE THESES  
OF LURIA AND ERIKSON**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The choice of Luria and Erikson's theses for this integration puts the problem of the synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis in a new light. On the one hand, Luria starts with a materialist thesis and ends up with consciousness. He recognizes the individual in his/her intrapsychic dimension, but it is a mere recognition. On the other hand, Erikson starts with the individual and his/her inner psychic life, including the unconscious mind, but ends up with a fuller recognition of the sociohistorical context. In either case, some important human aspects are recognized, although not completely. Cognitive and psychosocial development, viewed together, can produce a more comprehensive understanding of the person in context. This is why the integration of Luria and Erikson's theses could be comprehensive.

**B. SOCIOGENETIC VIEWS OF COGNITION AND PERSONALITY**

The seventies and more so the eighties were marked by a decline in the popularity of cognitive-nativistic theories in psychology. Like mechanistic models, cognitive models opened new areas of investigation. They proved to be

insufficient because they did not pay enough attention to the single most important element in the cognitive situation, the speaker-listener and the consequences of the dynamics involved for the emerging self. Cognitive models also assumed that thought is all that matters, and the more abstract, the better it is. In this way, the context of cognition becomes irrelevant. Therefore, cognitive models are idealistic in nature because they are removed from the concrete reality of those they study. Today, a major focus of cognitive research is on "attempt(ing) to recapture the total personality (behavioral, cognitive, affective, ego dynamic dimensions) of the speaker/listener in communicating and learning to communicate" (Titone, 1983, p.274)

There is a cognitive tradition looking at semiotics and particularly language as a marvelous phenomenon of communication, personal growth and humanization. Cassirer (1944) a neo-Kantian, looked at the human being as essentially an "animal symbolicum". In his reflection on the nature of human existence, he argued that:

Between the receptor and the effector system which are to be found in all animal species, we find in man a third link which we may describe as the symbolic system. This new acquisition transforms the whole of human life. As compared with the other animals man lives not merely in a broader reality; he lives, so to speak, in a new dimension of reality (p.24, original italics).

Mead (1948), an interactionist with a keen interest in language, considered that "language as made up of

significant symbols is what we mean by mind" (p.190n.), and that "the body is not a self, as such; it becomes a self only when it has developed a mind (i.e., language) within the context of social experience" (p.50). This is one of the clearest formulations of the relationship between cognition/language and self/personality from a sociogenetic perspective.

Merleau Ponty (1970), a phenomenologist with important contributions to the psychology of perception and cognition stated that everyone is simply caught up in language. As humans, we like to think that we have language, but the truth of the matter is that language has us. In other terms, Merleau Ponty considers the human condition within the context of language:

Perhaps, in everyone, language is the basic function which constructs a life and its works and transforms even the problems of our existence into life's motives (p.18)

Roberts (1981, p.109) extended the argument even further:

The relationship between language and personality is not causal in a deterministic sense. In that the two presuppose one another, their relationship is emergent and developmental, not only revealing man's becoming, but defining its very essence over the course of his life.

This view of human existence and essence might be questioned on philosophical/religious grounds, but it shows the importance of cognition/language in human life. Whether

essence could be other than the product of existence, is a complex issue marred by ideological traps. This issue shows none-the-less the importance of a holistic view of cognition/language and self/personality.

Thus, from the perspective of writers such as Cassirer, Mead and Merleau Ponty, to name a few, cognition/language must be considered as one of the primary sources of human motivation and conduct. Echoing similar views, Bain (1980a, p.81) suggested that "it is the voluntary use of language and other symbols which constitutes the phenomenon of Man". He explained that, one speaks, to be sure, that one might communicate, but on a more fundamental level that one might unite, not only with another, but especially with oneself. It takes, therefore, little imagination to see the importance of words in putting together one's life, in unifying of one's world, and in making sense of it all. Cognition/language can not be understood in isolation from the self or personality. As Murray (1972-74, p.475) puts it, "like air itself, it (language) permeates every nook and cranny of existence."

It should be remembered, however, that Cassirer, Mead and Merleau Ponty missed the major Vygotskean thrust, that the intermental dialogue is inextricably interwoven with language and that the "inner face" of the external dialogue becomes the "affective tone" of the self. Erikson also

recognized the latter but missed the former.

### C. LURIA'S VIEW OF COGNITION AND PERSONALITY

Vygotsky (1966, p. 33) saw the decisive rôle which language plays in molding the activities of humans as the "mastery of one's own process of behaviour." Luria and Yudovich (1965), in their classic work, Speech and the Development of Mental Processes in the Child, further explained this "process of behaviour." They suggested that "what the child first does with the help and instruction of the other, he/she later does by himself/herself, supporting his/her own efforts by his/her speech." It is this directive function of speech, combined with the interactional function which eventually accounts for the child's mastery of his/her own, previously shared actions.

Bain (1976) studied Luria's regulatory function in infants who have resolved Erikson's first two psychosocial crises. He found that, initially regulation is external. At a higher level, regulative speech becomes internalized as thought, and the child's actions become more voluntary and conscious. This "process of behaviour", or "regulative function of language" constitute the essence of personality. As Bain (1980, p.82) puts it:

In broad terms, these principles suggest that we see the child as animal-symbolicum, developing from a social to a psychological organism as he progressively masters the means of his self

creation. On the one hand, as has been known at least since the time of the Leipzig Gestaltists, if an object is to be distinguished from its surroundings as the bearer of certain objective or intentional properties, it must be cognized, it must be made to stand out by being named, gestured, or signed in some way or other. On the other hand, as the developing child comes to master 'his' signing system, he becomes the creator of his own cognitive world.

In other terms, the child as "animal educandum." must be educated to become psychologically independent. There is a very close relationship between cognition/semiotics and self/personality. The self, the cognitive/semiotic systems and the social dynamics are united. Once cognition/semiotics are defined on the lines of the tradition which views them as the basic tool of humanization, if not human nature itself, and once self/personality are defined as the quality of being-in-the-world, it is inevitable to see close relationships between them. According to Titone (1983, p.276):

Human communication is the very marrow of personality, and language as a species-specific power ... is essentially and operationally connected with human personality.

Therefore, it is now clear that:

- (1) At the edge of cognition, one has to address the non cognitive but highly relevant aspects of personality if one is to gain a clear idea about the essence of cognition;
- (2) If personality theory is to address specifically

human needs, it has to pay attention to the upper levels of cognition in humans;

(3) Both theories have enough theoretical and empirical support and represent some of the most advanced theories in their respective fields. They will enrich this integration.

In other words, a well known thesis of cognitive development such as Luria's will remain incomplete because it does not account for psychosocial development. This is equally true in the case of Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development. It will remain incomplete because it does not account for cognitive development. This is why Luria's and Erikson's theses could complement each other and provide a valuable psychological model to understand the person in context.

Luria's thesis of cognitive development has the merits of being at the same time post-Hegelian in a Marxist sense, of remaining within the Humboldtian tradition and thus of being post-Piagetian in its emphasis on socio-historical conditions, and to have links with the Frankfurt School's focus on language and its appreciation of the unconscious life. Erikson's thesis of personality development is important because of its close ties to the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition, its great appreciation of the sociohistorical conditions prevalent today and its positive



approach to psychopathology.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Chapter I presented the main features and strengths of Luria's thesis of cognitive development. They concern the central role played by semiotics and language in cognitive development and the sociogenetic nature of human development. These features are valuable in order to understand the person in context. They are particularly useful in understanding the psycholinguistic and educational progress of ethnic minority children living in a multicultural society such as Canada. However, even a very sophisticated understanding of the cognitive development of the person is not sufficient to account for the whole life of the person. Therefore, it is important to find a theory which addresses the non cognitive aspects in the life of a person.

Chapter II discussed Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages. This thesis complements Luria's thesis by accounting for the other facet of human development, affective, emotional and personality development. Erikson's thesis has many merits, but the most relevant to this integration concern his positive view of human nature, his objective evaluation of psychosexual development and his epigenetic view of human development which recognizes both

the biological and the social factors of human development. A feature of Erikson's thesis, which is particularly useful in this study, is his famous discussion of the major issues of adolescence and young adulthood. Identity achievement, sexual relationships, ideological (religious and political) commitment and career choice, are important issues which make Erikson's thesis indispensable for this integration of cognitive and psychosocial development.

Chapter III presented the proposed integration of Luria and Erikson's theses. It was argued that this synthesis will provide a model capable of accounting for the person in context. Cognitive and psychosocial development, as viewed by Luria and Erikson, covers a whole spectrum in the life of the person and accounts for many dimension of his/her life. Moreover, this integration will not only benefit from the valuable insights of these two powerful models in developmental psychology, but it will pool their strengths together to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the person in context.

Theoretically as well as clinically, Luria's and Erikson's theses are widely recognized. They are also presently the subject of interest by many researchers. However, all these studies are done using quantitative analyses adopting a hypothetico-mathematical-deductive model of enquiry. It will be important to seek another kind of

empirical support for these theses using inductive-qualitative methods suitable for theoretical development. The next chapter will discuss Grounded Theory, the methodology proposed for this study.

## CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. INTRODUCTION

The review of the literature of the theses of Luria and Erikson demonstrated that they are now widely accepted by psychologists. Many aspects of these two theses have been researched for decades now, but all the support found so far comes from quantitative methodologies. Grounded Theory is a qualitative methodology which was used successfully to ascertain the value and the validity of theoretical models. An important objective of this study is to seek this kind of empirical evidence. It is hoped that Grounded Theory will help to answer two important questions about the integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's theses of psychosocial stages:

(1) Are Luria's and Erikson's theses based on fact or are they mere speculation?

(2) Are the major themes in this integration supported by empirical evidence?

### B. RESEARCH DESIGN

Grounded Theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). It is a method for theory development using one or more of the procedures used in social science. In this short discussion of Grounded Theory, a presentation of

qualitative methodologies is given first, then the important characteristics of Grounded Theory, and especially the Constant Comparative Method and theoretical sensitivity will be discussed.

### **Qualitative Methodologies**

There are several approaches to the study of cognition and personality. Although it is not the intent here to discredit the findings of researchers working under controlled conditions, the literature does show a need for more naturalistic studies. The everyday world provides this type of knowledge source which, for maybe genuine reasons, is discarded in laboratory situations. It is anticipated that the complexity of the naturalistic study and all that it entails will result in some concrete and revealing insights into the relationships between cognition and personality as defined by the authors. This type of knowledge can, it is suggested, provide a different appreciation of the issues involved.

Analytic induction is central to the logic of any qualitative research, whether it is anthropological, interactionist or ethnomethodological. Researchers using a qualitative methodology, whatever their theoretical presuppositions, share a common problem: There is no consistent agreement on how to develop and validate

generalizations. For empiricists, the problem does not arise so directly. They can use a control group which is not exposed to the assumed causal variable. They assume that these procedures exempt their generalizations from the methods of everyday life. Survey researchers can use tests of significance to assess the explanatory power of different variables. Analytic induction, on the other hand, is a method by which the qualitative researcher tries to formulate generalizations that are consistent across all his/her data.

Lindesmith (1952, p.492) based analytic induction on the researcher's attempt to discover negative evidence for any generalization he/she proposed. The aim was to find a 'decisive negative case'. Denzin (1970) also notes that analytic induction relies on theoretical sampling rather than statistical sampling methods. His main strategy was to sample theoretically in a continual effort to find crucial cases that would invalidate his theory. Denzin's thinking is very close to that of the proponents of Grounded Theory.

Analytical induction generalizes by abstracting. The nature of the explanations can be seen, for instance, in extrapolating from case studies to like situations by logical inference based on the demonstrated power of the theoretical model to account for initially negative

instances. The claim, therefore, is not to representativeness but to faultiness of logic. In the extreme, it is the methodology which makes a difference. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, p.15) argued that "social science is not primarily based on paradigms but upon refinements of methods used in everyday life."

In the positivist tradition, science relies on the rigorous development of generalizations using methods appropriate to the data. Mathematico-deductive logic is at the heart of this quantitative methodology. When applied to social sciences, the same assumptions are made, which leads directly to a mismatch of subject and method. A methodology developed to deal with natural science was indiscriminately applied to human phenomena which are of a different nature. This is why quantitative methodology has been under criticism lately.

Interactionism (Mead, 1948) and more recently ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967) reject the positivist assumption that descriptive concepts are simply a first stage towards the test of the explanatory hypotheses. They both argued that they are, in themselves, adequate scientific explanations. Halfpenny (1979, p.808) argued that:

... in contrast with the sharp distinction drawn between concepts and explanatory hypotheses within the positivist approach, in the interpretivist (or interactionist) approach, understanding the actions

and interactions of respondents, by virtue of grasping and comprehending the culturally appropriate concepts through which they conduct their social life is the way in which explanation is achieved.

Ethnomethodologists are more concerned with people's actions and interactions and very little with what they are thinking or their concepts. However, they share with interactionists a belief that systematic description is, in itself sufficiently explanatory and part of "a naturalistic observational discipline that [can] ... deal with the details of social action(s) vigorously, empirically and formally" (Schegloff and Sacks, in Turner (Eds.), 1974, p.233). This linkage between description and explanation within ethnomethodology is succinctly outlined by Cuff and Payne [(Eds.), 1979, p.178]:

Instead of trying to produce 'deductive-causal explanations', or sets of law-like propositions, they (ethnomethodologists) aim to produce descriptions. These descriptions concern the methods members use to accomplish the world for what it is. In the description and analysis of these methods, ethnomethodologists, like other social scientists, are attempting to generalize about social life. In their case, these generalizations are about the sort of 'apparatus', the 'sense assembly equipment' that human beings use to construct and sustain their everyday lives.

However, ethnomethodologists are interested in law-like propositions as given in the members' accounts. In attempting to deal with generalizations about social life, ethnomethodologists would have to deal with the propositions of the members.



Interactionists are concerned with the creation and change of symbolic orders via social interaction. They view research as a symbolic order based on social interactions. For Denzin (1970, p.5) "Methodology ... represents the principal ways the sociologist acts on his environment." He adds that each theoretical perspective represents a particular way of looking at and acting on society. Methods can not be neutral instruments because they define how the topic will be symbolically constituted and how the researcher will adopt a particular definition of self vis-a-vis the data. For instance, interactionists are likely to define themselves in a subject to subject relation to their data, while positivists pursue an object to object model. In the same line of reasoning, Denzin proposes that a description of content serves only as a prelude to analytic work. Basing himself on Glaser and Strauss' (1967) distinction between "substantive" and "formal" theory, he reminds us that "the intrinsic fascination of much ethnographic data should be a stepping-stone towards the attempt to establish 'universal interactive propositions', or in other terms theory development" (Denzin, 1970, p.19).

Denzin uses the term participant observation rather than ethnography to identify the research methodology most appropriate to his perspective. Such a method involves sharing people's lives while attempting to learn about their

symbolic world. It requires taking the viewpoint of those studied, understanding the contextual character of their interactions, viewing social processes over a period of time, and can also encourage attempts to develop formal theories grounded in this first-hand data. Unlike positivist research, Denzin (1970, p.216) points out that "the participant observer is not bound in his fieldwork by pre-judgments about the nature of his problem, by rigid data-gathering devices, or by hypotheses." His/her stand is a position which is more interested in asking questions, or even questions about the questions and to avoid looking for ready-made answers.

Denzin (1970, p.186) suggests the use of multiple sources of data as part of his methodology. He viewed the participants' observation as "a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, respondent and informant interviewing, direct participation and observation and introspection." He even suggests a "method of triangulation" to overcome partial views and present something like a complete picture. This made some researchers accuse him of reverting to a positivist stand. For example, Halfpenny (1979) pointed out the positivist assumptions behind the method of triangulation. For him, positivist thinking seeks to obtain reliable measures of mental states and/or social events. Triangulation helps to

validate findings from this point of view because, by enabling the comparison of a number of accounts, it serves to eliminate bias. For an interactionist such as Denzin, on the other hand, without bias (in this case, a range of symbolic orders generating different accounts), there would be no phenomenon. In other terms, by eliminating bias, the complexity of the phenomenon is lost, and one ends up studying an epi-phenomenon or an artificial or reified situation.

Many researchers (eg, Dukes, 1965, Shapiro, 1961, Kvale, 1983) think that descriptive research is a particularly appropriate method in the behavioral sciences. According to Kvale (1983, p.446):

The dominant position of quantitative knowledge in education and the subordinate position of qualitative knowledge have in the present analysis been attributed to external social interests in educational knowledge ... A tentative conclusion may be formulated thus. In social systems where simplicity and legitimacy of decisions are of primary importance, quantitative methods will have a privileged position; whereas in social systems with an interest in obtaining deeper understanding and efficient change of social phenomena, the issue of quantitative and qualitative methods will be subordinated to the use value of knowledge.

Descriptive methods involve more than fact gathering and reporting and are used in order to analyze and interpret the meaning and significance of what is described. The data gathered focus on the whole process and are interpreted in light of previous findings. This method appears to be well

suited to the tasks of this integration. Attempts will be made to offer a better understanding of these aspects of human behaviour and possibly to discover new hypotheses, causal relationships and generalizations.

Naturalistic methods rely heavily on observation and interviewing. Because of the nature of the information required from participants, the semi-structured interview is considered to be the most useful technique. The interviewer will pay special attention to establishing rapport to increase the validity of the statements of the participants. An interview of four to six hours duration will be conducted with each participant. The first part of this taped interview will be aimed at gathering general information. The second part of the interview will focus on the researcher's areas of interest.

Another important dimension of this study is the ethnocultural dimension. In addition to interviews, attention is paid to the contribution of informants. The reason for this special interest in the ethnocultural dimension of this study is to check the generality of our existing psychological knowledge, theories, laws and propositions. Universal statements about systematic relationships among variables (either in terms of covariance or causal relationships) can be asserted only on the basis of such comparative analyses. Thus, if cultures are viewed as

independent variables, then increasing the range of variation constitutes a quasi manipulation of independent variables. In this sense ethnocultural studies provide the possibility for culturally decentring psychological research. Moreover, in the multicultural context of Canada, such ethnocultural interest is most desirable and represents the greatest need today.

### C. GROUNDED THEORY

The context of Grounded Theory is qualitative research. Meaning gathering is considered to be more important than the techniques used. The personality of the researcher is also an important factor in this process. The development of a sense of his/her self as a researcher is particularly important in qualitative research. It also involves establishing a research position along the lines of an interpretive or critical-reflective paradigm.

The purpose of this research is to verify existing theories. This also includes looking for possible gaps in the theories and making concepts more clear. Its ultimate goal is to go beyond the present theories and generate a new theory. The basic tools to do this is conceptual in nature, and in particular, involve description and interpretation.

Grounded theory is a perspective on both data and theory. It contends that there is much value in

the conceptual ordering of research data into a body of theory. This theoretical grasp of problems and processes within the data is perceived as a very useful way to understand what is going on in a substantive area and how to explain it and interpret it (Glaser, 1978, p.3).

### **The Constant Comparative Method**

Glaser and Strauss (1967) consider the Constant Comparative Method to be central to Grounded Theory. It is combined with an explicit coding procedure and the style of theory development existing in more-or-less qualitative research methods. Its purpose is the analyses of data to generate theory more systematically than other procedures.

Rather, the constant comparative method is designed to aid the analyst who possesses the abilities, in generating a theory that is integrated, consistent, plausible, close to the data and at the same time is in a form clear enough to be readily, if only partially, operationalized for testing in quantitative research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.103).

Compared to the quantitative approach, the constant comparative method is not designed to guarantee replicability of research. "It is designed to allow with discipline, for some of the vagueness and flexibility that aid the creative generation of theory" (p.103). Moreover, it is not concerned with the testing of a few hypotheses, but to generate many hypotheses that belong to different levels of generality. Moreover, this method is not aimed at making universal claims about the data, but only claims

that can be supported by the data.

Glaser and Strauss outlined four stages in this method:

(1) Comparing incidents applicable to each category. First, the researcher keeps coding and comparing incidents until they fit into a category. "The basic, defining rule for the constant comparative method (is): while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category" (p.106). Second, the researcher moves the analysis to higher conceptual grounds by comparing categories and returning to the data for more coding which takes into consideration these existing categories. This helps to generate the theoretical properties of the categories.

The second rule of the constant comparative method is: stop coding and record a memo on your ideas ... In doing so, the analyst should take as much time as necessary to reflect and carry his thinking to its most logical (grounded in the theory, not speculative) conclusions ... The analyst may spend hours on one page or he may code twenty pages in a half hour, depending on the relevance of the material, saturation of categories, stage of formulation of theory, and of course the mood of the analyst, since this method takes his personal sensitivity into consideration. These factors are in a continual process of change (p.107).

(2) Integrating categories and their properties. At this stage, the comparison of incident by incident moves to the comparison of the properties of the categories. The analysis has moved to a higher conceptual level. As diverse

properties of the categories begin to integrate in a unified whole, and as different categories become integrated through constant comparisons, the researcher starts to make theoretical sense of the data. In other terms, these categories become the building blocks or the major themes of the new theory. Unlike speculative theories, grounded theory is based on facts, and it is always possible to return to the data or reverse the process, going from the theory to the category, to the property of the category, to the incident, and finally to factual data. Although the researcher is more removed from the data at this stage, he/she can only claim what was grounded in fact so far.

(3) Specifying the scope of the theory. In theory development, the researcher is bound by the same criteria for a sound theory, namely , parsimony and scope of applicability. Concerning parsimony, as he/she becomes committed to the theory, incidents fit a smaller set of categories. Also, theoretical saturation eliminates bulk from true concepts. Regarding the scope of applicability of the theory, it is possible to raise its level of generalization by relating it to other studies which dealt systematically with the other aspects of the theory. For instance, in the case of this research, another study about Canadian Muslim Lebanese youths in Ottawa would raise the scope of applicability of the theory.



(4) Writing theory. The researcher has now coded the data, written memos and starts to develop his/her theory. Memos provide the incidents behind the categories. The most important categories become the major themes which will constitute the section titles of the study.

When the researcher is convinced that his analytic framework forms a systematic substantive theory, that is, a reasonably accurate statement of the matters studied, and that it is couched in a form that others going into the same field could use, then he can publish his results with confidence. (p.113)

The researcher should be aware of the level of generality from which he/she starts and the level of generality he/she wishes to reach. In this research, the writer started with findings drawn from abstract psychological categories, and hopes to end up with a formal theory with an even higher level of integration and abstraction. This is also a case of a substantive theory raised to a formal level. The specific handling of the data and the modes of conceptualization (searching for categories, developing hypotheses and building on other theses) are part of the process to develop a formal theory with a strong foundation in the data.

#### **Theoretical Sensitivity**

The basic condition for theoretical sensitivity is to approach the research in an objective way. The researcher

strives to be receptive to the data. He/she tries to eliminate preconceived ideas and personal bias. This sensitivity is not necessarily contrary to a good knowledge of the theory involved.

Sensitivity is necessarily increased by being steeped in the literature that deals with both the kind of variables and their associated general ideas that will be used. Thus the analyst's sensitivity, while predominantly of a single field and an area or two within it, is surely not so limited. By familiarity with ways of constructing variables in other fields he may imbue his theory in a multivariate fashion that touches many fields. Thus an analyst can easily generate categories familiar to psychology, public health, economics, or history from studying these fields to make himself sensitive as to how they conceptualize data. Possibilities are limited only by the social psychological limits of the analyst's capacity and resources (Glaser, 1978, p.3).

Data should not be forced to suit a certain theoretical framework. It should fit naturally to be of any relevance. Other theories are accepted for what they are and their categories become part of the data. The researcher is alert to any opportunity to raise the conceptual level of his/her theory. In reading the literature, he/she is careful not to interpret the data according to its major concepts. The recommended approach is to read the literature after the data has been analyzed and the theory generated. However, there might be an exception if the theory is well-known. The researcher may look for emergent fits. This usually results in extending and transcending the initial theory.

Grounded theory does not confront other theories

with being wrong or off, nor does it synthesize with other theories that seem right on. It does not, because these other works simply become part of the data and memos to be further compared to the emerging theory to generate an even more dense, integrated theory of greater scope. Thus their variables of relevance become included and integrated into the grounded theory (p.6).

In Grounded Theory the source of good ideas is either the data or other theories whose ideas emergently fit the data. The researcher acknowledges the originator's idea but also accepts his/her unique contributions to the advancement of the theory.

We find in most grounded theories that the analyst using an emergent fit soon goes quite beyond an originator's idea in many unanticipated, complex ways and thereby leaves the originator far behind. It is a travesty when the analyst gives the credit to the originator - who could never have thought of the ingenious new use- instead of taking it for himself (p.9).

And most importantly, a well done grounded theory will usually, if not invariably, transcend diverse previous works while integrating them into a new theory of greater scope than extant ones. This is a useful contribution (p.11).

### **Theoretical Sampling**

Theoretical sampling involves identifying codes from the data and using them to collect more data which specifies their properties and conditions. Theoretical sampling for a code ends when it is saturated and integrated to the theory. This makes the theory more dense.

In the beginning of theoretical sampling, the researcher allows participants to present any issue relevant to the

topic. Theoretical sampling goes in all directions. Later on, as he/she discovers core variables, theoretical sampling becomes more selective. As the conceptual level of the research moves from comparing incident to incident, to the comparison of incident with concept, to the comparison of concept with more incidents, to finally the comparison of concept to concept, theoretical sampling comes to an end as the code becomes saturated and part of the theory.

Theoretical sampling is concerned with the theoretical purpose and relevance of the data. It is focused not on the groups themselves but on the properties of the groups.

The researcher must always bear in mind that groups are from a theoretical viewpoint, clusters of variables, which are not readily all apparent, and any of which are to be discovered by comparison (p.42).

Further, the groups need not be clearly defined or membered. We are not comparing populations, we are comparing ideational characteristics of groups that in turn delineate behavioral and attitudinal patterns (p.44).

In this research, the theses of Luria and Erikson form the basis of theoretical sampling. Since both are major psychological theories which have been tested and re-tested and proven to have both theoretical and practical relevance, they were used as the basis of study. The writer finds justification for this in Glaser (1978).

We also suggest that if an existing theory seems quite grounded in data, one can possibly begin with it. But in using this theory as many are now using grounded theories, one must be cautious. The analyst must theoretically sample to establish its

emergent fit and to prevent its derailing the analyst from achieving maximum relevance. Just because concepts of the theory fit, they do not necessarily capture relevance, nor should they be allowed to steer the study away from relevance in favour of the relevance in the other studies from which the concept is taken (p.46).

#### **D. THE SAMPLE**

A sample of Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese participants was chosen for this research. Great care was taken to ensure confidentiality. This was achieved by not including any data which could reveal the identity of the participants. Confidentiality was further enhanced by the Grounded theory methodology, which relies on the analysis of 'slices of experience' rather than case studies, which would provide an explicit portrait of the person and thus compromise confidentiality. Moreover, the names used in the study are fictional.

#### **Description of the Population**

The ten Canadian male and female late adolescents/young adults of Muslim Lebanese ancestry who agreed to come to the first interview and completed the questionnaire were considered as the general population for this study. This population was particularly suitable for the researcher to study because of several factors. First, he had a good relationship with the Muslim Lebanese community and was

known to many of the participants and/or their parents. And even when one of the participants saw the researcher for the first time, after a few minutes, they were able to relate to their shared experience.

Second, since the researcher was known for his involvement in Islamic work at the local and national levels, rapport was greatly facilitated. This made the discussions with the participants more meaningful. His involvement with youths from the Al-Rashid Mosque Youth Club for more than three years also helped this process.

Third, since this study aims at an in-depth, qualitative analysis of cognition and personality, it would not be feasible to have a large number of participants. From a population of ten participants, only six committed themselves to this study. The other four were not willing to invest the time needed to make the interviews meaningful and had to be excused from the research. However, because of the volume and complexity of the data, this small sample was considered to be adequate for the purposes of this study.

#### **Choice of the Sample**

The criteria of selection were flexible enough to accommodate the representation of a cross-section of the Canadian Lebanese Muslim community regardless of

socioeconomic status, gender, intellectual ability and academic achievement. However, extreme cases of psychopathology, intellectual and academic disability were not included because the aim of this dissertation is primarily the study of cognition and personality within the normal range.

Participants were selected from the Lebanese Muslim community of Edmonton through the personal contact of the writer. First, community leaders were asked to encourage youths to participate in the study. Both the personal and the communal benefits were stressed to them. Once they agreed to the initial meeting, a prominent community leader and the researcher met with them either individually or in groups of two or three and explained to them the nature of the research and its benefits. In one or two cases it was necessary to convince them to get their full commitment. In two cases, home visits were necessary to explain to the parents up to what level their daughters will be involved in this study. Two participants volunteered to convince their friends and relatives to participate in the research.

In-depth questionnaire interviews were conducted with six of the ten respondents. The reasons for dropping out from the research were varied. One male participant was busy with exams, but in his place he agreed to convince his sister to participate in the research. Since it is more

difficult to get female respondents the researcher appreciated this. Another male participant who was from a remote area could not keep up the appointments because of exams and travel during the weekends. A third female participant who committed herself initially could not keep up the appointments because she worked all the time, including evenings and weekends. Apparently she wanted to save money for her wedding. The fourth female participant was also very busy with work and evening classes. These participants indicated their willingness to participate, but were not willing to invest the time required to make the research viable. This writer was convinced that the individual benefit in terms of self-knowledge was sufficient to motivate the potential participants, and he was willing to compensate them financially for their time if this was the reason why they hesitated to participate in the research.

As stated, finally the number of participants interviewed was six, three female participants (Dalal, Nadia and Sawsan) and three male participants (Amir, Hassan and Majid). In most cases, two interviews of approximately three hours duration each, were most appropriate to cover all the relevant aspects of cognitive and psychosocial development, but the first interviewee had an extensive life history which required a third interview. Another reason



for repeated interviews was to check whether participants will respond differently to the same questions, and especially those questions which they had difficulty answering.

The number of interviews is considered adequate to gather data in a research of this kind. In the majority of the cases, saturation occurred during the second interview, and information gathered became repetitive. Unless the researcher was convinced that there is more meaningful information coming, the second interview was sufficient to cover all the areas of the questionnaire interview. Concerning the number of participants, a larger sample would have been desirable, but it should be remembered that the aim of this research is theoretical sampling and not statistical sampling. Furthermore, this is an exploratory type of research whose aim is to develop hypotheses which are based on data. Under the circumstances, a much larger sample was considered impractical because it would create data management problems for a researcher who is from a different background than grounded theory.

Theoretical saturation was evidenced in this research when the last interviewees introduced simple variations of experiences presented by the first or second interviewee. Finally, this small sample is considered legitimate because there is no intent to either analyze the data statistically

or to generalize the findings beyond this population.

#### **E. PROCEDURES**

Two basic sources of data were used in this integration:

(1) The preliminary questionnaire.

(2) Questionnaire interview guides, which in themselves provide detailed ethno-cultural profiles of the participants.

##### **Preliminary Questionnaire**

The preliminary questionnaire is used primarily to gather general information about the respondents and to get some idea about their cognitive and psychosocial development. It also contains their commitment to participate in the research. The preliminary questionnaire is found in Appendix 1.

##### **Questionnaire Interview Guide**

The interview was semi-structured. To prepare the interview guide, Spradley's (1979, p.58-61) model was followed. It consists of three elements necessary in this kind of interview, namely descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions. Theoretical issues played an important role in the formulation of these questions and especially the nature of the probes used in

the actual interview. Open-ended questions were designed to allow participants to tell their own story in their own time and order and in their own words. All the interviews were conducted in English. The focus of attention was directed towards those aspects of their experience deemed relevant to their cognitive and personality characteristics.

Luria's (1976) and Erikson/Marcia's (1963, 1966) clinical procedures were used to develop the Questionnaire Interview Guide. Specifically, the 4th and partly the 5th questions of the Questionnaire Interview Guide were adapted from the same categories used by Luria in his Cognitive Development, and the 6th, 7th and 8th questions were adapted from Erikson's and Marcia's questionnaires on identity statuses. Open-ended questions were asked first before direct probes were made. The general overall interview guide was as follows:

1. Tell me about your family and social background.
  - (a) What is your socioeconomic status?
  - (b) What is your family constellation?
  - (c) How do you describe your family life?
  - (d) What does your family and social background mean to you?
  
2. Tell me about your cultural background.
  - (a) What do you know about your parents' life in

Lebanon?

(b) What do you consider to be the major cultural characteristics of your community in Edmonton?

(c) How do you compare life in Lebanon and in Edmonton?

(d) How do you describe Islamic life in Edmonton?

(e) What does your cultural background mean to you?

3. Explain to me how you adjusted to Canadian life.

(a) What do you remember about your school life?

(b) Did, being a Muslim Lebanese make a difference in the way your teachers, your peers, and the larger Canadian society treated you?

(c) What strategies did you use to adjust to Canadian society?

(d) What does it mean to you to live in Canada?

4. Can you tell me what you consider to be your cognitive (intellectual) strengths and weaknesses.

(a) Do you have any difficulty understanding abstract ideas and concepts?

(b) How are your verbal-logical capabilities (deduction, inference and induction)?

(c) How is your problem-solving ability (solving hypothetical problems and handling theoretical operations)?

- (d) How do you handle mathematical concepts?
  - (e) How about scientific concepts?
  - (f) Are you planning to pursue university or graduate studies?
  - (g) What is the value of education for you and for your parents?
  - (h) What does it mean to you to have such cognitive or intellectual abilities?
5. Do you have any thoughts about being bilingual (Arabic/English)?
- (a) How proficient is your English?
  - (b) Was the mastery of English a factor in your academic progress?
  - (c) How fluent are you in Arabic?
  - (d) How important is Arabic in your family?
  - (e) What do you think about the Arabic/English Bilingual School concept?
  - (f) What do you think about the Islamic School concept?
  - (g) What does it mean to you to be bilingual or monolingual?
6. What was/is adolescence for you?
- (a) What are/were the major issues for you during adolescence?

- (b) Tell me about your childhood.
- (c) What do you remember about puberty? What are your views about dating and marriage?
- (d) What do/did you think about choosing a career?
- (e) What do/did you think about getting involved in politics?
- (f) What do/did you think about becoming committed to religion (Islam)?
- (g) What does/did adolescence mean to you?

7. Can you explain to me how you lived adolescence.

- (a) How do/did you cope during adolescence?
- (b) How do/did you feel about yourself during adolescence?
- (c) How do/did you relate to others? (Probe areas of conformity vs. autonomy)
- (d) How is/was school during adolescence? How are you doing in your college/university majors?
- (e) What does/did adolescence mean to you?

8. What kind of a person are you now?

- (a) How different is it in late adolescence/young adulthood from adolescence?
- (b) Are there other important dimensions in your life, besides cognition and personality?

(b) How do you see yourself in the next ten years?

(c) What does it mean to you to be such a person?

## **F. MEANING GATHERING**

### **The Interviews**

The time and place of the interview was mutually agreed upon by the participant and the researcher. The sites were mostly classrooms or offices of the University of Alberta. Only in the case of Nadia was it necessary to hold the interviews in her home. The main reason for this exception is that Nadia was not a university student and was available only during evenings. In all cases, privacy, freedom from distractions, good sitting arrangements and the ability to record the interview and to take notes were secured.

In the beginning, each participant was introduced verbally to the research topic. Then they were asked for permission to record the interview. They were also told that confidentiality will be guaranteed. With these reassurances, all the participants gave their consent and were able to talk more freely.

The interview started with questions of a general nature which covered family and socio-cultural background and adaptation to Canadian life. The second part of the interview focused on cognitive and language development. The third part of the interview dealt with psychosocial

development during adolescence. The interview concluded with a discussion of late adolescence/young adulthood and their present self-perception.

Few problems were encountered during the interviews. Some delay occurred when one participant had to leave town suddenly. There were also time restrictions because participants were busy with their studies. This was resolved by interviewing those who had limited time last after the researcher had gained more confidence in conducting the interviews, and after core variables were identified.

Participants indicated that the interviews were interesting and that this type of research is important for them personally and also for their community. Many of them indicated their willingness to encourage their siblings or relatives to participate in this kind of research in the future. They are also interested in seeing the final product.

### **Data Analysis**

The six interviews each generated an average of 41 typed pages or 246 pages of detailed data. In addition, another five pages for the questionnaire, a total of 30 pages. Thus, a grand total of 276 pages of data were available for analysis. The volume and complexity of the data had to be



handled carefully. The constant comparative method was the basic qualitative method for the analysis of the data. It was also supplemented by feedback from social scientists (considered as informants) familiar with the issues and/or the participants.

The data was filed into three records:

- (1) organizational files;
- (2) fieldwork files, and;
- (3) analytical files.

Organizational files were about the administrative organization of the data including biographical information about the participants.

Fieldwork files contained the transcribed interviews.

Analytic files contain detailed comparisons between incidents and concepts and the emerging categories which form the substantive theory.

This research is exploratory in nature and relies on an analytic stance characterized by moving from data to concepts and vice-versa in order to fully describe and explain the cognitive and psychosocial development of the participants. Coding the data was done continuously from the very beginning until categories became saturated. Thus, information was arranged and rearranged until theoretical coherence was achieved. The patterns which emerged from these comparisons form the major themes of this research.

### **Presentation of the Data**

In the following chapters of Part Two, representative quotes will be used to illustrate the major themes. Although the six participants are not equally represented, all were given a fair chance whenever it was feasible, especially when considerations of confidentiality were satisfied. The quotes were directly taken from the typed transcripts and only in rare cases was it necessary to make corrections to add emphasis or to enhance the meaning. A large part of the data was used, but other aspects of the data which were not relevant to this study were left out. They could form the basis of future studies.

Chapter V will introduce the socioeconomic and cultural contexts of the cognitive and psychosocial development of the participants. Chapter VI discusses their cognitive development and their bilingual life. Chapter VII presents their psychosocial development. Chapter VIII presents a theoretical rejoinder and discusses the implications of this research.

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

This study was delimited to include only Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults from Edmonton. Male and female participants were mainly from a university

background. Only Nadia had a pre-university educational background. This was not intended by the researcher, but unfortunately all the respondents who completed the questionnaires but dropped out from the study were from a high school/college educational background. Participants were also mainly from a middle class background. There are two reasons why young adults with a pre-university education dropped out. One reason is a fear of self disclosure. Another important reason is the noted shyness of female participants. There are also less important reasons such as the lack of free time and the inability to appreciate the value of this study.

Since this study is limited to this specific population, no attempt will be made to generalize these findings to other Canadian Muslim Lebanese or to any other youth population. The development of this substantive theory is solely intended to develop systematically hypotheses and generalizations about the cognition and the personality of the participants and not to establish causal relationships. This could, however, be done at a later stage.

#### **G. CONCLUSION**

This chapter deals with the methodology of this research. Data collection consists mainly of in-depth questionnaire interviews. The research design is limited

to Grounded Theory, a qualitative methodology concerned with the development of theory from data by using an inductive mode of thinking.

The interview schedules, the techniques used and the analysis of the data were discussed in this chapter. A detailed discussion of Grounded Theory was provided. Particular attention was paid to the discussion of the constant comparative method and theoretical sensitivity. The chapter concluded with the delimitations and limitations of the research and the chapter summary.

This research is considered an important first step in the investigation of the cognitive and psychosocial development of Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults. This is a largely untouched area of study, especially from a psychological and psycho-educational perspective. Another objective of this research is to show that the integration of cognition and personality is necessary for any meaningful understanding of the person. The procedures used in this study are intended to provide a pool of data and a substantive analysis of issues from which tentative conclusions can be made.

Part Two is concerned with the description and analysis of the data.

## PART TWO

Part One provided the review of the literature of Vygotsky/Luria and Erikson's theses. These theses were discussed and evaluated individually in terms of their suitability for the proposed integration of cognitive and psychosocial development. Although these theses are presently the subject of great interest by researchers, they have not so far been tested in the field using qualitative methods such as Grounded Theory.

Part Two presents the descriptive data on the integration of cognitive and psychosocial development. The conceptual framework of this research is evident in the data presented in the next four chapters. This framework was synthesized through the research process. The researcher was involved with every aspect of the data and developed an intimate relationship with it. This helped me to develop this conceptual framework and to evaluate the accuracy of the fit between Luria and Erikson's formal theories and the substantive theory which emerged from the data.

As the data was gathered, major themes of cognitive and psychosocial development emerged. These major themes represent the four chapters of Part Two. First, it became clear that cognitive and psychosocial development occur in a socioeconomic and sociocultural context. The cultural

perspective in particular can be useful in advancing research on Canadian children with different cultural backgrounds. Cultural research can inform mainstream psychology on the role of specific cultural practices in organizing human behaviour.

Second, language has a special place in the discussion of cognitive development. It is evident that, not only does language mediate cognitive development but in the case of the participants, it defines an important dimension of their lives. This is in line with the Vygotskian theses. In the area of cognitive development proper, the participants did not have any difficulty handling Luria's cognitive tasks. This might be due to the fact that these tasks were developed for a much less cognitively sophisticated population. In spite of this, there is a noticeable weakness in the area of critical thinking. Many participants seemed unable to draw valid conclusions from what they learned or read, unable to analyze problems, unable to apply learned skills to everyday problems, and unable to develop a position on an issue. They attributed this to a weakness in their education.

Vygotsky asserted that the origins of all higher cognitive processes are first and foremost social. The role that social activity plays in the teaching and learning of critical thinking in the classroom is better understood

today by referring to Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development", a model which places teacher and student in an expert-novice apprentice relationship and emphasizes active intellectual interaction within a social context.

Third, with the exception of one participant, psychosocial development proceeded normally for all the others. However, there were many problems, especially in the case of the young women. The issues of parent-child relationships, dating and the position of women in society were the most difficult to resolve. Male participants were more worried about careers and ideological commitment. Overall, the participants had a somewhat difficult adolescence. Because of difficulties in the areas of cultural adjustment and religious commitment, issues with a close connection to identity management, self-esteem and ego strength, it is not surprising that many participants went through an identity crisis.

Cote and Levine (1989) also demonstrated that humanistically oriented adolescents are more likely to have a severe identity crisis than are the technologically oriented. They explained this tendency in terms of the ego-superego struggle for dominance of the personality, and the importance of the value orientation especially during adolescence.

These patterns are discussed in more detail in chapters

V, VI and VII. Chapter VIII provides a detailed discussion of the data with the purpose of establishing an emergent fit between the data and Luria's and Erikson's theses, and developing a substantive theory. This final chapter also considers the value of the proposed integration. It concludes with a discussion of the implications for future research.

## **CHAPTER V: THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF COGNITIVE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The social context of the participants is of primary importance in understanding their cognitive and psychosocial development. Luria's cognitive tradition and Erikson's psychosocial tradition stressed the importance of viewing the person in context and criticized the purely mentalist formulations of cognition and personality. This chapter presents a description of the participants' socioeconomic and sociocultural backgrounds, and in particular considers the combined influences of their Muslim Lebanese and Canadian heritages.

Cognitive and psychosocial development represent two important dimensions in the participants' lives. Traditionally, these dimensions were analyzed in a de-



contextualized way. This often led to reification and a kind of understanding of the person marred by ill-founded abstractions. By including, in this study, a detailed analysis of the person's socioeconomic and sociocultural context, it is possible to gain an in-depth knowledge of his/her concrete life situation.

## **B. SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT**

### **Immigration and Social Class**

With the exception of Sawsan, who is a third-generation Muslim Lebanese immigrant, the other participants are second-generation immigrants. Their parents are Lebanese by origin of birth, but lived in Canada for relatively long periods of time, usually more than 20 years. Thus, all the participants were born and raised in Canada.

Amir's father came to Alberta almost 50 years ago, at the age of 15. First he worked as a peddler, transporting goods on his back to sell to farmers all over Alberta.

He, what happened was, his uncle, I don't know if he was in Canada, uh, he was in Canada, and he went back and brought my dad with him. And he said after he came to Canada, he started working, selling door to door whatever, and he said he used to carry stuff on his back. All I know, I think he had a pretty rough life (Amir:14).

Later, he started a small business in Edmonton. Family life always centered around the business. The family spent all their time, including evenings and weekends managing the

business.

Amir looks at his family as low middle class. His parents were able to move upward socially, from a working class background to a low middle class, through hard work and many sacrifices. Consequently, they experienced hardships, and in many respects, their life was similar to that of working-class immigrant families.

We consider ourselves middle class. My parents run a ... store. It's our only source of income, and basically that ... feeds us, and it seems like we just get by. We really do not have too much. We can't afford luxuries like some families. We just basically get the necessities, unless we are working part time, then we buy what we need. I work part-time, my elder brother works full time and my sister works full time. I guess that helps (Amir:1-2).

Hassan's parents lived in Canada for the last 25 years. Soon after Hassan's father arrived in Canada, he entered into a business partnership with his brothers, but the business did not prosper. Hassan's mother works part-time with her husband and is also absent from home during the evenings. The older children assume the responsibility of looking after their younger siblings during the evenings.

Hassan looks at his family as low middle class, but actually, what he describes is the life of a working-class immigrant family.

My parents are immigrants to this country, so I'll put them in a lower social background. I would say they are not necessarily at a lower level. I mean they are middle class. We live comfortably; we work to live comfortably. I would say more to the lower end of the middle class, I guess. I help out in a

lot of ways, especially since, you know, my parents, they are immigrants to this country, so they can't compete as well, or they'll find it ... First of all their language is different here. So, I mean they have been here a long time now, so they can, you know, they know enough to get along, but they don't know enough to move ahead or high (Hassan:1-4).

Majid's parents migrated to Canada 25 years ago. His father and mother worked very hard, apparently because they wanted to save enough money to return to Lebanon.

We have a house here, and we have a house there. They are not going to stay here long, maybe a year or a year and half, then they'll go there to stay, I guess. They like it there quite a bit (Majid:1).

Majid looks at his family as low middle class. His older brother is working at his father's old job and still supports the whole family. His sisters are also planning to go back to Lebanon because they can get better jobs there and they like the cultural atmosphere. Majid's family also fits into the pattern of the working class immigrant family.

(We are) middle class, I guess. Certain basics. Everything is average. It's not upper class, and it's not lower class. Everything in between (Majid:1).

The families of female participants enjoy a higher socioeconomic status. This is because the female participants are mostly university students from higher social classes.

Dalal's father came to Canada 25 years ago. After graduating from university, he worked in the private sector. Presently he is thinking of starting his own business.

Dalal's mother was born and raised in a small town in Alberta. She has a college education, but did not work outside the home since she got married.

And I guess you can say we are middle class. I mean we are not overly wealthy, but we are not poor or anything. A bit higher (middle class), not low, uh (Dalal:1).

Nadia's parents came to Canada about 30 years ago. Although her father had little education, he entered into a partnership with his brother and became co-owner of a successful business. Nadia thinks that her family is doing well compared to other Lebanese families. She looks at her family as high middle class, and she even aspires to a higher socioeconomic status herself.

Well, I would consider myself in a middle class actually, you know, because we have everything that we need, yet at the same time we don't have, like you know, the very best or whatever, like you know some people might have. I would consider ourselves middle class, uh, very middle class ... Probably high middle class, uh (Nadia:1).

Sawsan's parents are second-generation immigrants. Her father was born and raised in Edmonton. After he finished high school, he worked with his father, then inherited a large family business. Sawsan's mother was born and raised in Ontario. The family comes from an upper class background, and achieved a high standard of living along with financial security.

Say, my parents are upper class. I'm comfortable, very comfortable. I always had what I wanted. And we travel a lot. And we have a lot of things,

material things. And my dad has his own business. So, we have been comfortable (Sawsan:1).

### C. SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

#### Family Life

The Lebanese Muslims of Edmonton are Sunni Muslims. They migrated from the towns and villages of the **Beekaa Valley**. Very few of them came from large Lebanese cities such as Beyrouth or Tripoli. They are from a restricted geographical location around **Lalah, Kherbet-Roha** and **Qar'oun**. This migration pattern shows the importance of family life of Lebanese Muslims. The main reason for leaving Lebanon is to seek better economic opportunities. Many immigrants came to Canada with the intention to work hard, save enough money and return to Lebanon to live a more prosperous life.

The Muslim Lebanese community of Edmonton is divided into 3 or 4 large family clans consisting of more than 50 people each. Very often, the clan is large enough to make endogamy possible.

She (mother) is a ... too. That makes the family bigger. That's a big point there, that both come from the same family. So, if you visit one side you visit the other side. They are all from the same family. Family is a very important part of our life, actually. It is something that's very much stressed in the house. I have lots of uncles here, more from my mom's side than from my dad's side. My dad's side, they are kind of dispersed around Alberta, some in BC. Family is stressed a lot. Like we believe family is a big part of

growing up. It's important to stay as a family (Hassan:5).

Family plays an important role in the personal life of the individual. In some cases, clan ties are so close that participants look at relatives as brothers and sisters.

I have two uncles living in Edmonton that are from my dad's side, and my mom's whole family: She has four brothers and one sister. And I have a lot of cousins that live here too. It means a lot to have my cousins here. Ah, since I have no sisters, I have a cousin whom I'm very close to. She's like my sister. And I see my cousins like my brothers and sisters (Dalal:2).

It is very important to live among and socialize with many relatives. The participants have numerous family support systems. They perceive these support systems as an essential part of growing up. Family life is considered as their anchor in Canada. Closeness in the family is a common theme.

Well, we're close, we're closer. We, families are more important to us than my Canadian friends. Most of them don't even know their cousins, for instance. They don't even know them, hardly. They never see them, you know. We know, like by going to weddings and functions and that, we know, we get to know everybody. You know, we're closer. In that way we have a lot in common, and we're just getting closer (Dalal:6).

Lebanese Muslims truly value their children and consider them an asset. This attitude is common in less developed countries (LDCs) where parents consider their children to be their best guarantee that, at least one of them will get a good education and will be able to help to improve the

family's economic condition. It is interesting to note that many participants plan to have large families.

I would say I like children. I mean, I'll have children, like a lot of children. I don't see an ideal number (Hassan:35).

I would like to have 5 or 6 (children). I love to have a large family, I really do. I do not want to have a small family. And I would also like to have a large family because I just remember when my *sitti* (grandmother) used to have all the grandchildren at her house on Saturday nights for dinner, and it was just, like I decided it was just beautiful, like just to have ten kids, and my *sitti* at the head of the table, and all of us eating dinner. I just loved the whole family atmosphere. I think that's important (Sawsan:31-32).

There is strong evidence that the families enjoy and value close relationships. The relationships between participants and their parents are generally cordial. Some of them feel fortunate and are grateful that they are from such families. They believe that it is this family closeness which helped them to withstand the forces of assimilation.

Being brought up in Canada as a Muslim is difficult, and I think it's easy to get lost and lose one's religion. It's just you're bombarded by so many influences, peer pressure; Canadian friends are among these things. I think the closeness of the family is what saves us. If the parents had not really been careful, the children are, they send them to school, I really think they can be influenced, changed and altered, whether it is taking drugs or whatever (Amir:6).

The participants see this close family relationship as a basic difference between Canadian and Muslim Lebanese ways of life. The importance given to family life continues to

be evident in the case of the children of parents from Lebanon.

A big difference. I think the Muslims here stick to the other Muslims. It's closer than in Canadian life. They grow up with their parents. There is more closeness. A person could be living with his parents when he's married. The Canadian people view that as unacceptable. It is the closeness mostly (Majid:7).

Over there (Lebanon), they work, but no matter what, you always have time for your relatives, your friends, always. Here, it's a little different, so your work comes first. Over there, they are around with relatives (Majid:13).

Participants express a strong sense of familial obligation. It is common to find young adults still living at home with their parents. They work and contribute significantly to the family income. This is particularly true in the case of young women who typically stay with their parents until they are married. They are also very involved in the family business and feel a sense of duty to help whenever they can.

But, in spite of generally cordial relations between parents and offsprings, there are also important areas of conflict. This is expected because of the differences between the two philosophies of life, the Muslim Arab worldview represented by the parents and the Canadian worldview represented by their children. Sometimes, this pattern is reversed. Some participants think that their parents are too Canadianized. They want to reverse this trend of assimilation. They are more interested in their



Muslim Lebanese culture. Actually, they appear to be more positive about Islam than their parents.

My dad's side relatives, his cousins, they are the ... They are older, they are my dad's age. So we don't really associate with them that much, and also that they are more Canadianized. They are, really, none of them except ..., he is involved, and ... his sister, sorry, in the Arabic culture. So, we don't really see them too much (Amir:5).

Many female participants think that their parents are strict. There is a misunderstanding about the fact that Muslim women cannot marry non-Muslim men. Parents are usually conservative in matters of marriage, even according to the standards specified in Islamic Law. This makes relations difficult, especially during adolescence and young adulthood. It seems that even prior to puberty, parents institute a whole range of limitations on their daughters to prepare them to accept even more limitations later on. Because of the generally more permissive sexual mores prevalent in Canadian society, the parents' conservative attitude can create adjustment problems and disturb an otherwise harmonious family life.

Well, in childhood, the way I saw being Moslem and Lebanese and that, was, I just accepted everything and I really didn't ask questions. And when I was an adolescent, I asked a lot of questions and it was harder for me because everyone else was doing things that I couldn't do. And it was really hard because of that, because I realized that I was a lot different from everybody else. And I was mad at my parents a lot, because they were telling me not to do this and not to do that, and when I'll ask them why, they just say because a Muslim girl doesn't do that, or you know, those kind of excuses,

and I'll get mad because I was different from everyone else (Dalal:23).

These difficulties stem from the parents' inability to clearly explain the Islamic stand on dating and marriage. Although these parents are more educated than other Muslim Lebanese parents, their Islamic education is limited. So, when faced with practical problems such as dating, it was difficult for them to provide their daughters with intelligent and authoritative explanations.

Like my mom is more, not necessarily, she isn't the way she is because of the religion. She is more because of the culture and tradition, like very strict and protective and traditional, because of that, because of culture. And that's the way it should be (Sawsan:4).

On the other hand, conservative parents who lack Islamic knowledge also failed to deal with the practical problems their children were faced with. Their arguments remain unconvincing, and even when their sons or daughters accept their restrictions, they do so mainly to prevent confrontation, rather than out of personal conviction.

Well, you know, the restrictions, like I was saying before, when you're a female and stuff. Like you know, you're told you can do this or you can't do that, or ... Like you have to be very good or something, you know, things like that. But it doesn't bother me that, you know, my friends, sort of, they can do whatever they want and I couldn't. It used to bother me at one time, you know (Nadia:8).

Well, it's very strict, you know, it's definitely a strict cultural background. For being a girl and stuff, it's very limited, you know. You can only do certain things. Guys have more freedom and stuff, which is ... (Nadia:40).

When young people are better educated and have a chance to study Islam, they realize that their parents are unnecessarily strict. They also realize that their arguments are not based on valid principles of Islamic law but on merely cultural practices.

And it has always been a double standard in our family, the boys can do whatever they want, and the girls and me, I can't do anything. Like my mom always said, I always said: Why do they get to do it and I don't? And she says: Oh, then you want to stay out until 4 o'clock in the morning. And I say: No, I don't think so. Both of us shouldn't. That's the point. Not that I should do these things, but we both shouldn't. You have to have a reason why, and I mean there is no rule in the Qur'an that says that men, boys are different from girls. Just because a girl doesn't date, and doesn't drink, and doesn't smoke, and doesn't do those things, it doesn't mean men can do all those things. They shouldn't do those things either. That's what I think. My mom doesn't. She says: Well, that's how she was raised: the boys can do what they want and the girls can't (Sawsan:29).

### **Cultural Life**

Muslim Lebanese immigrants still have ties with relatives living in the Beekaa Valley. The participants who visited the old country think that life there is very traditional. They were impressed by striking cultural differences between Lebanon and Canada.

It's a totally different life than here. People over there, they are more friendly. You see relatives everyday. Here, it's very different. It's close. Everything is a way of life to them. It's continuous. It's a very slow pace. It's not changing. It's just the same thing, day after day. It's more gossip there (Ma'ïd:4).

But the people there are so traditional, like you know. Like I mean times have changed here in Canada, because everyone is very much the same. But in Lebanon, I found that really interesting, like you do everything still the way they used years ago, you know. Families are still the same, and houses still look the same. Wow! very darn different. It's very different, because life you live here is so fast-going and stuff, you know. Down there, they're still there. Every day is like a Sunday there, you know. It's a very lay back life. It's easy going. Yet, they have to work much harder to make money too. It's much tougher down there, I think, from what I saw (Nadia:5-6).

Muslim Lebanese families live in their own homes, usually single family dwellings, in the North side of Edmonton. Their living rooms are decorated with framed pictures of family members, especially rare pictures of parents or grandparents who were first comers to Canada. They also like to display beautifully decorated verses of the Qur'an written in Arabic calligraphy, or the whole Qur'an written in small Arabic script.

Food habits are scrupulously maintained. Lebanese cuisine is well-known in Canada. Favorite dishes are **kebbi**, **tabbouli**, **hommos** and **shish-kebab**. Dessert is a variety of **baklava** served with Turkish coffee. Meals are usually prepared by housewives, proud to show off their exceptional culinary skills during weddings, numerous family and community gatherings and Islamic festivals.

Dress code is more conservative, but in many respects similar to the Canadian way. Lebanese Muslims are not distinguishable from other Canadians because they dress

almost the same way. It is only on occasions such as religious festivals that older men and women put on their traditional Lebanese dress. **Hijab** (Islamic dress) is not as common as in other Muslim communities, but it is seen more frequently today, especially among recent immigrants. Older women dress more conservatively. They cover their hair with a **mandeel**, especially when they go to the Mosque, or when they have male visitors. Younger women like to dress fashionably, and at the same time try to stay close to the Islamic norms.

As far as covering of the head, I had a long discussion with my aunt about that and we said, we talked about it and she said, you know, she never ever thought of doing it. But once you talk about it and you really think about it, you really should do it. Like I really should be covering my head. But also I think that, I don't know, I think that it has also to do with drawing attention to yourself, and I know you should be modest, but I think also that if I were to wear some scarf over my head, or whatever, I would be drawing attention to myself. And I think, if I integrate myself into this society, I'm not drawing attention to myself (Sawsan:13).

To the participants, assimilation means adaptation to Canadian society. They feel secure because of their strong family ties. Some families limit their involvement with other Lebanese Muslims to a minimum. For instance, they no longer go to the Mosque and even stop sending their children to Sunday school to learn Arabic and Islam.

Well, when I was younger, we used to go to Arabic school, but we don't go anymore. And we used to go to the Mosque a lot more when we were smaller, but

we don't go anymore. And we go, in terms of culture, we go to a lot of functions, a lot of Lebanese functions. We go to a lot of weddings, and you know, things like that. They have to do with the culture (Dalal:3-4).

First, the Islamic dimension is given up unwillingly and the cultural dimension is kept intact. However, culture alone can not stop assimilation. In Lebanon, the people are immersed in the culture, and Islamic acculturation is natural, but in Canada, Islamic education must be systematically planned and executed, otherwise assimilation is inevitable. Because of limited Islamic education, many participants feel that they are not committed good Muslims. Many of them find it easier to forget about Islamic practices and pay more attention to cultural practices.

To me it's very important to retain my religion, very important, and to retain my culture. But I think it's very easy to pick and choose. It's very, it will be very in, and very stylish to be very Arab and to carry that culture, but not worry about the religious part. But I think, if you can appreciate the cultural part of it, then you have to appreciate the religion. And it's important to me to retain that, I think (Sawsan:5).

Second, the most important aspects of the culture are also given up. For instance, only one participant thinks that he speaks fluent Arabic. This is so in spite of the fact that his parents speak Arabic fluently. As children, the participants were not motivated to learn Arabic. Today, they are willing to make sacrifices to learn the Arabic language.

Oh, my parents are a lot more modern. They're like, for instance we don't speak Arabic at home, hardly at all. My brother and me understand it, but we do not speak it. They are more modern in these ways (Dalal:1).

And I think, I do think that, because most of our parents were born in Lebanon, and the fact that they are friends with mostly, just Arab people, and I think things are going to change for us when we get married because we know a lot more Canadian people, and I think that even after that we will lose a little bit of our culture, because most of us, our people, I know don't talk Arabic at home, most of them, you know. And it's things like that we won't be able to pass on to our children (Dalal:7-8).

Third, Muslim Lebanese life becomes indistinguishable from Canadian life. Because of its vitality, Canadian society constitutes a serious challenge to the Muslim Lebanese community. Participants find it easier to be part of the majority. By suppressing or denying their cultural identity, they hoped to be seen as part of the majority and not as a visible minority. For instance, some participants adopted a strategy. They try to be as polite as possible, not to be assertive, and even change their first names.

You don't really notice the Muslim community here. Over there (Lebanon), you're part of it every day. You're surrounded by it. Over here, you're not really, because you're in a Canadian background. The Muslim community has a Canadianized way of life, with a Lebanese flavour (Majid:6).

I was saying we were basically brought up in a Canadian context. We were sent to English schools. We were exposed to an English community. It would seem that we were the only Arab family in that area. And the only exposure that we had to our culture, our religion, was through our parents and our relatives during visits and that, and I think because of that we don't speak Arabic, and as well as we should be. Like our mother didn't speak

English and basically she talked to us in Arabic. And we basically understand it, what is said, most of the time, but you know, it's hard to speak it. And I think a big reason is that my dad spoke English well, and we were like exposed to English-speaking people. That's our speaking anyway (Amir:7-8).

The Muslim Lebanese community did not achieve a high level of visibility and dynamism, although it is one of the older ethnic communities in Edmonton. Majid thinks that it vanished in the background of the dominant culture. The community did not succeed in building any cultural institutions. For instance, only in 1987 the first Islamic School was opened.

Besides its academic role, the public school plays an important role in the assimilation of Lebanese Muslims. Although outright assimilation is rare now, the school does not focus attention on the sociocultural needs of the students.

The only thing that may be bad about it (Canadian education) is that I don't speak Arabic good. I really do not speak it at all, hardly, and I'm not highly educated about my religion as I would be if I was from a Middle Eastern country (Amir:31).

In addition, participants choose to have Canadian friends rather than Muslim Lebanese friends. Their parents restricted their friendship to Muslim Lebanese people. The participants did not have any significant friendships with other Muslim Lebanese youths. The parents did not encourage their children to be in constant contact with other Muslim



Lebanese children, instead they restricted their social contact only to the extended families.

I have two really close girlfriends that I had since I was in late grade school. And they're from the same social background, the same socioeconomic background, but not from the same ... like they're ... but they've been brought up with the same kind of morals. They go to the university. They are from the same neighborhood (Sawsan:2-3).

There is an apparent sequence in the development of Muslim Lebanese identity. Initially, assimilation is automatic and Canadian identity is assumed. Muslim Lebanese identity is not stressed. The conspicuous aspects of this identity are given up. This assimilation appears to be related to minimum involvement with the Muslim Lebanese community. Children are not motivated to learn about their culture. They reluctantly attend Sunday classes arranged for them to learn about Islam and the Arabic language.

During junior high, the participants realized that their opinions and ideas on issues are not the same or are completely different from their non-Muslim friends. Their views on alcohol, drugs, premarital sex, prejudice and discrimination are totally different. They appreciate the limitations of the Canadian society from practical experience and involvement. The Muslim Lebanese culture is evaluated more objectively and a cultural realignment in its favour takes place. Group conformity and wholesale Canadian identity are now being questioned.

Oh, uh, for instance, morals in terms of girls, even God, you know, activities of ... the way their sexual activities, their morals, their drinking, their ... they just ... they don't ... not that they don't believe it, but just because they lead such a life. And it's like a lot of them live like they don't, they're not even thinking about the future. They're not thinking about what's going to happen to them when they die, you know, like (Dalal:6). They don't, they just think differently. You know, to them drinking is important, and doing certain things like ... that are important. It's just a fact of life to them. You know, like we're going outside, and we're gone to get drunk, you know. Or for instance, if they go out, they go out to nightclubs, you know, things like that (Dalal:8).

I guess, it would be, I saw how my other friends would be growing up, and the things they were doing, and I began to wonder why they were doing them. Then I found that I began to learn more about them, and more about my family, my own culture, my own religion (Hassan:12-13).

During high school, there is a crystallization of this Muslim Lebanese identity. Participants are now fully aware of their minority status. They are also more critical of the Canadian society. For example, they are now aware of the limitations of the Canadian educational system and its inability to accommodate their religious, cultural and linguistic aspirations. Prejudice and discrimination are important issues especially in the case of those from lower socioeconomic classes. They are also concerned about job discrimination. Some participants are able to articulate the divergent cultural priorities of their Canadian and Muslim Lebanese backgrounds.

Over there, they work ... no matter what, you have time for your relatives, your friends, always.

Here, it's a little different, so your work comes first. Over there, they're around with relatives (Majid:13).

In spite of the emergence of this strong Muslim Lebanese identity, participants continue to value their Canadian identity. They do not see Muslim Lebanese identity exclusive of Canadian identity. There is room for both identities. The only difference now is that there is a dominant Muslim Lebanese identity.

Oh, like I said before, it (Muslim Lebanese background) means a lot to me, and it's, I want to retain it. I think I've got to, but I can't ignore the fact that I live in Canada and I'm surrounded by people who aren't of my background, and I can't save myself from them, and I feel better when I talk to them, when I get to know them. And I think that, I mean God made those people too as much as He made us. So, they're there, they should matter, so I can't ignore them. And I, but I think also for me it's very important, it's the most important thing to be a Muslim. I would say I'm a Muslim first and foremost, but I don't know necessarily what that means, like what that means living here (Sawsan:8-9).

I definitely am Canadian because, you know, I'm just so accustomed to the culture, and definitely Lebanese because that's what my parents are. To be honest, being Lebanese is more defensive. As I mentioned earlier, at times, I wouldn't even admit it, but I do admit it to my closest friends and people like that and I think it's, I admit it presently that I'm Lebanese all the time. I've been accustomed to be what I'm, part of my heritage. But you're right in that I'm more defensive about being Lebanese as opposed to being Canadian (Amir:12).

Another important factor in culture retention is the existence of a Muslim Lebanese neighborhood. Participants live in the North of Edmonton, in an area commonly known as

"The Lebanese Village." Many of their businesses and institutions are situated in this geographical location. This densely populated ethnic neighborhood also appears to contribute to cultural retention. Because Amir does not live in this neighborhood, he feels stronger pressures to assimilate. There is a need to belong, and consequently assimilation is inevitable.

High culture retention coupled with a high level of assimilation appears to be associated with low self-esteem. For example, Sawsan is presently experiencing a conflict between her Muslim Lebanese and her Canadian identities. This conflict also affected her family relationships.

But it took me a long time to get over that, but also it was just very difficult coming to university because I had a very bad self-image, and coming to university and having people say I was attractive. But that was weird because I was coming from an atmosphere where they didn't think I was attractive. So, it was always conflict-like. Then I always had a little self-confidence that I could never do anything, like I didn't feel I had any ability in anything, that I wasn't good enough in anything (Sawsan:37).

Specifically, Sawsan is ambivalent about her culture and objectively criticizes many cultural practices.

But I also think that there is a problem because we end up segregating from society, and that, I think for me personally, it's important for me to integrate. Like I know I'm a Muslim and I know what I know, what I think is right. And I want to tell people who aren't Muslims, not people who are Muslims what I think it's, the way it is. But if you take people from here and integrate them into this, they can start filtering, and like whether we get, you know, people who are good doctors,

Muslims who are good doctors, and Muslims who are good lawyers, and television people, broadcasters, and all, and journalists, then people start really realizing what we're really like. When, because they don't measure us if we succeed in our group. They don't measure us as well as if we succeed in their group (Sawsan:34-35).

#### D. CONCLUSION

Chapter V analyzed the social context of the participants' cognitive and psychosocial development. The analysis of their socioeconomic life indicated how their families fared in their quest to achieve economic integration in the Canadian society. Generally speaking, in spite of initial hardships, Muslim Lebanese families were able to provide their children with a standard of living comparable to that of mainstream Canadian families. However, the analysis of their socioeconomic life alone would be misleading if it is not compared concurrently to their sociocultural life. When the cultural life of the Muslim Lebanese participants and their parents are considered, it is evident that cultural achievements lagged behind socioeconomic achievements. There is evidence of cultural loss especially in the linguistic and religious areas. Moynihan and Glazer's model of "economic integration and cultural pluralism" has not worked as well as it did in the case of Hispanics of Southern California.

Vygotsky/Luria used a social-historical approach to

study higher cognitive processes, and it was felt that the understanding of the social context of the participants will not be complete without such an approach. Likewise, psychosocial development can not be understood properly without an appreciation of the role of the interdependence of young and older generations for optimal crisis resolution and healthy individual psychosocial development. In terms of the proposed integration, an age integrated approach to Vygotskean cognitive development such as Erikson's psychosocial stages is a logical extension of Luria's thinking. Moreover, given the fact that the participants are second-generation immigrants, the sociocultural dimension of their lives becomes essential. The data show how, without an understanding of these special cultural support systems, the researcher is at an enormous disadvantage in trying to understand the individual in context.

## CHAPTER VI: COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

Because of the importance of semiotics/language in the mediation of higher cognitive processes, this chapter will include a discussion of the language situation of Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults. However, for the purposes of presentation only, this chapter will be divided into two sections, the first one about their language development and the second one about their cognitive development.

### B. THE BILINGUAL LIFE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

#### English Language Proficiency

Male participants think that they are Anglophones. They use English daily at school and often at home when they communicate with their parents. In spite of this, they admit that their English is not perfect. They attribute this weakness to the fact that their parents' English has always been below average and were not able to provide them with a good linguistic model.

Maybe it (my weakness in English) could be because I was in Lebanon for a couple years, maybe. I don't know, ever since I was small, I preferred mathematical concepts than English, ever since I was in grade one. That was before I even went to Lebanon. That could be because my parents at first did not speak English. They were still speaking Lebanese (Majid:23-24).

Male participants are aware that it is important to master the English language for academic progress. Some of them had problems adjusting during the first year in university. These difficulties are directly related to the lack of English fluency. For instance, Hassan and Majid almost failed their English courses. Although they recovered by the end of the first year in university, they still consider English as a major weakness in their academic studies.

The first year I took an English course. I would say it started up very rough and lots of difficulties in the beginning. I would say the most difficult part is my first year in the university. University was much larger than high school, so I felt kind of inferior, I guess. Five was the final mark (in English). The first marks were way down, then I picked up quite a bit in the end (Hassan:20-21).

This lack of English fluency is seen in the light of the sociolinguistic context of the participants. Their parents and members of the community did not speak English well and were reluctant to communicate with them. They were ambivalent about English and looked at it as the language of opportunity and as the obstacle in the way of this opportunity. Participants were raised in a psycholinguistic atmosphere marked by anxiety and ambivalence. Their parents did not think English was important and were not committed to learn it. Because of this they were not motivated at that time to learn the language.



Female participants present a different pattern. They think that they have an excellent command of the English language. Dalal mastered the English language because she started to read at an early age. Sawsan writes poetry and plans to become a writer. In these two cases, both parents speak English without an accent because they are more educated and lived in Alberta for a longer time. Mothers are second-generation immigrants and can be considered native speakers of English. They provided excellent linguistic models to their daughters.

Female participants consider English as the main factor in their academic progress. Sawsan and Dalal started school with a good background in English. Only Nadia did not know enough English when she started school, because her parents only spoke Arabic at that time. She does not think, however, that this delay affected her academic progress. On the contrary, she believes that it was better for her to learn to speak Arabic before going to school.

When I was younger and stuff, I just spoke Lebanese. I did not know how to speak English. So, at a very young age you start off like that, so you still keep it no matter what (Nadia:22).

Nadia is the only participant who achieved close to a functional mastery of L1 and L2. Her parents did not speak English and therefore communicated with her exclusively in Arabic during her preschool years. Her mother, in particular, was able to provide her with this linguistic

role model because she stayed at home. Arabic was also used exclusively in the family and with Arab friends living in the immediate neighborhood. Therefore, when Nadia started school, she already had a good command of the Arabic language to prevent psycholinguistic problems usually associated with the learning of a second language by ethnic minority children. In spite of this achievement, her mastery of Arabic remains fragile. She appears to fit well in the category of ethnic minority children described by Bain (1986):

For some minority children, particularly those who live in tightly knit communities and who are further isolated from the mainstream because of race or religion, the reality of natural bilingualism is even more problematic. These youngsters tend to speak their mother tongue at home and with their playmates. Even if the community in which these children live is, at the adult level, bilingual, it is usually the case that the two languages are used for different purposes. (p.17)

#### **Arabic Language Proficiency**

Parents made an effort to speak Arabic with their children so that they will learn their mother tongue first before any other language. They also sent them to Sunday school to learn the rudiments of Arabic and Islam. Some of them even enforced a strict adherence to speaking only Arabic at home. This could only be done with drastic measures to isolate the family from Canadian society. The majority of these parents realized that they have lost the

battle even before their children started school. The influence of the "lingua communis" (English as the language of the majority) was just too great to resist. The little Arabic that they learned (often arrested at the "nominative level" of Luria or even earlier at the phonetic level) is never used so that the development of the "communicative stage" of language development can proceed. That is why many participants find it impossible to speak Arabic even though they claim to understand it well. Progressively all conversations are initiated in English and speaking Arabic becomes more and more wishful thinking. This language situation is similar to that of Franco-Albertans.

Among all the participants, only Majid considers himself bilingual. Majid was raised in a unilingual (Arabic) family and lived in Lebanon for two years. These exceptional circumstances gave him the opportunity to learn to speak Arabic fluently. Hassan also considers his Arabic to be at a higher level than other Canadian-born Lebanese Muslims. He is taking an advanced Arabic course at the university. The other participants do not have a good command of Arabic. They can read Arabic at a considerably lower level than they should according to their grade. They can also understand most conversations, but still find it difficult to respond in fluent Arabic.

No, not really (bilingual), because I'm not fluent in Arabic. And I consider bilingual is being able

to communicate with people very, very efficiently. And I can do it only in terms of English. Probably my worst part of it (is speaking Arabic), I don't know. I find it harder than anything else, the reading and the writing. In terms of reading to myself it's easy, but the most difficult part is my pronunciation of words (Amir:41).

Majid speaks Arabic well and is pleased with his progress. Learning Arabic was important to his parents. They speak only Arabic at home. His mother taught him at home. She also sent him to Sunday school and insisted that he go even when he complained that he didn't like it. It was, however, living in Lebanon during grade 7 and 8 (a sort of late Arabic immersion) which made the difference.

I think it's (learning Arabic) essential because, maybe not, to me. It's essential to my parents. I think it was important for us to, otherwise they wouldn't have taken us to Lebanon. But now, I think it's a little different, because right now they don't stress the Arabic language to us. Like if you do it's good, right, but if you don't they're not really ... (Majid:20).

The majority of the other parents also speak Arabic at home and encourage their children to speak the language. It is only Amir's parents who promoted English at the expense of Arabic. They did not consider Arabic to be important in Canada. Amir is now critical of their decision. He considers Arabic to be an important aspect of his religion and heritage. He is making an effort to learn Arabic. Like the other participants, he plans to spend a few months in Lebanon to learn Arabic.

Oh, it (Arabic) doesn't seem to be too important

(to my parents). Presently, I don't feel too good about it (not speaking Arabic), but in the past I was content to say "who cares?". But I realized that it's really important, because you have to read the Qur'an in Arabic. That's the language Allah sent it in. And also that it's part of my heritage. I would like to know a second language also (Amir:43-42).

Both Arabic and English are spoken at home, but an uneven development of both languages took place. Learning to speak Arabic was often sacrificed, and thus English became the dominant language. There are, however important exceptions to this pattern. For instance, Amir's sister benefited from favorable linguistic circumstances and was able to learn to speak Arabic fluently. Her mother spoke to her only in Arabic. She also interacted mostly with Lebanese friends and participated in many family and community events where Arabic was the language of communication. At the same time, her father spoke to her in English. This linguistic situation resembles the "one parent one language" situation (Bain, 1980).

On the other hand, Amir lived in a completely different sociolinguistic atmosphere which made it almost impossible to master Arabic. His father, as the dominant male role model, was fluent in English and did not give much importance to Arabic. His mother was interested to teach him to speak Arabic but her efforts were not sufficient. She did not teach him Arabic in the same systematic way as she did with his sister. He also interacted most of the

time with Canadian friends and did not have many Muslim Lebanese friends. He was not motivated to learn Arabic in Sunday school and looked at the whole experience negatively.

Oh, it (Arabic) does not seem to be too important. Just my parents and my sister are the only ones who speak it really good. It just seems like all the males, boys, got sidetracked and didn't care about it. And it's hard to pick up now. Probably, my dad spoke English and we communicated in English with him because he was in Canada for so many years. And probably the reason my sister learned it (Arabic) is that she went to Lebanon with my mother for a couple months, and she probably, she's not exposed to too many Canadian people as we are because of friends and that, because it's limited for her and that she's a girl and she's exposed to more Arabic friends, and she's older, so she sees our relatives more than we do (Amir:41).

Among females, only Nadia considers herself to be bilingual. In reality, when the researcher tried to have a conversation with her in Arabic, he found that she speaks in short sentences, still hesitates to speak in Arabic and gives up easily. These appear to be indications of early "expressive language" development. Her mastery of Arabic is weak, with major delays in the semantic and control functions of language.

Nadia benefited because she was raised in a unilingual family. This exceptional circumstance gave her the opportunity to learn to speak Arabic. Her parents consider Arabic to be important. They speak Arabic at home, all the time. Nadia did not learn to speak English until she went to school. She believes that this quasi- unilingual

situation at home helped her to speak Arabic fluently. Her parents also sent her to learn Arabic at Sunday school. They even encouraged her to go to Lebanon to learn the language. Recently, she started to attend Qur'anic Arabic classes at the Mosque.

I think it's (my Arabic) really good. Like I have the words down to t. Just putting them in a sentence. Because I don't speak it all the time, it makes it hard. I have to say it slowly sometimes and really think what I have to say, you know, because I don't speak it as much as I should. But I have the words down pat (Nadia:21).

Sawsan's and Dalal's parents did not consider Arabic to be important. Even though they were bilingual, they spoke only English at home. Speaking Arabic became limited to the few occasions when they went to the Mosque or when they visited relatives. Sawsan and Dalal also went to Sunday school and remember enjoying the classes. They did not have any Muslim Lebanese friends. These factors contributed to a situation of "subtractive bilingualism" whereby L1 is sacrificed in favour of L2. Very often, both L1 and L2 suffer because L1 can not be sacrificed without negatively affecting L2. The net outcome of this is the inability to use L2 effectively in school education and consequently to fall behind academically. Today, they regret that they can not speak Arabic. Dalal is now critical of her parent's decision. She considers Arabic to be an important aspect of her religion and her heritage.

It's (parents' Arabic) good. My mom's funny when she talks. Everyone laughs at her. But she can communicate and understand. And it is not, they don't use it at all at home, anymore. So, it's only when they go to like the Mosque or with relatives that they would speak it, but very, very rarely. But it's good (Arabic in our family). Not important. My dad and mom, they like it and they are, I mean they encouraged me to take the Arabic. But it's not extremely important (Sawsan:22).

Sawsan and Dalal know that they are unilingual. Their Arabic language skills are limited. They are now taking an introductory Arabic language course at the university. Dalal reads, writes and understands Arabic a little, but has difficulty speaking the language. Sawsan is still learning the Arabic alphabet.

I went to Sunday school and I remember learning the alphabet. I forgot the alphabet, so I didn't learn that much. Sometimes I have problems with the alphabet. I felt behind because I couldn't go to some classes. Dr ... is tutoring me now and I realize when I spend about half an hour doing it that I really pick up a lot. I just have to sit down and do it (Sawsan:22-23).

### **Importance of Arabic**

Participants support the English-Arabic Bilingual Program of the Edmonton Public Schools Board. They expect the program to facilitate learning Arabic and to promote a better appreciation and understanding of the Muslim Lebanese culture. They pointed out that parents will be relieved of the responsibility to teach their children Arabic. They think that parents are not qualified to teach their children



Arabic. They look somewhat optimistically at the English-Arabic Bilingual Program as an equivalent to the French Immersion program. They think that children attending the bilingual schools are fortunate because, with professional instruction every day, they certainly will learn the language.

I think it's a good idea in that it forces the parents to actually do something about it (learning Arabic). It takes time off their hands if they don't have time, and exposes them to both worlds. It's sort like English and French. J. Picard is a good example, but it seems like it's more French than English. And it gives us our rights, basically (Amir:43).

Many participants would not hesitate to send their children to bilingual schools. A few participants still hesitate to send their children to bilingual schools because of the distance and transportation, and are especially concerned about the quality of education.

It's good, you get to learn the language. In a sense it's bad because, let's say, you go out of elementary, right, you go into junior and high school, your English or your background in English might not be as great (Majid:21).

Participants did not know that there is a full-time Islamic School in Edmonton. However, when the concept of an Islamic school was explained to them, they were excited about it and thought that it was an important and positive development. They believe that Islamic schools are needed because good knowledge of Islam is more important than learning Arabic. They emphasize the importance of teaching

children Islam at a young age. They realize that parents are too busy to teach their children Islam properly, and appreciate the opportunity these children have to attend the Islamic School. They particularly value the Islamic atmosphere of the school, where better Islamic practices and discipline can be encouraged.

I think it's a very good idea as long as they maintain the basic education in terms of Canadian norms like math and English and stuff like that, because I think it's really important if you can get the kids at a young age on the right path of Islam. I just think it's good. I would take the private school I think, uh. Islam is more important than the language (Amir:44).

However, in spite of this support for Islamic schools, there is concern about the quality of education, especially basic education like English, mathematics and science. Majid thinks that Islamic schools would be more useful during junior and high school. He argues that if Islamic schools are limited to elementary grades, children will forget what they learned by the time they are in junior high school. Majid is very positive about the Islamic school. He will send his children even if it means sacrificing a little in terms of the quality of education. He is obviously looking at the long term effects and benefits.

From (grade) 7, 8 and 9 and high school, those are the important years, in the sense that people who learn from grade 1 to 6, they could forget it from 7 to 12. It's (Islamic school) good if it doesn't interfere with their academic. I think it's excellent. (If it doesn't provide the same quality of education) I think, in the long run it will pay

off. In this society, it's difficult, let's say to stay in contact with your religion, so the more you know about your religion, the better. If I have children, I'll have less worries. That would be a major factor. And I know there are lots of people that have to work and they can't teach Islam like full time at home. This way the school will be very well guaranteeing you that they are being taught this. It will be beneficial for sure (Majid:22-23).

The other participants are more hesitant and prefer to send their children to bilingual schools rather than Islamic schools. In general, females are less likely than males to give their full support to Islamic schools. Sawsan and Dalal are concerned about the quality of the English language and the ability to compete with children from the other public schools. Sawsan and Nadia prefer bilingual schools. Nadia thinks that Islamic schools are for people who are more religious.

I would say, I would have to be honest again too. You're talking about the bilingual stuff and then about the religious kind of, not different, but different parts right there. The bilingual for sure but I would say your parents have to be pretty religious. But you know I don't know if I'm making any sense or not. They probably have to be firm believers, you know what I mean. Not everybody is going to take their kids there. But I do think it's a good idea really. That's great (Nadia:24).

Dalal would send her children only up to grade 4 even if the academic level is slightly lower.

I think that's (the Islamic school) good, but I think that they should, if they're living in Canada, they should learn English because they wouldn't get very far here. As long as they can compete with the other kids here, then, that's fine. I would (send my children) to keep the culture and

everything, I would, uh. Well, (If Islamic schools have lower academic standards) if it was at a young age, I would say, then it's alright. I think more grade 4 would be where I would go (Dalal:21-22).

### **Personal Meaning of Bilingualism**

Participants regret that they do not speak more Arabic. They realize now that Arabic is an important dimension of their lives. They are willing to make sacrifices to learn Arabic. Many of them believe that they can learn to speak Arabic if they spend a few months in Lebanon. They look forward to the day when they can speak Arabic fluently and communicate effectively with their parents and their relatives.

I do plan to go back home for a little while. I think that learning in class here is good, but I don't feel it's sufficient enough. Like I would be really interested in learning more Arabic (Hassan:25).

## **C. THE COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

### **Cognitive Interests**

Male participants identified mathematics as their most important cognitive/intellectual strength. They developed this interest early in life and generalized it, during high school, to similar areas such as economics and accounting.

I really enjoy math. I guess everybody calls me a clown with numbers. I have always been involved with something along the lines of math, if not directly with math, with things such as economics (Hassan:14).

(My cognitive assets are) basically numbers, math, mathematics; mostly to do with numbers and stuff like that. I don't consider English as a strength. I do not consider it a weakness, but one of my weak areas (Majid:15).

Female participants consider language as their most important cognitive asset. Sawsan and Dalal are undergraduate students in arts and social sciences. They do not identify mathematics or science as a cognitive or intellectual strength.

I think that I'm very analytical and very ... I think I can perceive things very well. And if I think of a situation and I analyze it, it's easy for me to perceive all the possibilities and pick apart situations. I don't think, like academically speaking I'm not mathematically or scientifically inclined. I'm not interested in science but I'm very interested in writing. I love to write and I'm, I think I'm creative. I hope I'm imaginative. I like that sort of, that side of it. And I think that, I guess I can argue well because I can see two sides of an issue and take the other side and try and look at it from their point of view while arguing my point (Sawsan:16).

Nadia did not pursue post-secondary education. She thinks she has a more practical orientation to life, and believes in doing things rather than thinking about them.

I'm very much a 'go getter'. If I want something, I definitely go out there and get it. That's the way I'm. I think because my belief is strong in something, then I will definitely come out there and get it. It will just ... That's one specific strength with me. And if I know that I have a potential to do something, then I'll go there and I'll do it (Nadia:14).

She has good linguistic skills but experiences difficulties with mathematics. She was a good student in

high school. She remembers a tremendous change in her academic performance: She paid more attention to her studies and became an honors student.

I was always good at reading and writing, not bad at all actually. Math, no good. To be honest with you I didn't do that good in elementary or junior high. In high school I did very well. Well, just something definitely changed. I don't know what it was but something definitely changed (Nadia:15).

In spite of this excellent academic progress, she decided not to go to college or university. Unlike the other participants, who value post-secondary education, she preferred to work in her family business.

No (I didn't have any post-secondary education) because I knew what I wanted to be. I had a very big interest in (a trade) or I wanted ... It was even a bigger one doing, you know, interior decorating design and stuff. So, anyone (Nadia:17). I think (being an honours student and choosing not to go to university is) because, I don't know, I stopped and I thought about that: Why didn't I go to NAIT? Why didn't I go to university? I think because I knew, I don't know, I just really enjoy (her trade), you know. Maybe that would, I think I know, kind of my own philosophy. I think, no matter what you do, you know, whether you're a garbage picker or whatever, it is just what you do best. You know what I mean. Like I could go and be a doctor, but I wouldn't be really happy about it, you know. So, I want to be able to enjoy what I'm doing, you know (Nadia:19).

### **Abstraction**

In general, participants have a preference for concrete/practical ideas. Only Sawsan indicated a clear preference for abstract ideas. Some participants find

abstract ideas more difficult to grasp, but they appreciate both abstract and concrete ideas. They consider university education to be a major factor in developing their ability to handle abstract thoughts effectively. Only Sawsan definitely prefers abstract ideas.

I'm more comfortable with practical concrete things. I'm taking a theory course right now and it's, like I had an exam yesterday and I had to sit there and, you know, absolute quietness, and I had to sit there and read it over and over before I really understood it (Dalal:15).

### **Verbal Concepts**

Participants who attend university can grasp complex scientific concepts in their fields of study. They are also comfortable with everyday concepts. But as was discussed earlier, male participants have a preference for numerical concepts. They do not find verbal concepts interesting and therefore were not motivated to excel in them.

Numerical concepts, I excel better. Verbal concepts, it's okay, it's not bad. (A concept such as) "social justice", I don't really prefer that. I don't know, I just don't like that area, so I'm not really interested in it. So, I don't really follow up on it (Majid:16).

Female participants who attend university are majoring in social sciences and arts. They are capable of handling the complex concepts related to their studies. They are also comfortable with everyday concepts and show an even higher development of non-discursive thought. For instance,

Sawsan is involved in the theatre and Dalal is a painter.

Well, we're doing Karl Marx, his concepts of alienation and class struggle. At first, it (the concept of alienation) was just a little bit (difficult). Then, as I sort of read it more and more, it got to be better, to be a lot easier (Dalal:16).

I think, I'm fine with (concepts). Like if it's the concept of, I don't know, "realistic theatre" or the concept of "absurdist theatre", I would say I would not have any problem like understanding it or communicating it to someone. But I would have to pin it down to, like I'll have to say: okay, what do you want to get out of this, or ... (Sawsan:17).

### Mathematical Concepts

Males excelled in mathematics. They enjoyed their math classes and were very motivated to master the subject. They consider math as their major cognitive strength. Females did not have a good experience with math. They consider math as their major cognitive weakness. They found math difficult and think that it is far removed from life. They were not interested in math for these reasons.

Well, to be honest, math was one of my weak spots. I didn't do very well. Just like (my older brother), I didn't have a thing for math, I think (Nadia:17).

(Mathematics are) frustrating because they don't, it didn't mean anything to me. Like they just were, I mean, I didn't see where they were going. That's why, I mean I had to always ask: Why we're doing this? When am I ever going to use this? It was impractical. I do (see now a need for math), but I also see the way that they could make them, like I don't want to feel like when I went to the classroom that I'm learning something that's



totally separate from what I'm living outside. And that's what I always thought I was doing (Samsan:19).

### **Scientific Concepts**

Male participants are comfortable with scientific concepts. Besides their basic interest in math, accounting and economics, they also had an interest in chemistry or physics. Biology was not very popular. Female participants found scientific concepts a little easier and not as frustrating as mathematical concepts. As was the case with math, they eventually lost interest in science and gave up. Only Nadia did relatively well in biology in high school.

Actually, science (in high school) was a little harder for me also. Math and science, I couldn't really. They were harder, uh (Dalal:16).

### **Verbal-logical Abilities**

In general, male participants can understand and make complex verbal-logical statements. As university students, they are now familiar with detailed discussions of subjects, arguments and counter-arguments and theories. Their specializations in the area of economics and finance helped them to appreciate more the specificity of mathematical thinking. They find statistical procedures efficient and practical. They are not comfortable with philosophical thinking and some of them display a pre-critical attitude

even towards the subjects of their study. They blame early specialization and the lack of a solid general education, especially in philosophy and the social sciences, for this attitude.

Sometimes, maybe (I look at an argument critically), but I don't know, when I sort of read something and I look at it, I sort of believe him, whatever he says. Then, if he writes from an extreme I would believe him, and if another writes the opposite I believe it too. So it's a little bit difficult, but I could sort of understand where he is. If I'm to read something, then I look, then tend to agree with him (Majid:17).

Female participants are more advanced in the area of verbal-logical abilities. Only Nadia has difficulties in this area, apparently because she did not go to university. The other participants are trying to develop their critical abilities. Dalal thinks that she needs to concentrate more when dealing with such operations. Sawsan knows that she has difficulties in writing.

I'm interested in fiction, so I write essays and I get slammed in my essays all the time for writing, just writing. Like I don't, I don't, my set-up or my structures aren't right. I don't set up this and this and this the way it should be. I always just write and kind of fall on how I talk. So, I guess with that I don't, I'm not great at that. But I do, I mean I love to write (Sawsan:18).

### **Problem-solving Abilities**

Participants are familiar with theoretical operations and hypothetical problems. They found them more difficult than real life situations, but it was in university that

these operations became easier to understand and to master.

That's (hypothetical problems) fairly easy. I find that's what we were bombarded by in school. Basically theory and hypothetical, and I find no problem in school (Amir:38).

Hypothetical problems, that's a little bit difficult because you don't know where you're coming from, you don't know the background. If it was a real life situation, it will be a lot more easier. But in terms of solving it, I can solve it, but conceptually understanding it may be a little difficult. Maybe solving it may be a little easier than understanding it (Majid:17).

#### **Personal Significance of Cognitive/Intellectual Abilities**

The parents of male participants were described as not well educated, especially English education. In spite of this, participants were proud to point out that their parents learned to speak English although they did not go to school in Canada.

I think, the big difference is that my parents are not as educated. They both did not go to school, especially in terms of English school. But I really think they are very intelligent in that they know what to do in the practical sense that you were talking about, in real life. They don't have to worry about theory or the hypothetical. They do all their thinking in terms of what they have to do in real life (Amir:39).

My dad probably finished about grade 5, I think, and my mom I think, grade 3. Actually they surprise me, like a lot of times. What they know about houses, interest rates and stuff like that. In terms of that, I think they know more than I do. And it's a little bit surprising. Actually my parents went through that (buying and selling their house) four times, so they know it very well. But also in terms of work, employment; they know what is going on here, and it's surprising considering

their education and that ... Experience has something to do with that (Majid:18).

Hassan, however, thinks that because his parents did not speak English fluently, is an important reason for his parents' lower occupational achievement.

Probably (the difference between my intellectual abilities and those of my parents is) the level of schooling completed. And considering living in a country where English is the major language, I guess communication would be greater, uh quite a difference (Hassan:18).

The parents of female participants are more educated. Both parents finished high school. Dalal's father has a university education. Only Nadia's parents did not go to high school. Dalal and Sawsan identify intellectually with their parents because of their higher education and experience. They trust their opinion and think they are smart people.

I compare myself with -not with my brothers because my brothers were not that long out of school- and not with my mom, but my mom is a very smart woman, she's very quick, but my father. I do because I think that he's a very smart man and I trust his opinion. Maybe my mother, in the fact that I'm very analytical and I pick things apart that way. But in the field of my interests, what I'm interested in, neither of my parents (Sawsan:20).

Yes, she (my mother) finished high school. I think that they (my intellectual abilities) would compare more to my father because, you know, he's more educated than my mother. My mom, we don't really have a lot to talk about in terms of education (Dalal:17).

Participants are happy that they can function better than many people and can interact with most people. They

believe that intellectual abilities are God-given and should not be wasted.

They mean a lot because I'm proud of myself that I'm getting an education instead of, you know, working part time in a store or something (Dalal:17).

### Value of Education

The participants report that their parents value their children's education. They want them to at least complete high school. Both parents and participants can see the value of education in terms of:

- (1) Helping them to achieve their goals and progress in life, like have better job opportunities.
- (2) Knowing their environment and learning to look at things more objectively.
- (3) Becoming better persons and understanding other people.

I think, it (education) allows me to operate at a level above lots of people. In terms of some people you meet, they carry a conversation and you may not know what they're talking about when they use a technical term, whereas if you have an education you have a better chance of understanding what these people mean. It allows you to interact with a large group of people (Amir:40).

I would value education as one of the most important things in life. I find it important in anybody's life. Well, it's important in achieving your goals, in progressing in life. It means knowing your environment, knowing how things operate, knowing how you can adapt (Hassan:19).

Male participants plan to finish their bachelor's

degree, then proceed to specialization or certification. They are not interested in graduate studies and do not want to "continue too far" in education. Instead, they plan to get married and settle down. Some of them are willing to continue beyond the bachelor's degree level if they are admitted to law school.

Nadia and Sawsan view education more in terms of personal meaning, like getting a general education, or learning about history and literature. Dalal believes that education is important, and that getting the right job will depend on the level of education. She thinks that if there is little or no education, one can end up working part-time in a boring job, or a job one does not like.

Since I've been in the university, the most valuable part of it has been getting a general education. I learned a lot of things, not just one specific thing. And also about history and literature because everything we do relates to that and there is always a reference, and there is always, every time you read something, there is always a reference to something that's always happened before. And that's very important for me to be aware of what's going on in the world now, to be aware of what's gone on before. That's been important to me (Sawsan:21).

Dalal and Sawsan want to finish at least a masters degree. They are planning careers in teaching, research or law. Dalal thinks that marriage might prevent her from completing her education.

I like to do my bachelor of ..., but that's very impractical because I wouldn't be able to use it for a career later on. I mean I'm not going to be

an or anything like that. It would be just something for me to do that I enjoy in the school. But I would like to get my law degree. I don't know, I'm just applying for everything. If I get in, I'll see what happens. I don't know (Sawsan:20).

I would like to (go beyond a BA), but I think that if I was to get married or something, I would take a year off, maybe. But I would like to get my masters. I think that in terms of getting a good job, then it's important for me to get my masters. So, I would like to get it, uh (Dalal:15).

Nadia was working since she finished high school. She does not want to further her education.

It's interesting because the one that's not after me, my sister, she's very different. I was mentioning, with (her), like I know right away she wants to go to university as soon as she's finished high school. She has different interests, whereas when I was in high school, I went into art, into (a craft) and all that stuff, you know. I can definitely see her being a doctor or a nurse, you know. Just the type of person that she is. She's not really into the crafty stuff (Nadia:19).

#### D. CONCLUSION

Chapter six provided the description of the data on cognitive development. As predicted, language plays an essential role in cognition. It is central to the intellectual development and the academic progress of the participants. Compared to their parents who were described as not well educated, the participants achieved higher levels of cognitive development. They did not have any difficulty with the kind of cognitive tasks that Luria administered to the inhabitants of Soviet Central Asia in

1931. However, their full cognitive development was hindered. Some of them had difficulty with the more abstract tasks. Using the theoretical frameworks of Bernstein (1967), Cummins (1982) and Bain and Yu (1980), it is clear that there is a relationship between the loss of L1 in favour of L2 and this cognitive weakness.

The next chapter explores the characteristics of psychosocial development which played an important role in the lives of the participants.



## CHAPTER VII: PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

Chapter VII describes and analyzes the participants' psychosocial development. In spite of the different dynamics involved, the discussion of the psychosocial development of females and males will be combined. This discussion centers mainly on adolescence, but both childhood and young adulthood will be included in the analysis. Childhood is important in determining the contribution of pre-identity stages to personality development. Young adulthood is important because all participants are presently at this stage.

Clearly, "identity" is the major issue. It permeates the participants' fundamental concerns in the areas of dating and marriage, choice of occupation, and even in a more serious way, their ideological commitment. However, not all participants are equally concerned with these issues. For instance, Nadia seems to be satisfied with ethnic identity and does not stress Islamic identity, whereas the other participants express a strong personal attachment to Islam and its values.

The other important issue is "autonomy". Participants range on a whole continuum going from high levels of conformity, to minimum need for independence, to outright

rebellion against parental authority. The latter is particularly evident in the case of Sawsan who appears to be going through a full-blown identity crisis affecting every aspect of her psychosocial development.

This chapter has three sections. The first, psychosocial development during childhood, briefly explores the stages leading to identity. The second, psychosocial development during adolescence, discusses in detail adolescence experiences, adjustment, and developmental tasks in the areas of dating and marriage, occupation and ideological commitment. The third and final part, psychosocial development during late adolescence and young adulthood, describes the participants' self-reflection and personal traits.

## **B. PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DURING CHILDHOOD**

### **Childhood Experiences**

Dalal remembers childhood as a time when she accepted everything her parents told her. They did not explain anything to her and were very strict.

Well, in childhood, the way I saw being Moslem and Lebanese and that was, I just accepted everything and I really didn't ask questions. And when I was an adolescent, I asked a lot of questions and it was harder for me because everyone else was doing things and I couldn't do it. And it was really hard because of that, because I realized that I was a lot different from everybody else. And I was mad at my parents, a lot because they were telling me not to do this and not to do this and when I'll ask them

why, they just say because a Muslim girl does not do that, or you know, those kind of excuses. And I'll get mad because I was different than everyone else. And now I just realized that for me that's just the best thing, that I'm different from everybody else, that I'm glad that my parents were like that (Dalal:23).

Nadia remembers that she was very shy. She is still trying to overcome this personality trait.

From what I remember, I was very quiet, very, very quiet, very shy. Well, always good at heart, friendly. I'm finding, as I'm getting older now, it's not as bad as it used to be. I'm starting to open up a lot more than I used to (Nadia:32).

Sawsan remembers childhood as a time when she was very close to her family. In spite of a poor relationship with her mother, this closeness in the family is still clear in her memory.

Basically, I remember my mother, my relationship with my mom and it has always been negative. But I remember my family, how I was always with my family. That's basically what I remember (Sawsan:24-25).

Male participants remember their childhood as a time without problems and concerns. It was a carefree period which they enjoyed very much.

You don't have any worries about that (even irresponsible behaviour during adolescence) in your childhood. There is nothing to worry about, no responsibilities. You're not expected to do much. And throughout your adolescence, you're starting, there is more expectation of you to do things. But you're still immature in that you're not fully developed mentally or physically and you do not know what to do in certain situations. But basically, I would say, in my childhood, I was outside playing a lot. That's all I remember (Amir:44).

At school, they were involved in sports and consequently made Canadian friends. At the same time, they noticed the differences between their Muslim Lebanese and Canadian cultures.

I would describe my childhood as one of competing with a Western Canadian society and that of a Muslim society in a Western Canadian society (Hassan, Questionnaire:3).

Their parents remember that they were well-adjusted children. Their success in school coupled with good behaviour contributed to a positive sense of competence and acceptance by parents, other significant adults, and teachers.

My parents considered me good-natured due to my success in school as well as helping them out in looking after their business (Amir, Questionnaire:3).

### **Childhood Developmental Tasks**

Participants remember their childhood as a time marked by strong family ties. Although they appreciate family closeness, they also pointed out the problems associated with it. Dalal identifies communication problems between her and her parents. The problems were related to discipline, because parental limitations and expectations were not explained properly to her satisfaction. This is somewhat surprising in a family where the father is a university graduate. Dalal thinks that her father's Islamic

knowledge is good because he was raised in Lebanon, but in reality, it appears that both parents had limited Islamic knowledge and therefore could not answer their daughter's questions about Islamic limitations in a convincing manner. This ultimately led to communication problems, and at times, to Dalal's involvement in activities which her parents did not approve. In time Dalal understood and accepted her parents' expectations and slowly changed her behaviour accordingly.

Nadia remembers that she was very shy during childhood. Even today she is still shy. It might be related to lack of assertiveness. Muslim families are traditional and modesty of their women is encouraged and emphasized. Sometimes this virtue is carried to an extreme. Although Nadia is an intelligent young woman, she is still shy, and is excessively polite and even apologetic at times. Her family and culture do not encourage the women to develop strong personalities and are very suspicious of their independence.

Sawsan enjoyed a close family life, but at the same time it was not a happy one because of a poor relationship with her mother. As a child, she was very attached to her father and her childhood experiences were generally positive. It is not known exactly when the relationship with her mother deteriorated, but it does not appear to be during childhood.

It was probably during adolescence years and was specifically related to the issues of identity and autonomy. She explains that her mother is very attached to her and at the same time very domineering. She thinks that their relationship deteriorated because they argued constantly.

Male participants remember their childhood as a happy time with few responsibilities. Amir remembers that he spent his time playing with other children, but there were no Muslim Lebanese children in his neighborhood. He also remembers that he started helping at the family business at this young age. During childhood, he felt closer to his mother than to his father because his father worked at the store most of the time.

Hassan and Majid cannot remember anything specific about their childhood. However, they remember that it was a time of play and few responsibilities. Their relationships with their parents and their siblings were warm. Family life was important, in spite of the fact that both parents worked long hours.

### **C. PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DURING ADOLESCENCE**

#### **Adolescence Experiences**

Dalal experienced difficulties during the adolescent period of life. She felt too restricted in her life because she was not allowed to do some of the things that her

Canadian friends were enjoying.

Well, it was hard in terms of, well all my friends did certain things and I didn't do them. But I associated with a lot of Canadian girls but I didn't go to parties and things like that (Dalal:22-23).

Dalal felt that peer pressure was stronger at school. At the beginning she was not proud to be a Muslim. She could not understand why her parents did not want her to associate with non-Muslims and especially males. She resented this restriction and was angry with them, because they did not explain the reasons clearly to her. It was not until high school that she realized how different she was from her Canadian friends. Now, she understands why her parents were so protective and realizes that she is different from the others because she is a Muslim. She is even happy that her parents were strict with her.

Now I can see everything, why they (parents) said it to me and everything and I would say the exact same things to my kids. Well, I guess that I've grown up and I've seen that being like everybody else is not the greatest thing and that being Moslem and being Lebanese and the culture that goes with it is something that I like and I'm glad that I'm part of it. And before when I was an adolescent, I wasn't proud to be a Muslim, I wasn't, you know, proud of it at all and now I am (Dalal:24).

Nadia thinks that peer pressure did not play an important role in her life. Her parents convinced her that there is no reason to date non-Muslims since she would not be able to marry them. However, when she chose Muslim friends, she was not certain whether her parents would like

them either. She felt that if her parents did not like them she is not supposed to like them too.

I used to get upset, especially when I couldn't see a movie or whatever, you know. It's probably not the best example but when I couldn't go see the movies or little things, go shopping by myself, it was always, 'oh, not because we do not trust you' or whatever, you know. They wouldn't like a specific friend or something, you know. And if your parents don't like them, then you can't like them either. That was when I was younger and stuff. Oh, it used to bother me at the time but they were always right though, I have to admit. They really were, you know (Nadia:27).

Sawsan also remembers she had difficulties in the area of peer pressure. However, in her case, adolescence was especially marked by a poor relationship with her mother.

Well, let me think. I was actually very, I mean generally, I've always been a happy person and I think I adjusted well in junior high school. I mean there was always the typical sort of things like 'Do I fit in with all my friends?' And sometimes kids can be very cruel. And I mean we would go through periods where I would be friend with one group of friends and then they would turn on me and then they would be friends with me and I would turn on someone else. That sort of things. But I think that generally what happens to children, but nothing that really affected me a lot except for, my mother was very negative when I was younger. She was always negative about how I looked, about my weight because I was heavier. And so I grew up with a lot of really bad self-image, very little self-confidence and I was very sensitive about that. But that changed when I went to university (Sawsan:24).

Amir associates adolescence with the time when he assumed adult responsibilities.

Hassan remembers living more of a Canadian adolescent life. He was very involved with Canadian friends. He went



out with them frequently and together they did whatever they wanted to do.

I lived it more, as more of a Canadian adolescent life, going out, going to school, getting involved with school, Canadian kids, sports. Considering high school, I could have gone to a high school where there are more Arabic people; it means a lot more, but I chose not to. I chose to follow the friends I know in high school (Hassan:26).

The major issue of adolescence for Hassan was growing up and starting to think about the future. He remembers that he was somewhat confused about the future. This might be so because during adolescence he acted like an adult, responsibilities and all.

It (Adolescence, growing up) meant, I started to think about my future. I meant starting to, not considering my future, what I was considering to do. But I did not know what I was going to do, where I was going to do it, whatever I decided to do (Hassan:27).

Majid found adolescence more carefree than young adulthood. He was not concerned or even thought about the problems of adult life. This might be so because he spent his adolescent years in Lebanon, and it was more like a transition than a stable home life. No serious thought about anything, just the reality that he will go back home in a few years.

It was much easier. I didn't have too many worries. Everything was just do what you want and it was much easier. I didn't have much to think about. You don't really think about your future too much. You didn't think too much about your job. Basically, you're with your friends (Majid:25).

## Adjustment

Dalal found early adolescence (junior high school) a difficult period. She did not like it because she had to deal with too many issues at the same time. She felt better in high school.

Uh, it was the worst period. I would never go back to it if I had to. I'm talking about the periods between 7 to grade 9. That was the worst. But high school was okay for me, in that part of adolescence, later adolescence. But junior high was the worst. It was, just everything, all the questions I had and everything came up at once, it seems so. I didn't like it at all. I wanted to get out of there, you know. Like I couldn't wait until I got to high school (Dalal:27-28).

Nadia also remembers ages 14 and 15 as the toughest years because they were years of change. When she started to understand things better and to know who she is, she felt good about herself.

Somehow, I remember this, I remember 14-15 were the toughest years because things around you start to change. You're not only yourself, but getting older. And it's a lot of things you have to look forward to. What I mean: Am I making any sense? Uh, I went through some tough times because you start to understand things a little bit more. I mean I knew who I was and I felt good about myself. I'm sure there are ... uh. I felt good about myself. Sure there were a few things that have bothered me at the time. Actually, come to think about it, uh, at that age, that's right, as much as I can remember things, I don't remember, I just remember that sometimes I was uptight about things, you know. At that age it did kind of interfere with my school work, you know (Nadia:35-36).

Sawsan remembers adolescence as the period when her

relationship with her mother deteriorated. Her mother was very critical of her, and this contributed to her insecurity. It was until the first year of university that she started to feel better about herself. She believes that she still suffers from "a frustrated female identification thing" (p.35).

I just always, like I said I was heavy and so my mother's way of not having me challenge her is to sort of bring me down, like tell me that I was, to be very negative and very ... She was never positive or encouraging, like a typical nurturing mother thing. Like my mother is not the kind of bake cookies kind of mom. Like she doesn't ask me how I'm or how my day is or how you are and you look nice sort of thing. That's not her style. So, that's very difficult for me to deal with. And she would always tell me that I was heavy or that I was uglier than whatever. So that took me a long time to deal with because it was, I grew up with a very, very bad self-image. Her expression (of affection), no, she never showed me any affection or never showed me any positive reinforcement. I guess this is the word. Then I always had a little self-confidence that I could ever do anything. Like I didn't feel I had any ability in anything, that I wasn't good enough for anything (Sawsan:36-37).

Among males, Amir identifies adolescence as the time when he became more independent in matters of personal hygiene, staying out late and generally living with less restrictions. He thinks that he coped well during adolescence and does not remember having any major adjustment problems during puberty or adolescence. He felt more important during adolescence because his parents trusted him with more responsibilities.

I think it's (adolescence) a growing up stage,

that's what it's to me. It's, I guess in my case, it made me feel as more of an important person because my older brother does a lot of things and I want to do those things too. And I feel, you know, I have reached a stage I can do them now (Amir:54).

Hassan found adolescence somewhat difficult. Although he does not associate it with difficult times or crises, he thinks none-the-less that coping then was difficult. He remembers that he was worried for some time about all the changes in his life, and he was expected to be more responsible. These concerns affected his schoolwork.

I mean just thinking about the changes you got to go through, the major decisions you have to make in your life. I guess, for a while, you feel a little scared. How can I put it? Worried about changes, about things that are expected of you, and ... (Hassan:33).

Majid remembers adolescence as a happy time. He had few concerns and coped well with all the physical and emotional changes associated with early adolescence. He enjoyed this period of life and felt good about himself. The issues such as marriage and career choice at this stage were not important.

It was good. I liked it. It wasn't much to think about as now. It was good in the sense that it was carefree. Choosing a career, I really didn't think of it. It was just there and this is what I wanted to do. I just pursued it from there. In terms of marriage, I don't think of it even now. I do sometimes. I did some time in high school or a little after (Majid:29-30).

### Adjustment During Puberty

Dalal remembers that puberty was not a remarkable time and that her friends also experienced similar difficulties. She did not attend any sex education classes.

It (puberty) was the same as it was for all my friends. There was no difference. No (I didn't take any classes in sex education). We got a book at grade 6 about something. I don't remember what it was. We didn't get any, no (Dalal:25).

Nadia remembers puberty as a difficult time, but she is also vague about her feelings.

You go through adolescence, from what I remember I think you go through a period of time where you, you know, you're just changing, I guess. It's hard to explain. It's just. I think it was ... I'm sure everybody goes through times like that when it is difficult. Actually, that age, it was difficult, uh (Nadia:33).

Sawsan remembers that she was not aware of the issues of puberty but that dating was an important issue around that time.

Thus, Female participants are not willing to discuss physical and emotional changes which occurred during puberty. They consider sexuality a very private matter. They also value modesty as the most valuable feminine characteristic. Muslim Lebanese women, more than men, are not encouraged to discuss their sexuality. In this regard, the influence of school seems to be negligible. This outlook is consistent with their families' conservative values.

Male participants received specific information about puberty at school. For instance Amir attended sex education classes during grade 8 and 9. He thinks that these classes were really good and he remembers taking them seriously. He learned about physical growth, puberty and pregnancy. He did not tell his parents about these classes because he thought they would have been upset.

They (my parents) probably didn't know I took a course like that. I think my mom would have more negative feelings than my dad. But if I explained to them what it was about, they wouldn't object (Amir:45).

Hassan also thinks that sex education classes helped him to deal with puberty.

I would say it's something they helped you go through with in school. They teach you. They let you know what to expect (Hassan:27).

Majid was barely conscious of puberty. Apparently, because he moved to Lebanon at the same time, he was busy trying to adjust to his new life and did not notice the changes that might have occurred.

Actually that was about grade seven, maybe grade eight. That was when I was in Lebanon. I don't think I was conscious of it. Just part of everyday (Majid:25).

### **Academic Progress During High School**

Dalal did not pay too much attention to her studies during junior high school. She was more interested in going out with her friends. It was only during the last year that

she really worked hard because she wanted to go to university.

Well, in junior high, I didn't really care that much about my school work. I was too involved with my friends and you know, going out and having fun and stuff. And then in high school, up until my last year of high school basically, I started realizing that if I wanted to go to university, I have to smarten up and study harder (Dalal:29).

Nadia also remembers a big difference between junior high and high school. She was more self-confident during high school and felt better. Consequently, she started to work very hard, improved academically and became an honors student.

Junior high and high school, just incredible! How much more I was confident in myself! I don't know exactly why. I was so much more confident, much more hard-working. And I don't know what it was. Maybe I had woken up more or something. I just felt great. I felt like I worked so hard and I really tried hard and it's different, so. Maybe ends start to meet or something, you know. Things were really good! (Nadia:36).

Sawsan procrastinated a lot. She was not highly motivated to do school work until the last year of high school. When she realized that she would fail her grade, she worked very hard, improved her academic standing and was admitted to university.

I've always been a very lazy student. I mean that's the way I am. I have always been lazy and I've always had report cards that said: "You know, Sawsan is very, very smart and intelligent but she refuses to use that", you know, or whatever. But I've, it's not reflected in my schoolwork now, I had never had any major problems or anything. I always got everything done no matter what it is. Like school-

wise, when I was in high school and I was in grade 12 and I was failing grade 12, then I realized that I have two months to go before I have to apply to university and I won't get in. Then I just decided to pull up my marks and I pulled them up by about 30% and I got in. So, things like that. I always end up, I mean if I try, I always end up at the last minute, pulling myself up and doing it (Sawsan:36).

Male participants adjusted well to school life during adolescence. They did well academically and found most of the courses easy. They also had good relationships with their friends and teachers.

I found it good. I liked high school courses and all that; I enjoyed it. It was different than junior high because during junior high they told you what to take, everything. They give you a couple choices with options. In high school it was pretty well you plan up the whole thing or what you want to take (Majid:32).

### **Autonomy**

Dalal was easily influenced by her peers and consequently became a follower. Now, she thinks and acts differently. This change occurred during the last year of high school.

Well, I was conforming, I used to conform a lot. I used to do what my friends did and now I don't care at all. I just do what I want to do. It's (being non-conformist) good. I think it's the best way to be (Dalal:28).

Dalal thinks that she understands her parents better now. She finally gave up trying to prevent her mother from teaching her how a Muslim woman should behave. She still



thinks that her mother is "conservative, but in the right way" (p.29).

Well, I stopped to want to fight with my mom because she was trying to teach me and I just didn't care, you know. And that's what the main difference was. Well, she would, if I ask her: 'Can I go camping with my friends and their parents?' She would say no. And I would say why not? And she says because I just don't want you to do that, you know. And then it would just get into a big argument. And if they were Moslem, it would be a different story. But because they weren't Moslem, that's why she wouldn't let me. And I didn't understand that (Dalal:29).

Nadia believes that adolescence is the time when you are ready to be your own person and have different ideas on issues. She remembers adolescence as the time when she became more independent and started to think differently from her parents. On the other hand, she does not remember any significant influence of peers pressure.

By then I was at that age, you're sort of building your own personality, you know. Once you're getting old and stuff, you have different thoughts. And I sometimes get them away, and at times I had differences too. I was independent but to a limit. I always did have respect for older people around me and stuff. So, to a limit, I think (Nadia:36-37).

Sawsan thinks that she was a conformist in certain ways and a non-conformist in other ways. But the many arguments and disagreements with her parents and her brothers indicate conflict in interpersonal relationships and especially in the area of conformity and autonomy.

I think in some ways I'm conformist in that I, when it's really small issues that don't really mean

anything. No, I really, actually it's not true because I try and fight for small things. I don't know, depends. It depends specifically on what it is, like very specifically. I would make a specific decision (Sawsan:38).

Amir was always an independent person. As early as grade 6, he learned to do things for himself and to expect little help from his parents who were always busy with the family business. He made all the decisions related to school without any guidance from them.

Well, as a kid, they (parents) were thinking for me, but I always remember thinking for myself. In terms of school, I didn't get too many people to help me. Definitely I was able to think for myself and make judgments on my own and more so in adolescence than in childhood. And I was also exposed to more situations where I had to make a situation on my own. For instance, in junior high, where there is a high incidence of people smoking, whether I would smoke or not. I think, the way I was in terms of the health side, in the way I was brought up, like I never smoked and even alcohol and drugs and stuff like that. Uh (I took my own decisions) because my parents and my brothers were not with me. Usually I was with my friends. I was in contact with them, you know decisions that require, that involve lot of peer pressure and stuff like that (Amir:53-54).

Amir's parents knew of his involvement with non-Muslim friends and tolerated it because it was limited to sports. He spent a lot of time with them and developed close friendships with some of them. On the other hand, he had very limited exposure to Muslim children or even Lebanese children. Consequently, he did not develop any close friendship with them. His relationships with adults are always characterized by respect. This is particularly

important in the case of significant adults such as parents and teachers.

Not really because they (parents) realized I was involved in sporting activities and stuff like that and that basically I was with my friends most of the time when I was not in school or at night. And my parents didn't really have much time to concern with myself in that they were always busy with the business and that was basically so even when I was a child. I would say that (Amir:54).

Hassan sees a big change between childhood and adolescence in terms of dependency on his parents. He remembers being more lonely and worried at times during adolescence. He depended on his parents for support during this difficult period of life.

Oh, it (dependency on parents) changed quite a bit. It's more ... You become a little bit more lonely at times. You become a little more worried as I said, and ... (I depended on my parents) a little bit, I would say, uh a little bit. I did depend on my parents, I mean I always depended on my parents. Even now, I still depend on them a little bit. It's a tough thing to go through. I would say my parents helped me go through it (Hassan:33-34).

Majid remembers relating well to other people. He was not too dependent on his parents. He was working part time since grade 10 or 11. The influence of peers was mutual. He accepted their influence in certain areas such as sports but not in matters related to alcohol and drugs. He sees a big difference between elementary and high school because he did not notice any drugs and alcohol in elementary school.

Actually, it (peer influence) was half and half, I

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would say. Their influence, the stuff they do like sports, all that they influenced me in doing those sort of things. I know lots of friends that, you know, drank, did drugs and things like that but I wasn't influenced in that respect, nothing at all. Actually childhood, you know, none of this stuff came up. Like there was nobody drinking, nobody whatever. But in adolescence or the high school years we began to do this sort of stuff. It's a bit different (Majid:31).

### Dating and Marriage

Dalal always knew that she should not date non Muslims but she continued to go out with them until the end of high school. She recently realized that dating any non Muslim male is just a waste of time because she can not marry him. She believes that such marriages will just cause numerous problems with her parents.

Well, I just think it's a waste of time to go out with a Canadian guy. Like I mean going out with a person the same as me, Lebanese and Moslem is fine. That's really good. But it's just a waste of time to go out with a Canadian because I would never marry them and I would loose the respect of my parents. They would be, you know, it will just cause a lot of problems (Dalal:24).

Dalal thinks that marriage should be built on love, not just convenience. She does not believe in pre-arranged marriages because the future spouses do not know each other before they are married. Her parents do not object to "dating" a Muslim who wants to marry her because they believe they should know each other prior to being married.

I don't believe in that (pre-arranged marriages) because if you don't know the person, what they're really like, you know, a lot of things can happen. Like I have friends that got married because of that and their lives are just awful now because they didn't know the guy. Then, you know, it just all went wrong for them. Well, (the person should be) open-minded but also like still having their Lebanese views and their Moslem views (Dalal:24-25).

For Nadia, dating was never a problem. At a young age, she was taught that a Muslim girl cannot marry a non-Muslim man. It was also explained to her that Islam prohibits free mixing of men and women. She just accepted everything without questioning. When she was older she became more critical but gradually her parents' reasoning started to make sense.

Dating was not a concern. I never, it was never a problem. Like I mentioned before, when I was going through that age it didn't bother me. Like dating, that I could date, was just, I mean at that very young age and stuff, I was taught certain things, so it never... I was taught, "Don't talk to boys" or whatever, you know. "A Muslim girl does not hang around with boys unless there is some kind of commitment". That's basically what I was taught. Actually, I think it's right. At a period I did kind of resist. I thought that's silly, in a way. As I got older, it kind of made sense to me. I'm just, the type of person I am, it's to get along with those stuff (Nadia:33).

Nadia is not thinking about marriage as yet. She also does not have any definite idea about the kind of person she wants to marry. Dating is still a major issue in her life.

No, I don't think I did (think about marriage). That's one thing I never really, I didn't. I wasn't

just dying for : "After high school, I'll get married and ..." This is just not me, you know. I'm not saying people who finish high school and go and get married are not ambitious. I'm just a little more ambitious than that. At a young age, it was really weird. They taught you, they say: "You don't. This is really personal. Don't talk to boys and that stuff. So, at a young age, we were taught, especially this is a prime example for Muslims. They did it at a very young age. "Don't talk to young boys". So, you knew right then at that age. It was very strict. You can't talk to guys. You know what I mean, like that? So, being brought up like that, as you get older and with my own personality, it didn't bother me at all. I never had a problem with that at all, you know (Nadia:28).

Sawsan thinks that dating is the most difficult issue of adolescence. Her parents feel that she is not careful. They are afraid that she might fall in love with one of her many non-Muslim friends. She does not want this to happen either, but the problem is that she is not allowed to date Muslims either.

I think, I don't know, it's so hard. Like it's such that I think that issue, that's the most difficult issue because I don't know, at my age now because I am 21 and this is the age that I should be probably looking to get married, or my parents expect me to get married. And when I'm surrounded by people who are not my religion I can understand my parents' point of view, that they're scared that: "What's gone to happen? She's gone to meet somebody, she's gone to fall in love" and on and on and on. So, I understand that and I'm careful about that because I know I don't want that to happen, but I also feel that the more you resist, the more my parents say no, you can't do something, the more the child is gone to want to do it just for the wrong reasons. So, there has to be a balance. But I also think that there has to be something like, if you're in high school and you're not dating, which I didn't do and I'm still not doing, if you're not dating people who are non-Muslims, you have to have a group

of people around you who are Muslims to counteract that (Sawsan:26).

Sawsan has many non-Muslim friends but very few Muslim friends. She goes out regularly with them to dinners and movies but does not go on an actual date. She explained the Islamic position on marriage to them and the fact that she cannot marry a non-Muslim.

Dating and that sort of thing, like I have lots of friends. Most of them, probably all of them are non-Muslims. And I have no problem to get to know them and no problem, I mean guys and gals going out for dinner or any of that, going for movies because actually I think now very rarely like do I think of any of my friends going on dates. They get to know people in groups and then sort of happens from there. Ah, they (my non Muslim friends) all think that I'm this repressed individual who's not getting to talk or to express her true emotions and the whole batten, that I probably has a chastity belt and all that stuff. Like that's their image of it. And I think the fact that I'm pretty modern makes them see that that's not necessarily the way it is (Sawsan:27).

Sawsan would like to get married and have children before she is 30. She wants to stay at home to raise her children, especially when they are young. She wants to have a large family because she wants at least one sibling of the same sex for each one of her children.

Oh, because I don't want, I want, if I have a daughter, I want my daughter to have a sister, and I want, I want there to be somebody in the family, someone from my children, another sibling. They can connect with at least one sibling, each person, because I know my two older brothers, I have always felt sort of a little left out, and I would like to have another sister to break the ice for me or just that, just so that my parents would know that I'm not, just because I'm difficult in situations, it's

not me, it's because sometimes that's the way it is. That's why I would like to have ... (Sawsan:31).

But she has difficulty finding the right person to marry. Until now she did not find any Muslim who has a positive attitude towards women. She believes that Muslim Lebanese males were raised with the notion that they are more important than women. Moreover, boys can do whatever they want to but girls cannot. Her mother gave her brothers more privileges. Although she criticized these practices, she agrees that her parents were right to be more protective towards her.

I would like to get married, that's very, I mean that's what I really want to do and I want to have kids and I don't want to work when I have kids, I want to stay home. I think that's important and it's not something I want to do like when I'm 30, I like to do it sooner. But I also really haven't found anybody who I think, any Muslim man, for some reason. They all seem to have this attitude towards women that's very secondary, like: 'That's very, that's a nice hobby, dear. But you know that's not really what's gone to, you know.' It's kind of condescending in a way. And even my brothers who are born and brought up here. Like they don't take ... I think what it is, that they don't take women and what they want to do seriously enough (Sawsan:28).

Male participants also have difficulty accepting the prohibition of dating. They dealt with male-female relationships in different ways. For example, Amir distinguishes between 'friendship dating', i.e., to enjoy the company of a female friend and dating as commonly perceived in Canada, i.e., date one person with the



intention of living together or marriage.

Well in the past, I thought it was right to date but I still knew it was morally wrong to have premarital sex and it still is and I realize that. But I don't think there is anything wrong in dating in the sense of having a friend (Amir:46).

On the other hand, Hassan thinks that dating is not important because 'it's something we do not do in our community' (p.28). He is referring to Islam's prohibition of dating, especially when it involves premarital sexual activity. He believes that the reason Muslim Lebanese parents encourage early marriage is an attempt to prevent dating.

Majid dated non-Muslim girls. He thinks it's part of living in the Canadian society. He believes that dating happens secretly with many Muslim Lebanese youths but most of them do not want to admit it. In his case, dating helped him to understand what non-Muslim young women think about relationships.

Uh, I've dated. It's part of this society, I guess; it's definitely. It doesn't exist, I don't think, in Lebanon. It happens secretly. A lot of people do not want to admit it that it does. It's good to get to know other people and you learn a lot from it. I learned quite a bit from it, like how girls from this society view relationships and stuff like that. I've seen some English girls. After a while you sort of, you see their views, and it's just, it's not the same. It's a big difference. Like I've seen this one girl for a while and you know, I thought my parents would come, you know ... like this will be secretly with me. My parents did not know about anything. 'All white girls are no good, right', and to myself I thought this girl was different. And she was not really (Majid:26).

Amir prefers to marry a Muslim woman. He thinks it is important to know her very well. He believes that a big problem with Muslim Lebanese marriages is that they are arranged and sometimes the two people do not even know each other.

I think about it and I know that I'm going to marry a Muslim, but my view is that I really need to know the person good. I think a big problem about our marriages is that they are made just like that without even knowing each other. And a lot of people are just miserable in their marriages. For marriage, it will be hopefully a once in a life thing and it's gone to be with someone that I love and I want to be with for the rest of my life. So, before I jump into it I want to make sure (Amir:46).

Amir wants to marry a Muslim woman, but he does not insist that she must be from a Muslim Lebanese background. He believes that differences of language are not crucial as long as you can communicate with each other. He thinks that he will marry a Canadian-born Muslim woman. He does not think he will marry a Muslim Lebanese woman from Lebanon. He believes (wrongly) that he cannot marry a Christian or a Jewish woman until she converts to Islam first. Islam's position is that a Muslim man is allowed to marry Christian and Jewish women.

Hassan thinks that Muslim Lebanese parents prefer their children to get married at a young age, usually around 18. He believes that this preference of early marriage is just because of the way they were brought up back home.

I imagine that parents ... I guess that's the way

they grew up, they like to see their kids married off, especially when they are girls (Hassan:27-28).

Hassan wants to marry a Muslim Lebanese woman. He will not consider marrying a Canadian Christian or Jewish woman because he thinks (wrongly) that it is not allowed in Islam. Marriage does not appear to be an important issue for him at the present. He plans to get married in about five years, at age 25.

Majid's parents would like him to marry a woman from Lebanon but he does not think it is a very good idea. He prefers to marry a Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese woman. His parents are concerned about the gossip in the community that Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese women are less conservative and lead a free and independent life. He discounts this gossip.

I think I made up my mind to marry a girl with Lebanese background. Actually they (parents) prefer if I marry one from back home, Lebanon, but I'm not sure if I will. I don't know, but there is a lot of gossip in this country too. So, they hear stuff about Lebanese girls and they sort of view all of them like that. But I don't think that's a real major concern. As long as we marry someone from Lebanon and the parents say it's okay and everybody knows about her, no big deal. I think I'll marry someone from here. I would say 99% (Majid:26-27).

### **Occupation**

Dalal had some difficulty choosing a career. First, she was involved in a teachers' training program, then changed to an area in the social sciences. Although she

does not foresee a change again, she does not know exactly what career she will pursue. She thinks it will be in the academic field, probably research.

I went through what I thought I can do best. I've got at this stage where I think I can do this best. As for a career, I don't know exactly what I want to do, so. No (My mind is not made up now about my career). Like I know it has to do something with ... (social sciences) but I don't know exactly what it would be. Something, maybe research, group research or something to that effect. Uh (I gave up teaching) basically because I do not think I have the patience (Dalal:25-26).

Nadia did not have any difficulty choosing a career. She knew exactly what she wanted to do, by the time she finished high school. The fact that she started working in her family business was a big factor in facilitating her career choice. Although she enjoys her job and even finds it a good avenue to express her creativity as an artist, she still thinks about a career in engineering.

It (career choice) was just like that. I was really happy because I knew exactly what I wanted when I got out of high school, which is great, you know, whereas students that are, have a lot going for them, and I have seen it a thousand times, you know, they have great marks, everything, they finish high school but they don't have a clue to what they want to do. They waste all this time, you know what I mean. I do something that I really enjoy. I do really. Certainly something I want and I enjoy. Like it came to me. I thought about that (Career change). I thought, there are other things. I mean (the present occupation) is not the best thing in the whole world, you know, but it's, I really do enjoy it. I thought about it, if I did not want to do (the present occupation), I would probably go back to school, college or something, getting into architecture or something, you know, something like that (Nadia:29).

Sawsan went through a crisis period when she thought about choosing a career. This crisis is not yet resolved. She always wanted to be an architect or a lawyer, but it was in high school that she became interested in the theatre. Her parents and even her brothers are not happy with her choice and have repeatedly expressed their disappointment. She is still trying to find a compromise which will be satisfactory to all concerned.

My parents are not happy with theatre, and I know that. And I know if I go into law, it's a concession on my part but that it will make them happier, so, I mean that makes me happier. But if I go into law, you know, if I want to do theatre on the side, I can still do that and both will be happy. I can't totally rebel and do what I want because I'm not gone to be happy, they're not happy. And it's also, it looks good. Like to say: 'my daughter is a lawyer, my daughter is in law school.' It looks good. And from another perspective, husbands, that looks good for them. So that, I mean that's what definitely my mom said: 'What Muslim boys can look in a Muslim girl who's doing theatre?' So that's the kind of thing that she says (Sawsan:31).

Amir found it difficult to choose a career because there were many choices available to him. He finally chose business because there are many opportunities in this field. He was offered a job recently but he is not certain it will work out. He looks at his first job as a short-term career. If he has to change careers, he may go back to university to further his education in business or to get a law degree.

It's difficult (to choose a career) in that there are so many things a person wants to do. The basic reason I picked the business area is that there are

so many opportunities, and even though I have a job I do not plan it to be my career because I'm still hesitant whether I will like it because I'm still not into it. So, I feel it's easy for me to shift from one career to another, hopefully if I don't like it (Amir:49).

Hassan developed his present interest in business since high school. He took business classes and enjoyed them. He changed to economics during his first year of university. He has not yet made up his mind about a career and is still thinking of going to law school.

I would say (I choose my education and my career) in high school. I was involved in a lot of business classes and I enjoyed it a lot. So, I thought I would continue in something along those lines and, actually at that time I was interested in getting into business or something related to that. It was not until at least my first year of university that I decided to get into economics. I have taken a couple of economics courses in my first year and I continue to learn (Hassan:29).

Majid did not have any difficulty choosing a career. Around grade six, his older sister introduced him to accounting. He took an accounting course in high school and liked it. When he was in grade 8 or 9, he wanted to be a computer engineer. He did not, however, change his mind about being an accountant.

### **Ideological Commitment**

Dalal is not very interested in politics and finds it too complicated. She is not committed to any one political party. She is also skeptical about university politics.

However, she is more positive about the politics of the Muslim community. Although she was never involved in the Muslim Youth Club or the Muslim Women Association, she thinks that these associations play an important role in the community. Although she is not interested or involved in politics she does not think that it is typical of all Muslim Lebanese young women. Many of her friends are involved in politics. For instance, her cousin is very much involved with the Palestinian issue and Canadian political parties.

I think it's (Canadian political life) complicated, and for me to understand it, I have to really read out about it, you know. So, I don't even think about it sometimes. Like I vote and everything and I make sure that I know, you know, what the issues are and things like that (Dalal:26).

Nadia finds politics boring. Although she considers herself to be a Liberal, her political involvement is limited to voting.

I'll be honest with you, politics is something I'm interested in, you know, to an extent, but I don't like politics at all. I know what I have to know and that's really, that's not a good attitude either. But just, I'm not into politics at all. It will be boring more or less, you know. That's the kind of attitude actually (Nadia:30).

Nadia is also not involved in the politics of the Muslim community. She is not fully aware of the issues.

Oh gosh! I don't know if I agree with that (political alliances. For instance, the president of the Association has to be from Lalah and the vice-president from Kherbet-Roha). That's kind of, I think whoever is fit for, you know, that position, to me, it doesn't matter if he's from Lalah or Kherbet-Roha, or whatever. It doesn't

matter to me as long as you're fit for the spot.  
That's the important thing (Nadia:30).

Sawsan considers politics to be important but cannot find any suitable political affiliation in Canada. Although she is Conservative and likes the PC's pro-business and Free Trade policies, she also believes that this party is a hierarchy which ignores social justice issues. She appreciates the social policies of the NDP, but the real alternative for her is the Islamic system.

Like I would say I'm a Progressive Conservative because I like their idea about business and about free enterprise and that ... Then again they're very, they're pluralists, sort of. I mean it's a sort of hierarchy, I think. Even though it doesn't say it is, I think it is. I mean certain people can get benefits and certain people don't. There will always be certain people who are rich and whether they deserve it or not, and certain people who are poor, no matter how much they try. So, that's what I don't like. That's why I would lean like towards the socialists who help the people who are poor. But then I don't know. Like my view of politics is very Islamic. Like the Islamic sort of system is what I believe is the proper system and there is nothing that's similar to that here (Sawsan:32-33).

Dalal thinks that she is very committed to Islam. She considers Islam to be the most important thing in her life. She thinks that everything she believes in comes from Islam. But when her Islamic practice is considered, Dalal's commitment to Islam is not very strong. Her positive feelings towards Islam appear to be only an expression of good intentions which did not yet translate into a sincere and conscious commitment to Islam.



Oh! I'm very committed. It's, I don't know, it's the most important thing to me. Well, everything that I believe comes from that. So, that's why, you know, it's very important to me, you know, to maintain the way I feel about it for a future for my children (Dalal:27).

Nadia thinks that she has only an average commitment to Islam, but in spite of that she cares a great deal about her religion. She appears, however, to limit her understanding of Islam to do(s) and don't(s) and believes that the true Muslim is the one who follows these religious regulations. In reality, Nadia's Islamic knowledge and practice are limited. She is aware of these limitations and would very much like to learn more about Islam. She is presently attending weekl<sup>y</sup> Qur'anic and Islamic classes.

(Praying) I'm learning how to do that. Fasting, I've tried. Some people get very sick. So, but I believe in that stuff, you know. I wouldn't mind at all, actually (to talk to others about Islam). Like a lot of people, I find, like my friends ask me: "Why can't you eat this?" It's quite a few of them, you know. "Since it's my religion, I can't do that." Some of them say: "Oh!, uh, okay." Some of them accept it. Some of them think it's weird. I like definitely to learn more about Islam (Nadia:31).

Sawsan believes that Muslims should not segregate from the larger society, instead they should try to integrate into it. She would like to see Muslim doctors, lawyers, journalists, etc., as part of the larger Canadian society so that Canadians can know and accept them; beliefs, practices, success and all. She believes that succeeding in our inner group is not enough; the Muslims should succeed

in the majority society. She also believes in propagating Islam and dispelling the many existing myths about Islam and Muslims.

But I also think that there is a problem because we end up segregating from society and that, I think for me personally, it's important for me to integrate. Like, I know I'm a Muslim and I know what I know, what I think is right. And I want to tell people who aren't Muslims, not people who are Muslim what I think it's, the way it is. And that's what I think is important. Like, I think people, I don't know, like if you have a group here and a group here and this group is doing great things, this group doesn't know about them. But if you take people from here and integrate them into this, they can start filtering and, like whether we get, you know, people who are good doctors, Muslims who are good doctors and Muslims who are good lawyers and television people, broadcasters and all, and journalists, then people start really realizing what we're really like. When, because they don't measure us if we succeed in our group, they don't measure us as well as if we succeed in their group (Sawsan:34-35).

Amir has a negative view of politics. He also discounts university politics. He knows the major stands of the national parties but not their specific policies. He favours the NDP because he knows the leader personally. He believes that the PC is the party of big business and the rich, but he would vote for them if they will help him. He thinks that the leader of the Liberal party did not deserve the support of the Muslim Lebanese. He did not even thank them when he won the leadership race.

I think politics is politics anywhere you go. In the university, just in terms of, there is so much propaganda around. For example, The Jewish Club and the Palestinian Club on campus. I really do

not like to get into politics that much. I admit it I do not know too much about the policies of each party. I know where each stands. This is in terms of Canadian ... (Amir:50).

Amir is also hesitant to get involved in the Mosque's politics because he believes that the parties concerned are just after power and political control. Another reason he is hesitant to get involved is, the adults might not appreciate the views of younger people. He believes that he might appear to be disrespectful towards adults if he tries to argue with them.

Probably (I will get involved in the Mosque's politics), take a side over another side. Basically, you have to or just stay neutral and don't get involved in it. I'll probably get involved with one side whether it is a relative or not. It is just a lot of politics, with different groups who want the power, that want to control things. In every society, I think, that's our goal, to have the power. But it's too bad that we do not like this as a teamwork (Amir:51).

Hassan was a member of the students' council in high school. He wanted to help change some of the things that the students did not like.

Well, there wasn't always everything that I agreed with about running the school, so I thought, you know, if I get involved I'll have some input about changing some of the things that the students didn't like. But other than that ... that's the main reason. Also, it would benefit me in the long run as well (Hassan:30).

He was also the president of the Muslim Youth Club in 1987. He attended the meetings of the board of directors of the Mosque and remembers that his views were always

welcome. He would like to get involved in the Mosque politics in the future.

Majid did not have any interest in politics during adolescence. Now, he listens to the news more often and pays more attention to the views of each party. Recently, he became interested in politics, but his involvement is still limited. He prefers the NDP.

Even now, I don't follow politics that much. It's interesting sometimes but I don't go out of my way to (Majid:28).

Concerning religious commitment, the other aspect of ideology, most male participants also have weak commitment to Islam. Amir thinks that he is not a very committed Muslim. He does not have time to practice his religion. He does not will be more committed to Islam in the future because he does not have enough knowledge of the religion. He thinks that his Islamic commitment increases during the month of Ramadan. For example, last year he tried to fast but because of exams he missed many days.

The truth is that I haven't been committed to it (religion) lately, probably because I'm lazy and I do not have enough time. But I will hopefully, Insha-Allah, be committed to it. What I mean by committed to it: praying five times a day and doing everything, although I maintain little spurts of my commitment to it (Amir:52).

Hassan believes that he has a strong commitment to Islam but it did not translate yet into religious practices.

I would say it's not 100% (Islamic) commitment, definitely not. I'm strongly committed. I mean I

don't pray five times a day, although I, you know, it does bother me but I don't. I fast, not every year lately. During exams, I found it difficult. Fasting, I pray, I go to Jumu'a (Hassan:31).

Majid thinks that his knowledge of Islam and his religious practices are limited. In spite of this, he believes that Islam is now playing a more important role in his life. He was involved with the Muslim Youth Club for a short period of time. He also had the opportunity to live in a Muslim society when he was in Lebanon. He would like to get involved in the Mosque's affairs in the future, although he believes that the adults do not take young people's views very seriously.

I didn't really know that much about Islam. Now, my commitment is about the same. Like I don't pray five times a day, I don't pray that often. I think I'm conscious of it (Islam) now more than I was before, and I understand, like now, things (Majid:28).

### **Culture and Religion vs. Cognition and Personality**

Understanding the relative importance of cognition and personality, as compared to culture and religion, is an important issue. So far the assumption of this research was that cognition and personality can explain the lifestyle of the participants. However, the participants repeatedly indicated that culture and Islam play an important role in their lives. This study will not be complete without addressing this issue and evaluating the real importance of

cognition and personality and the influence of culture and religion.

Dalal believes that religious beliefs and values are as important as cognition and personality. But she recognizes that religion is not emphasized in Canadian society and does not play an important role in the lives of her Canadian friends as it does for her. She believes that the basic difference is that religious beliefs are not important and as a result do not determine lifestyles and behaviour.

Well, it's (religion) the most important thing because it affects your personality for sure. Oh no, because it doesn't, religion is something that, it doesn't matter to a lot of people. And so, I think that what a person believes should be kept to themselves and they should accept what other people believe. And you know, that's all. It is (a very important dimension to understand), but you see, when you start, like I have certain values, always because of the religion that I am, but if I would try to explain this to my Canadian friends, they would listen but it's like banging your head against the wall. You know, they don't, I mean to them it's, like I had a conversation with my friend the other day and she said: "I can't believe" she said: "I think it's so weird that you guys don't drink in your weddings", you know. She said: "For us it's like the most important thing. Everyone goes there to get drunk", you know alcohol. And I said, you know, I didn't even know what to say, I just said: "But that doesn't matter to us at all. Well, we don't even think about that." And I said: "If someone dared to come to one of our weddings drunk, you know, they would be out of there very fast and they would be shunned, you know, a lot of people will be really mad at them." They don't, they just think it's weird. So, it's like they think that we're weird because of what we believe. And I just think that they're. I don't know, they just think they're not. They just fully do not understand what we believe. So, it's just not worth getting into it because, you know, they're set in

their ways already (Dalal:30-31).

Nadia recognizes that -besides cognition and personality- Islam, culture and language are very important factors in her life. She thinks that her basic motivations and outlook on life are so because of her Islamic, cultural and linguistic heritage, although she does not stress the religious dimension as much as the other participants. She thinks that people can understand her from her artistic expression. This may be a case of artistic expression competing with religious expression in a significant way.

Sawsan is very conscious of her public image, i.e., an assumed kind of identity superimposed on her Muslim Lebanese identity. Although it is mainly a socio-cultural identity, it none-the-less determines the kind of person she is.

I think that the way that I am has a lot to do with how other people perceive me. I've always been very conscious of having, of wanting to be liked by everybody. And I always used to be very conscious of having an image. And I think that shaped the person I'm now because I may be less conscious of it but it's still a factor and I think people have always, because I'm different from everybody else, because I'm a Muslim and I'm a Lebanese, for one thing, men are more attracted to the fact that a woman, a girl whose parents are strict and she's not blond hair and blue eyes and she comes from a nice, a wealthy background. Then they kind of have this image of this Arab princess. And men are attracted to that and that's always, that affected the way I am because people give that image to me and I tend to build on it (Sawsan:39-40).

Sawsan also thinks that culture and religion are as important as her cognition and personality for understanding

her as a person. She thinks that Islam determines the way she is. The Arabic language, however, was not a important factor in her life.

I think it's (my Muslim Lebanese background) just as important. I think that's what determined me, had determined me (Sawsan:40).

Amir believes that there are more important things than intelligence. He thinks that the person who does good things must believe in something. For him, religion is as important as cognition and personality.

I think that even if you're not intelligent, just your actions you carry on, just the things you do, whether or not you give charity or just help for example an old lady cross the street, just the physical nature, just the duties you do, I guess they could be related to your religion if, basically if you follow your religion you could be a good person. Well, uh, I think so (religion is as crucial as cognition and personality). Basically because it's sure you believe in something which is Allah or God. Just people's belief in general is an important thing because their actions are determined by their beliefs, I think, and what they do. If the actions are good, he must believe in something, I think. I just find it difficult not to believe in something if he does things which are good because right there he believes in goodness or he wouldn't be doing it (Amir:57).

Hassan thinks that culture, Islam and the Arabic language are as important as cognition and personality. He credits his behaviour and action to his Islamic beliefs and thinks that everyone believes in an ideology. However, he does not stress these factors as much as Amir.

Majid thinks that religion is as important as cognition and personality. He looks at his religion as an identity



which determines and defines the purpose of his life.

I don't consider it (religion as a personal thing). It is more than personal, I think because it's a sort of identity. Like you know who you are and a sort of a background for how you're here, how you're supposed to live your life. You just do not live and die. There is more to it (Majid:33).

#### D. PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DURING LATE ADOLESCENCE AND YOUNG ADULTHOOD

##### Self-reflection

Dalal thinks that she is a well-adjusted person. She has a high level of self-esteem. She also relates well to other people. She foresees a stable and rewarding life in the future.

Uh, I've always been self-confident and I've always, I've never been jealous of other people, ever. And I've always been confident with myself and what I have and I never looked at other people, as you know, role models or anything like that, I never had that problem. (In the next 10 years) I hope that I'm successful in a career. Well, first of all I would hope that I'm successful in a relationship, marriage and you know, probably have at least one child. And I hope I'm successful in my occupation (Dalal:32).

Nadia thinks that she is a shy person. She would like to be more independent and is working at it. In spite of this, she has a positive self-concept and a high level of self-esteem.

The person that I am, this might sound funny, it means a lot to me because I like the person that I am because every person has good qualities and I like the qualities in me. Number one, being more independent. Like, I think I'm not definitely an

irresponsible person. That I think I would like to be a little more independent. And I'm getting to be a little more outspoken, so. I think I'm shy and I would probably always be because that's in my personality. That's just the way I am. I think things like that never go away, just that type of person that you are, you know. You can't be a loud person and the next ten years be a shy person. I don't know, you do not change that much. Maybe I do not know (Nadia:39).

Nadia foresees a normal life and success in her career and family life.

(In ten years) I'm sure I'll be married or something, probably still working because I like to keep myself busy. Who knows? Maybe a family (Nadia:38).

Sawsan considers herself to be a lucky person. She is particularly grateful that, in spite of difficulties with her parents, she did not suffer any serious psychological injury.

Even in terms of the way am, like I'm very , I think I'm fairly well-adjusted. And I'm very lucky that I haven't had really big traumas in my life or crises or, you know, really serious things happening to me that have injured me mentally or physically or whatever. So, I think I'm very lucky. I think I'm lucky in the fact that I can communicate with people, when I'm with people. I'm lucky because I have material things, I mean I don't have any diseases, I mean. I think I'm a very lucky person (Sawsan:41).

Sawsan foresees a normal future and a successful family life, in spite of her sense of vulnerability and a basically poor self-concept.

(In ten years) What I hope, what I think will happen, I have a negative ... What I hope will happen in ten years, I'll be 31. Realistically, I think that I'll be married and I don't think I'll

be living in Edmonton. I know I'll not be living in Edmonton. That's a fact, that's factual. I don't know where I will be living. I think somewhere in Canada or the United States, I'm not sure. But I think that I will be married and that I will have a couple of children and that I will be, I think, I'll be happy. And I think also I'll be doing something on the side for me. I don't know what that would be, whether it would be writing or just doing something for me personally (Sawsan:40-41).

Amir considers adolescence as just another phase of life. It is a time when you can still enjoy yourself as a person because there are no major responsibilities. By comparison, young adulthood definitely means more responsibilities on his shoulders. For example, his parents expect him to work part-time and to partly support himself.

No, because I think adolescence, it was fun in that I can act irresponsible and not get in trouble. Like you can joke around, do anything, play. You just don't have any worries, it seems like. And mentally you're not totally there. Like you can be smart in school but you do not know what's going around you in the world. Now like I know what's going on in parts of the world. I always think ahead now. I try to see how it seems like to my future. In other terms adolescence was kind and carefree (Amir:54-55).

Amir is satisfied with the person he is and thinks that he is basically what he wants to be. In the future he thinks that he will be well-established and more mature because he will be dealing more with the real world. His only regret is not learning to speak Arabic. He would also like to know more about Islam so that he can practice it better.

(In 10 years I see myself) hopefully married, with a couple kids; hopefully knowing more about my religion and taking it more seriously; being able to support myself and my family; having a job in which I'm content; doing the things I enjoy; travelling *Insha-Allah*. And I guess as I progress I'll be more mature in that I'll learn more things. It will be as if I'm doing more practical things and being more accustomed to the real situations as opposed to the university environment (Amir:58).

Hassan thinks that adolescence for him turned out as he expected. He remembers it as a rather difficult period. He feels good about himself at this stage in life. In the future he looks forward to a well-established life. He thinks he will basically be the same person, and expects to be a more committed Muslim. He would like to improve and master the Arabic language. He believes that the Muslim community will be more united and that the Arabic language will be more widely used.

Ten years from now, I see myself not different from now. I see myself the same person basically. I see myself married with children. I don't have an ideal number of children. I would say I like children. I mean I'll have children, a lot of children. I don't see an ideal number. I would see that the language would be used more. I would see that our community would be more involved with each other, especially in this country (Hassan:35-36).

Majid thinks that adolescence was a good time because it was carefree. He likes the person he is now and would not like to change too much. In the future he looks forward to a well-established life consisting of all the material things.

It (adolescence) was good. I liked it. It wasn't

much to think about as now. It was good in the sense that it was carefree (Majid:29).

### **Personal Traits**

Dalal considers herself to be a generous and honest person and above all very concerned about her family. She works hard when she likes what she is doing. What distinguishes her from her friends is being a very quiet person.

I think I'm generous and I'm honest when it comes to people that I care about, my family and even my extended family. They matter to me the most and I would do anything for those people, you know. There is nothing that I wouldn't do for them. And I'm hard-working if I like what I'm doing. And I'm quiet a lot. If I have nothing to say, usually I don't say anything. I just don't talk for something to do. Well, I've always been quiet, I think. And I've always been close to my family. Otherwise I've changed, uh (Dalal:29-30).

Nadia thinks that she is a good person. People like her honesty. They also appreciate the humorous dimension of her personality.

Well, I'm very kind-hearted person. I, it's hard to explain yourself really. I'm a very sensitive, kind-hearted person. (Sensitive) towards anything, actually. (People like in me) honesty, definitely honesty. Personality, I guess. (Personality) humorous, I think. I don't know (Dalal:37-38).

Sawsan thinks that she is an ambitious person. She also relates well to her friends who perceive her as very open with them. She thinks she is intelligent, especially when it comes to grasping and understanding issues well. She is

not shy or afraid to communicate with people.

I put on that sheet (Questionnaire), I put that I was loud. I don't know if that's, I don't know, I think that I'm ambitious. And I think that I'm sometimes overly sensitive. And I think that I'm very public. People perceive me as being very public and very open. But I'm a very private person in that I don't really tell people very, a lot of what I feel. I think that I'm intelligent. I think that I could be, I could do. But I think I'm very open and I'm very, in some ways I'm not shy. And I'm not afraid to communicate with people (Sawsan:39).

Amir would like to be seen as a kind and considerate person. He tries to be sensitive to other people's predicaments, and does not belittle anyone. There are times when he likes to be alone. He believes that money and social status are not the most important things in life.

I think I have a good heart. I consider other people's predicaments in the situations they are in. I try not to -although it's hard- put people down unless I'm joking with friends, which is normal I consider. I think it's, in terms of money and your social class, I don't think that's important. It's the actual person you are. That's why it's important for me to get in a person the right personality if I want to marry her. The person who's always with the material things, who's always worried with her hair; she wants a Mercedes Benz or whatever. People like that I don't like. They're too worried about the material things and they're not worried about people's feelings and stuff like that (Amir:56).

Hassan thinks that he is an outgoing and friendly person. He was chosen as president of the Muslim Youth Club because of his personal qualities: hard working, easy to get along with, knowing the important goals and striving to achieve them.

For instance, when I became president of the Muslim Youth Club, I became because I wanted to encourage, help our youth get involved, get together, do things the Muslim way. That was the major goal. That was, I would say, the most important goal of the Muslim Youth Club (Hassan:34).

Majid also thinks that he is a kind and helpful person. For instance, his girlfriends used to discuss their problems with him because he was a good listener. Although people think he is shy, he believes he can be bolder, especially when he is with his friends.

(I'm) polite. I don't like to swear too much. I don't like to swear at all actually. I'm bolder. I don't consider myself shy. Maybe other people do, but I don't consider myself shy. I like to converse with people, communicate, joke around (Majid:32).

#### E. CONCLUSION

The data shows that, with the exception of Sawsan, the other participants experienced a normal psychosocial development. Their childhood, adolescence and young adulthood experiences were generally positive. Developmental crises and conflicts were resolved with minimum stress. They had a positive school experience. They appear to enjoy a high level of self-esteem. In spite of this, Muslim Lebanese young adults face difficulties in trying to adjust to Canadian society.

The major problems are interpersonal. Most of the stress is related to relationships with parents. There is

evidence of cultural conflict. Participants have to cope with cultural expectations from their family which contradict those of the school. For example, the school promotes the development of critical skills, while parents demand submission to parental authority. The participants question parental authority, which causes communication problems. Sometimes, as in the case of Sawsan, these interpersonal conflicts lead to rebellion and alienation. It appears that female respondents want to construct their personal and professional life expectancies around the inevitable marriage. In the case of male respondents, they would like to choose a partner who their parents approve of, and at the same time who will fit into the predetermined structure.

Another area of youth-parents conflict is "double standards" when dealing with males and females. These problems are often centered on minor issues such as curfew, but they also concern more important issues related to education: minimum education for the females and post-secondary education for males and females.

Are Muslim Lebanese young adults better equipped to adapt to Canadian society than other ethnics, or are they exposed to more stress? It depends on the individual's ego strength and self esteem, both of which are closely-linked to the issue of identity. Participants with a weak cultural



and especially Islamic identity appear to experience more stress. They are also less likely to succeed in circumventing the vicious circle of assimilation and loss of identity.

The final chapter will provide a synthesis, and an in depth analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER VIII: OVERVIEW, DISCUSSION AND THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT

The main objective of this study is the integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages. Another important objective is to achieve a comprehensive knowledge of the person in context. The context is seen as an essential element in the overall understanding of, and under what conditions the participants achieved their past and present cognitive and psychosocial development.

The data was systematically analyzed in order to ground Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages, and thus show the merits of this integration. Theoretical development is considered to be an important step in Grounded Theory because it allows the researcher to formulate theses based on factual data. Such theses are theoretically developed within the limits set by facts and emerging concepts and categories.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first is an overview and theoretical discussion of the major themes. The second is about the merits of the proposed theoretical integration. The implications for further research are offered in the last section.

## I - OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL INTEGRATION

### A. OVERVIEW

The purpose of this dissertation was to evaluate the merits of the integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages. Specifically, empirical support was sought for these two theses of human development. To achieve this goal, a Grounded Theory study was conducted with a sample of Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults.

Three male and three female participants were chosen after they responded to a preliminary questionnaire, and committed themselves to the research process. Demographically, male participants were from a working class background, and female participants were from high middle or upper class backgrounds. Educationally, male and female participants at least finished high school, and five of them were university students.

In-depth questionnaire interviews were conducted on an individual basis. The purpose of these interviews was to collect detailed descriptive data about the participants' cognitive and psychosocial development using the same categories which Luria and Erikson used in their famous clinical studies. Special attention was paid to the full description of the social context of the participants'

cognitive and psychosocial development.

Data analysis concentrated on three areas. First, the analysis revealed that the social context of the participants is essential to understand their cognitive and psychosocial development. Socioeconomic, familial and sociocultural variables are important to understand these aspects as well as other important aspects of the participants' lives.

The second analysis showed that Luria's thesis of cognitive development is very suitable to an in-depth study of this important psychological issue. Luria's thesis of cognitive development is especially valuable to study ethnic minority groups such as the Muslim Lebanese participants. It is perhaps the only thesis which puts a great emphasis on the role of semiotics/language in cognitive psychology. This semiotic/language dimension can not be ignored in any meaningful discussion of the cognitive development of minorities in Canada. It is also central to cognitive development, academic progress, and the building of a more just society.

The third analysis showed that Erikson's thesis of psychosocial stages is particularly suitable to understand the complex issues of adolescence such as identity, autonomy, peer pressure, sexual relationships and marriage, and career choice. Erikson's thesis was also sensitive to

the outlook of an ethnic minority group with a different worldview and sometimes conflicting values. It was particularly valuable in accounting for the participants' ideological commitment (religious and political).

Lastly, the final analysis showed that, when Luria's and Erikson's theses are integrated into one single conceptual framework, their theoretical (and clinical) value is greatly enhanced. As such they can provide a more meaningful understanding of the person in context. Moreover, this integration will broaden the scope of what is researchable by directing attention to phenomena in a more humanistic and emphatic way. The major themes in this integration are discussed, each in turn.

## **B. THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF COGNITIVE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The cognitive and psychosocial development of the participants become meaningful when their social context is taken into consideration. Socioeconomic and sociocultural analyses are valuable for a good understanding of the participants' adaptation to Canadian society.

### **Socioeconomic Context**

These Canadian young men of Muslim Lebanese ancestry are from working-class, immigrant backgrounds. Their lives

are marked by economic hardships. In spite of personal and family sacrifices, there is only limited upward social mobility. Mothers and older members of the family have to work to make ends meet. But in spite of their low socioeconomic status, these families have achieved a reasonable level of economic integration.

Canadian Muslim Lebanese young women are from upper middle class or upper class social backgrounds. Their families achieved a high level of economic integration. Their economic achievements (eg., kind of jobs, income levels, standard of living and accumulation of wealth) are at least comparable to those of other Canadians. Although this sample is not representative of the Muslim Lebanese population in Canada, it does, however, indicate that, in the case of Muslim Lebanese women, university education is still mostly an aspiration of the economically well-to-do. The parents of these young women value university education; they are more educated than other immigrant Lebanese Muslims. The importance given to post-secondary education is in sharp contrast to the attitude of parents from lower socioeconomic levels. For instance, although all male participants are presently attending university, none of their sisters are going to university. Apparently post-secondary education is not encouraged for girls, maybe to facilitate early marriage.

Thus, male and female participants are from widely different socioeconomic backgrounds. In spite of this, all of them achieved a degree of economic integration in Canadian society. Economically, they have done reasonably well, are productive members of the Canadian society and are gaining economic power. But by itself, economic integration is not sufficient to give a clear idea about adaptation to Canadian society. It is also necessary to consider the participants' sociocultural background.

#### **Sociocultural Context**

The Muslim Lebanese family, as represented in this study, is characterized by a large, closely-linked network of relatives which makes it look like a traditional clan. In general, family ties is strong and stable. In spite of tension which comes from intergenerational conflicts (themselves largely due to cultural conflicts between the Muslim and the Canadian ways of life), children still respect and obey their parents. Family ties are perceived as part of growing up. This important feature makes the Muslim Lebanese community unique among other Muslim communities. It is rare to find such family support systems and an almost intact extended family atmosphere among the other Muslim communities in Canada. It's a crucial factor in understanding the participants' adaptation to Canadian

society.

In spite of these strong family ties, there is evidence that the traditional Muslim Lebanese family structures are going through the same structural changes as are other Canadian families. From a quick statistical analysis done by this writer, it was evident that this trend is particularly apparent in families with higher levels of education. The average family size of this sample is 6.3. By socioeconomic status, the average size of working-class families is 7 compared to 5.7 for families from higher socioeconomic status. When the level of education is considered, the size of families with parents who finished high school is only 4.5 compared to 7.2 for families of parents with limited educational achievement. If these trends continue, the Muslim Lebanese family could resemble the pattern of the nuclear family in a few generations.

There are apparent differences in terms of social class and especially education. In general, when parents are more educated, they usually have smaller families. This is also true for socioeconomic status, but there are important exceptions. If the socioeconomic level is high, but the educational level is low, family size remains high. This is explained mainly by the influence of Islam. Islam has always encouraged couples to have large families, and in this study, the less educated, in particular, appear to



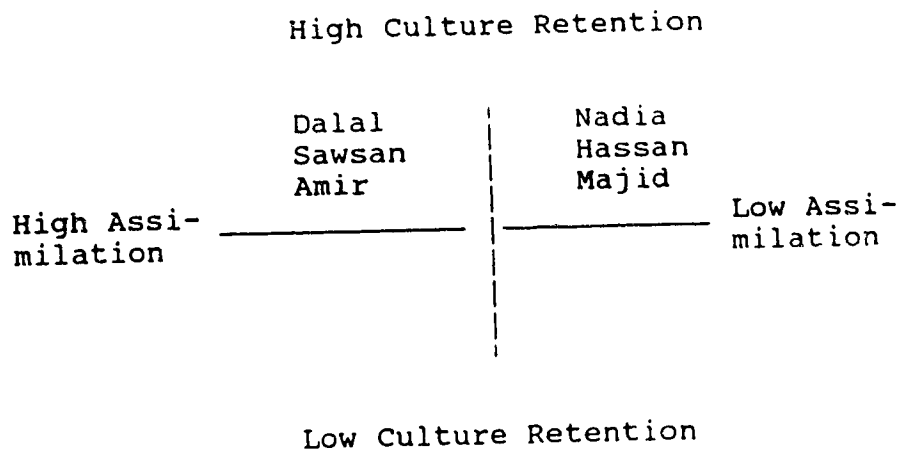
still favour large families.

Sociological research [eg., Barclay (1978), Elkholy (1966), Khattab (1969)] traditionally linked assimilation with the length of time an immigrant stays in Canada. There is, however, evidence of an opposite trend. It appears that, the longer Muslim Lebanese live in Canada, the more they want to retain their culture, religion and language. A possible explanation for this opposite trend is the experience of personal and/or collective discrimination. It may be that the length of stay in Canada facilitates assimilation, but only when there is a perception that fairness and equality are enforced by the Canadian justice system, in the absence of discrimination. For instance, Sawsan, a third-generation Muslim Lebanese, never experienced discrimination, and said that her friends were always positive about her heritage. She appears to be relatively more assimilated than the other participants.

Participants could be high on either assimilation or culture retention. They would like to be treated as Canadian as everyone else, but at the same time retain their culture. Some of them choose a type of individual assimilation coupled with collective multiculturalism. While the general trend is to retain their culture, they see assimilation as a way to progress in the Canadian society. They consider this strategy as a legitimate option

because they think that Canadian identity is an important dimension of their life.

This kind of identity management is a more advanced form of adaptation to Canadian society. Their parents' identity management was simply assimilation or culture retention. This shows that assimilation is not inevitable, and that it is possible to accommodate both majority and minority interests. Unlike their parents, these participants can take into consideration, in a creative fashion, the two aspects of adaptation to Canadian life. This adaptation pattern can be represented in this way:



Participants achieved either a high level of culture retention coupled with a high level of assimilation or a high level of culture retention coupled with a low level of assimilation. Culture retention refers to the preservation of cultural, linguistic and religious life. Assimilation

is accepting the Canadian way of life in a significant way. It is usually considered to be detrimental to culture retention. It is also distinguished from cultural integration or the attitude of accommodating both the ethnic and the host cultures, the essence of cultural pluralism. In reality, the levels of culture retention and of assimilation are not so high, but this represents the general trend. Only in the case of Sawsan, a relatively higher level of assimilation coupled with a high level of culture retention can be seen.

High culture retention coupled with a low level of assimilation appears to be associated with indications of high self-esteem and psychological adjustment in this study. These participants achieved a good psychological balance and social adjustment. They appear to be well adjusted and free from any serious psychological problems. Moreover, they reject total assimilation and show an increased interest in cultural retention. From the minority perspective, this is desirable. It is a form of conservatism which will help the cause of pluralism. Assimilation is not considered anymore as an option because of the losses in terms of cultural and religious identity and the mother tongue. Economic integration is not anymore a sufficient reason for such sacrifices.

High culture retention coupled with high assimilation

appears to be associated with indications of relatively lower self-esteem and psychological adjustment in this study. These participants had many difficulties reconciling their Muslim Lebanese and Canadian values, lived through many developmental crises and continued to experience adjustment problems. As was shown by Marcia (1963), female participants belonging to the Moratorium and Identity Diffusion statuses are particularly vulnerable to self-esteem manipulation. This is explained by a reversal of the usual pattern of female adaptation, that is, Identity Achievement or Foreclosure. Clearly, Dalal, and especially Sawsan, are challenging the old ways of looking at the status of females in the Muslim Lebanese family. In the case of Dalal, who is a Moratorium status individual, there is already evidence of a higher level of adjustment. But, in the case of Sawsan, who appears to belong to the Identity Diffusion status, she still living a full-blown crisis affecting every aspect of Identity Achievement.

This overall pattern may be somewhat reassuring to the Muslim Lebanese community and other minority groups because only those who experienced difficulties as minorities assimilate faster, while those who are well-adjusted are more committed to their culture. This pattern is well-known to researchers. Well-adjusted, well-educated and self-confident ethnics are those who champion the cause of

culture retention and pluralism and also initiate programs to achieve those goals.

### **Adaptation to Canadian Society**

The Muslim Lebanese community is now supporting the cause of cultural pluralism. It also supports the view of a multicultural society which accommodates different ways of life. On the other hand, the majority traditionally opted for the assimilation of minorities. It tolerated talented immigrants who achieved a high level of success as individuals, but did not encourage ethnic groups to become organized as political entities.

This majority conservatism aims at maintaining the status quo and safeguarding the interests of mainstream society. However, among other reasons, the deterioration in the historical English Canada-French Canada conflict over language rights might be motivating the English majority to be more willing to recognize the basic rights of the ethnic minorities. The fact that ethnic minorities represent a third of the population was not significant in itself to foster a new vision of Canada. This kind of social arrangements was criticized by generations of social scientists [eg., Porter (1965), Moynihan and Glazer (1970), Hall (1971) and Greenfield (1976)]. The logic of the ethnic minorities is different. It has developed in the context

of a worldwide demand for more equitable social arrangements for minority groups, including much more recognition of their socioeconomic and cultural rights. The experience of ethnic minorities all over the world shows that, unless other arrangements are made which recognize the economic and cultural aspirations of minority groups, the same cycle of cultural alienation, economic hardships and social unrest will continue.

The social context is now seen as an important factor in the study of human development. Researchers within the Vygotskian and Eriksonian traditions and also interactionists now view human development not only as internally driven, but also as being influenced by external factors. Each child grows up speaking a mother tongue, and identifies with his/her parents' culture. The understanding of early dyadic relationship with parents, and the cultural context constituting those relationships is considered to be crucial to the understanding of these processes.

The issue of ethnic adaptation is important to understand what is going on in the Muslim Lebanese community. Saram (1985) identified four types of ethnic adaptations, which he viewed in a developmental sequence. Several factors are taken into consideration, including the immigration status and citizenship, economic integration, minority-majority relationships, cultural identity and the

vitality of the ethnic group.

The first type of ethnic identification is a kind of "community adaptation." It is characterized by economic adaptation and social acceptance. For those with a low socioeconomic status, the dominant issue is economic hardships. Identity problems are non-existent because they live most of the time in their culture and continue to speak their own language. Some aspects of Canadian identity are assumed. The need to safeguard their culture and their religion is not strongly felt as yet. This type of ethnic affiliation corresponds to a quasi rejection of the dominant culture. In terms of community dynamics, there is no formalization of membership or hierarchy.

The Muslim Lebanese community has gone beyond this type of ethnic identification. Community adaptation does not seem to be the typical pattern for the participants. It appears, however, that the participants' parents assumed that, like back home in Lebanon, their children will also be automatically immersed into their culture and religion. The force of attraction to Canadian society and culture was not fully appreciated.

Saram's second type of ethnic adaptation is called the "pattern of marginality." Economically, it is characterized by the social mobility of a small number of people. Culturally, Canadian identity is assumed and ethnic identity

is not stressed. This adaptation works in favour of the Canadian society. Assimilation flourishes in the absence of the influence of culture and religion. The force of attraction to the dominant culture is so strong that participants adopt compromising strategies in order not to be identified as minority children. This involves shortening or changing their first names. Problems of identity management arise from this dual allegiance. Stereotypical images of the self and the conspicuous aspects of ethnicity are given up. Marginality also means a claim to equality and a competitive type of adaptation, which can become problematic if it generates excessive jealousy and envy. In some cases, it can lead to individual or even organized hostility.

There are still visible aspects of this pattern of marginality in the Muslim Lebanese community. Although economic mobility has been achieved in the case of many participants, the problems of identity management and dual allegiance are very much in evidence. In the case of Sawsan, they were so pronounced that the family was torn apart for some time. In the case of the other participants, there is ambivalence towards both Canadian and Muslim Lebanese cultures. A re-definition of both cultures is well under way, but many participants are not able to look beyond minor differences to search for more universal values. For



example, many participants find it difficult to define Islam in terms of basic freedoms, democratic rule and social justice, issues which are also important in the Canadian society. There is also a desire to conceal the conspicuous aspects of one's ethnicity. For example, changing first names to accommodate Canadian friends and employers is a common practice. There is, however, a recognition that such a practice is detrimental to cultural identity. There is also some evidence of hostility against Muslim Lebanese. It appears to be related to the Middle East conflict and especially the Lebanese Civil War. However, it does not seem to be a negative reaction against the few Muslim Lebanese individuals who achieved economic success. Participants from higher social classes appear to experience little or no discrimination.

Thus, the dynamics of marginality are still in operation and can explain, at least partly, what is going on in the Muslim Lebanese community. In spite of this gradual replacing of ethnic identity by Canadian identity, and the existence of a fair amount of assimilation, Canadian culture is not yet appropriated and guilt feelings associated with forsaking the Muslim Lebanese culture are evident. The Muslim Lebanese immigrants are subject to guilt feelings related to forsaking their birth country and enjoying success in the new country which is now the source of their

admiration. Unless they re-interpret their presence in Canada in a meaningful way (eg., increased Islamic Commitment or involvement in community work) they will continue to suffer from these ambivalent feelings. On the other hand, the community is forced to recognize these challenges and is organizing activities which reflect its way of life. In the final analysis, it appears also that the Muslim Lebanese community has also gone beyond the dynamics of marginality.

Saram's third type of ethnic identification is called "authenticity." It is characterized by economic stability and reflects a high level of self-assurance and a need for self-expression. People at this level obtained status appropriation through education and the right jobs. Their quest for ethnic authenticity translates into an interest in their original language, culture and religion. This shift starts with an awareness of differences. For example, Muslim Lebanese adolescents who were close to their Canadian friends, became very conscious of such differences in behaviour, especially in matters of alcohol, drugs, pre-marital sex and discrimination. They seemed to appreciate their Muslim Lebanese culture more and showed an interest in learning more about Islam and the Arabic language. A cultural re-alignment in favour of the Muslim Lebanese culture follows this re-evaluation of their cultural stands.

Culture then became a matter of conduct expressed for instance by the ability to speak the mother tongue. This emphasis could be of a symbolic nature only, but it is nonetheless a source of pride. The institutional dimension of the culture becomes important too. Culture as a personal cognitive reference point, which is now meaningful, is reflected on the community level as an increase in the vitality of the culture. Ethnic elites now form a class within the group and engage in political activities in the form of pressure groups and political blocks.

The Muslim Lebanese community seems to be at this level of ethnic identification. From a socioeconomic point of view, it now enjoys a better level of economic integration. Authenticity is manifested by the crystallization of the Muslim Lebanese identity. Canadian society is now viewed more critically, and its limitations are pointed out more readily. The participants are aware of their minority status. They value education as an important means to be successful in Canada. The Muslim Lebanese community enjoys an increased level of dynamism and vitality. There are numerous cultural events now, and a renewed interest in Islam is manifested by higher attendance at the Mosque and the various regular programs and social activities. There is also an awareness that it is vitally necessary and important to establish educational, financial and commercial

institutions. Teaching Arabic and Islam, in particular, is rapidly progressing. All these elements suggest a dynamic culture and a spirit of mobile pluralism.

The model of ethnic identifications proposed by Saram is emergent from the data. That is, as the data was analyzed and re-analyzed using "constant comparisons," it gained explanatory power. This model can complement Moynihan's and Glazer's (1970) thesis of economic-structural integration and cultural autonomy.

Using Saram/Moynihan and Glazer's framework as an explanatory model, it appears that the Muslim Lebanese community of Edmonton (just like the Hispanic minorities of Southern California) favour economic-structural integration and cultural pluralism. After sacrificing its cultural autonomy for the sake of economic progress, the relationship with mainstream society is now redefined. The participants, in particular, reject assimilation as an option. They aim for a balance between culture retention and assimilation. This study indicates that those participants who achieved high levels of culture retention and low levels of assimilation are presently better adjusted than those who achieved high levels of culture retention and assimilation.

In summary, Saram's thesis of ethnic minority adaptations coupled with Moynihan's and Glazer's thesis of

economic integration and cultural autonomy, provide important conceptual tools. Both theses show the importance of taking into consideration the socioeconomic and cultural factors affecting the individual. Luria also emphasized the importance of socioeconomic and sociocultural factors in any meaningful study of cognition.

Luria studied cognition using a sociohistorical method. This method is valuable, especially in cross-cultural studies. Unlike idealist speculations, which neglect to take into consideration the material bases of cognitive development, the sociohistorical method, by focusing on socioeconomic and sociocultural variables, provides a more comprehensive assessment of the person in context. This knowledge is likely to be more valid because it is grounded in the lived-world of the person. The following discussion of the participants' cognitive development is viewed by using Luria's sociohistorical and sociogenetic framework, with particular emphasis on the sociosemiotic factor. Luria, in his thesis of cognitive development, adopts a similar perspective to Saram's and Moynihan's and Glazer's models of ethnic minority adaptation.

### **C. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Cognitive/psycholinguistic Development**

Muslim Lebanese participants achieved different levels

of English language proficiency. Female participants achieved a higher level of proficiency than males. The latter had difficulties during their first year in university. These difficulties were directly related to the family psycholinguistic background. Their weakness in English motivated them to choose areas of study where there is little emphasis on the language.

The participants' mastery of the Arabic language is very limited. Only two participants achieved native-like fluency in Arabic, and this is because of special family circumstances. Clearly, the goal of L1 maintenance was not achieved. This is a case of "subtractive bilingualism." It suggests that the parents and the educational system failed to provide the necessary facilities to protect the mother tongue. The basic reason is that they did not appreciate the value of L1 in L2 learning and consequently in academic success. The solutions proposed, namely, the bilingual and the Islamic school concepts are promising because they do address the language and cultural needs of the children. In the meantime, the participants try to learn Arabic on their own, but their chances of being bilingual are not guaranteed unless a more suitable Arabic program is devised for them.

The mastery of the English language is a prerequisite for ethnic minority children to function adequately in the

school environment, and in the Canadian society as a whole. Social scientists interested in multiculturalism and bilingualism were able to clarify many pertinent issues. There is now a consensus on what works in ethnic bilingual education.

Lambert (1967), in his pioneer work on bilingual education in Canada, distinguished four ways in which minority children can work out conflicts between the language and the culture of the home and the school:

1. Harmonious identification with L1 and L2 cultures, the so-called balanced or functional bilingualism.
2. Identification with L2 culture and rejection of L1 culture. This has been associated with the assimilation of ethnic minority groups.
3. Identification with L1 culture and the rejection of L2 culture.
4. Failure to identify with either culture.

Each one of these patterns has implications for the kind of psycholinguistic development, self-concept and identity management that the participants will have. Lambert associates the first attitude with a more positive outcome.

The participants are closer to the second pattern. Even if they do not rejected their L1 culture, their identification with L2 is stronger. This shows moderate to high levels of assimilation. In spite of their ambivalence

and many reservations about both cultures, they are more comfortable in their L2 culture. From a psycholinguistic point of view, this seems to be a case of 'subtractive bilingualism', that is, a psycholinguistic situation where the child's L1 skills are lost in the process of acquiring L2.

This pattern of identification is common among ethnic minorities. It has been associated with a good level of academic achievement -itself closely-linked to high levels of L2 skills- but at the cost of L1 proficiency and often family harmony. It seems that L1 cultural maintenance was not viewed as an important goal by the participants' parents because they did not understand the requirements of the new sociolinguistic milieu and did not know that the mastery of L1 is important in order to master L2. This pattern of identification became desirable, and the mastery of L2 proceeded fairly well. The above noted weakness in the English language were relatively minor, and did not seriously interfere with academic progress.

The Muslim Lebanese children were not able to achieve a harmonious identification with both L1 and L2 cultures. This can be understood in terms of family variables which facilitated a relatively high degree of assimilation, and in terms of school variables which did not facilitate bilingual education. Participants are not able to achieve



a comfortable bicultural identity as yet, or to develop the necessary means to become members of both cultural and linguistic groups. Although they feel more comfortable in the Canadian culture, they are also aware that the internalization of their Muslim Lebanese heritage is still weak. For this reason, they would like this assimilationist trend to stop and replaced by a more balanced approach to cultural retention and assimilation

An important theoretical question can be raised here: How did the participants escape the more damaging patterns of cultural and psycholinguistic mal-adaptation found in immigrants communities all over the world (eg., the Netherlands and Sweden)? For many ethnic minorities, cultural conflicts proved to be debilitating as far as language learning and educational achievement are concerned. The participants did not have strong negative feelings towards L1 or L2 cultures and were positive about both cultures. Even though they tried to maintain their dominant Muslim Lebanese identity, they also looked favorably to their Canadian background. In this way, the mismatch between the language and culture at home and in school was minimized. Learning the Arabic language was not seen as a priority and was simply sacrificed for the English language. Therefore, there was little chance for any serious psycholinguistic damage.

Cummins (1982) provided a critical analysis of the policies and practices in the education of ethnic minority groups. He stressed the importance of sociocultural factors.

There exists considerable variation between minority language groups in the extent to which children are capable of succeeding in an L2-only school milieu. This variation is independent of SES and appears to be related to socio-cultural factors such as the degree of ambivalence vis-a-vis home and majority cultures (p.62).

As minority children, the participants experienced a conflict vis-a-vis L1 and L2 cultures, and since their parents did not promote or support L1, they resolved it by suppressing L1. Consequently, they had major difficulties with the Arabic language and some minor problems with the English language. Cummins would argue that a 'language shelter program' such as the present English-Arabic Bilingual program could have provided a stronger basis for L2 learning without sacrificing L1. What happened, however, is that the participants went through a school system which did not have any concessions to accommodate their language and cultural needs. The then prevalent assimilationist philosophy viewed their L1 as an impediment to academic progress, and considered it to be without any functional value. In the final analysis, their language difficulties are the result of the lack of support for L1 by their parents and the educational system. Parents were not aware

of what was happening to their children and accepted assimilation as the only option available to them. Today, the value of different educational arrangements for Muslim Lebanese children is more evident. As Cummins pointed out (1982, p.62):

However, there is considerable evidence that the attainment of functional bilingual skills can positively influence children's cognitive functioning. These findings add an extra dimension to the obvious personal advantages of bilingualism and suggests that school systems should explore ways of exploiting this potential strength of minority language children. Highly successful programs of this type exist in Edmonton, Alberta, for Ukrainian and German groups and are supported financially by the Alberta government (Lamont et al., 1978).

Bain (1980) discussed these cognitive gains in the light of Luria's thesis of cognitive development. Luria's thesis, with its emphasis on 'ontogenesis within sociogenesis,' places a central emphasis on the role of signs and particularly language in the formation of cognitive processes in children. Luria (1963) considered the development of a child's ability to voluntarily control his/her own cognitive processes to be contingent on his/her mastery of language.

Bain (1986) stressed the fact that, in Canada, there are two classes of second language programs, each with its traditions and vested interests, separate and unequal. He criticized some social scientists who continue to promote this inequality by fully recognizing the sociocultural

context of immersion programs for children from mainstream middle class backgrounds and ignore it in the case of ethnic minorities.

This amazing contradiction permits the lived-world and ESL/FSL relationships to be seen in the preferred Canadian manner of individual ethnics deciding for themselves whether or not to "take the initiative and really learn." That the ethnic problem may be one of poor teaching, anachronistic conceptualizations of language, social and economic inequities, within and between group power politics and acritical conceptualizations of these relationships, has been too often conveniently ignored (Bain, 1986, p.6).

It appears, therefore, that Canadian Muslim Lebanese children are not very different from other ethnic minority children. The fact that they had to sacrifice their culture and their language in order to survive is largely due to the then prevalent wholesale assimilationist philosophy and the low priority given to L1. Today, our conceptualizations of cultural identity and of the language alternatives available to ethnic minorities are different. There is an urgent need for significant changes in the educational policies directed towards ethnic minorities.

### **Cognitive Development**

The cognitive interests of male and female participants are divided along traditional lines. Males excel in mathematics and science and females in the Language Arts. Although this pattern is a reflection of the general trend

in the Canadian society, it also represents the cultural priorities of Muslim Lebanese parents. It is also important to understand how the Muslim Lebanese community and the Canadian society, particularly the school system, influence this differential cognitive development in males and females.

The language/math differential is one of the traditional sexual stereotypes. It is a serious prejudice because it represents a denigratory attitude toward females. In a study of sexism in grade 5 and 6 Australian pupils, Philips (1983) found that 52% of boys agreed with stereotypes such as "boys are better in math and science than girls." The comparison of this finding with the socioeconomic status of the children and the educational level of their parents is illuminating. Boys from working-class backgrounds, with a high proportion of immigrants, are twice more inclined to agree with these traditional stereotypes than boys from a middle class background (74% against 34%). Likewise, the level of education of parents affects the incidence of sexual prejudice. Parents without high school education are more likely to agree with stereotyped and denigratory descriptions of females than parents who completed high school education (56% against 43%).

More serious than prejudice, however, is the social outcome of this language/math differential. Since cognitive

differences are important in terms of educational progress and ultimately socioeconomic status, it is important to understand the nature of the difficulties female participants experience in mastering mathematical and scientific concepts.

The language difficulties of male participants should be understood in terms of family and school variables. Family variables are related mainly to the parents' inability to speak the English language and their ambivalence towards the new language and culture. School variables seem to play a more important role. As Cole (1983, p.1) explained in the case of reading problems:

If research is to make a difference, it will have to start with an understanding of how contemporary socio-historical contexts shape the nature of instruction and the production of school failure. Current data show how, without special cultural support systems, the individual teacher is at an enormous disadvantage in trying to get a student over the major misunderstanding that reading is reading individual words so that they sound right. Reading is a process of interpreting the world.

The participants' weakness in the English language and the female participants' difficulties in mathematics are linked to the assimilationist perspective of the educational system and to the lack of suitable programs for students with special needs.

Vygotsky (1984) distinguished between scientific concepts and "everyday concepts" and emphasized their interaction and its importance in the education of the

child. Everyday concepts are the constructions of the child. As such, they remain largely outside the realm of awareness. Scientific concepts which are taught in the school help the child to develop his/her reflective consciousness, abstraction and mastery or deliberate control. The dynamic interaction between everyday and scientific concepts introduces on the one hand a measure of systematization to everyday concepts and on the other hand, so to speak, brings down to earth scientific concepts.

This double challenge to the mastery of mathematical and scientific concepts was met in the case of Muslim Lebanese girls by an inadequate parental guidance and a poor school instruction. Many female participants come from families with a business background. Very often, they are involved in running the family business and were exposed to mathematics early in life. However, this familiarity with math becomes irrelevant because sooner or later they realize that their parents are expecting them to be fulltime housewives and mothers. Their own mothers, who finished high school and college education, are fulltime homemakers. They are more convinced of the limited scope of their education. Some parents define the role of women in society in a conservative way. The parents with less education, in particular, are still able to convince their daughters to start working or to get married as soon as they finish high

school. They do not value post-secondary education, because they have little or no education.

Parents cannot also provide the kind of instruction and supervision which will help to develop their children's interest to master mathematical and scientific concepts. Parent-child interaction is minimal and is rarely the same quality present in middle class families or based on sound educational principles such as the following account by Navarra (1955) of a preschooler's exposure to the concepts of biology and physics.

L.B. recalled an animated cartoon he had seen via television: 'Dad, I was looking at 'Junior Frolics' and Farmer Gray went up in a plane - the propeller fell off, and the plane came down.' L.B. paused and then continued: 'The moral of the story was: all things that go up must come down. Is that gravity, Daddy?' L.B.'s father agreed and added: 'Once the motor stopped, the airplane was pulled back to earth by gravity' (p.117).

Traditional school instruction did not take into consideration these individual differences. Male and female education was conceived to be uniform, a sort of battlefield where the individual is left to his/her own resources "to swim or sink". Educators did not appreciate the enormous difficulties facing these young women who wanted to master math and science. It is possible that the kind of reflective awareness necessary to master these concepts was not sufficiently nurtured and consequently did not develop.

Males continued to develop their cognitive strengths in



math and science while females experienced difficulties in these subjects and became discouraged. Many female participants complained that they could not link math and science to concrete realities. In other words, they could not relate to this high level of abstraction. In retrospect, if they could have benefited from an instruction based on Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development", the educational result would have been quite different.

What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow. Therefore the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions. It remains necessary to determine the lowest threshold at which instruction in, say, arithmetic may begin since a certain minimal ripeness of functions is required. But we must consider the upper threshold as well; instruction must be oriented toward the future, not the past (Vygotsky, p.104)

Participants excel in many of Luria's cognitive tasks such as perception, generalization, deduction, reasoning, imagination and analysis of one's inner life. All of them finished high school. Their educational opportunities provided the basic cognitive skills necessary to function in a complex society such as Canada. All of them are aware that they function at a cognitive level higher than their parents. From the analysis of Luria's tasks, it is apparent that their overall cognitive development is above average in the areas of concept-formation and conceptual operations.

However, there are also important differences between the participants, and especially between males and females.

In the area of abstraction, they indicated that, although they prefer more practical/concrete ideas, they are also comfortable with the very abstract concepts related to their fields of study. In terms of concept-formation, the gender differential between verbal, mathematical and scientific concepts are still important at the university level. In terms of conceptual operations, male participants are more comfortable with the mathematico-deductive model of thinking than with philosophical arguments. In particular, their critical abilities are not as well developed as those of the female participants. In terms of problem-solving abilities, both male and female participants point out that they do not have practical experiences.

Therefore, the participants enjoy well developed cognitive abilities. Their schooling provided opportunities to master the basic skills necessary to adapt well to the Canadian society and especially to the job market. However, this applies more to male participants. Female participants continue to choose the Liberal Arts and to experience difficulties in scientific fields. But, the efficiency of male participants appears to mask a lack of interest in more philosophical endeavors, and particularly, a weakness in critical abilities, even in their own fields

of study. Whether this is a normal developmental phenomenon of a post-industrial society such as Canada, or the reflection of a weakness of social consciousness is an important question which deserves further study.

A possible explanation is offered by Bai (1983). He views the social adjustment of ethnic minorities from developing countries in terms of technological and cultural transmission, class variables, and their own vision of the future. As they advance technologically from a background often characterized by an oral tradition, to the post-industrial background of the Canadian society characterized by an advanced written tradition, parents look at their immigrant status differently, and parent-child relationships are also subjected to different dynamics.

Initially, the new immigrant parents have low expectations and small specific goals for their children. Thus, the parent-child relationship remains personal and moral values are still clear. These parents continue to have a great influence on their children. As immigrant parents are more settled and assimilated, they impose higher expectations on their children, and their goals are not so specific. This new situation generates higher levels of anxiety. As the parent-child relationships become impersonal, as the parents are not always available, and at times are like absent parents, and as values are more

relative and confusing, technology takes over. The Muslim Lebanese participants appear to be at an intermediary position between these two stages. Only in the case of Sawsan, we see a high level of tension in parent-child relationships.

The participants and their parents value education, but only to a certain level. Males, in particular, do not want to continue too far in their studies but just to finish as fast as possible. This tendency is well-known in the Muslim Lebanese community. For decades, education was not very important, and parents encouraged their children to leave school to help run the family business. In a way, there is a definite improvement because the participants and maybe many other young adults are now getting a university education. Female participants present a different profile. They see education more in terms of personal satisfaction rather than just an opportunity to get the right job. Although this may be simply a reflection of their higher SES, it shows none-the-less more interest in higher education. Characteristically, female participants want to complete at least the master degree before looking for employment.

Participants value their cognitive abilities. Male participants are particularly grateful since their parents had very little schooling. Although they are proud that

their parents adjusted well to the Canadian society, they also point out the close relationship between their parents' level of education and the socioeconomic status and standard of living of their family. Female participants have more educated parents. Although their mothers finished high school, they typically identify with their fathers because of education and experience. It seems that they value their fathers' instrumental role more than their mothers' expressive role. This attitude translates into a strong desire to get a university education and a non-traditional career.

In summary, the discussion of the participants' cognitive development shows that there are some weaknesses in their psycholinguistic and cognitive development. In general, there are delays in the area of language development in the case of male participants and cognitive difficulties in the areas of mathematics and science in the case of female participants. Although these delays are not judged to be serious, and appear to be moderated by socioeconomic factors rather than strict gender differences, they seem to be present in all the social classes considered in this study. These differences are judged to be important and deserve to be researched further.

The next section will analyze the even larger context of the participants' life by adding to this discussion

elements of their psychosocial development. Erikson's and Marcia's frameworks will provide the basis for this analysis.

#### **D. PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Childhood**

The majority of the participants progressed normally towards developing a strong sense of identity in adolescence. As children, they had caring parents who helped them develop a sense of trust, a hopeful outlook on life, and the ability to depend on their world. They were allowed to manage their time on their own terms and to develop a first sense of autonomy, especially during play. Towards the end of the preschool period, they were eager to venture outside the home environment. This was because they were allowed to use their own initiative to develop their own powers and to accept responsibilities and social rules. School years were marked by industry or the development of skills to explore, manipulate, react, discuss and alter their personal and physical world. This is also the period when social responsibilities were developed through interaction with peers and continued support from adults. In the last stage toward identity, the sense of industry is acquired through the elimination of inferiority and the ability to formulate and execute plans.

However, there is evidence of two extreme patterns of child-rearing, one marked by lack of parental guidance and discipline and the other involving excessive control. Both patterns are dysfunctional and appear to have a particularly negative effect on females. They could lead to one or more of the following home adjustment difficulties seen in this study especially in the case of female participants, and particularly, in the case of Sawzan:

1. Frequent arguments between parents and their daughters, and consequently emergence of ambivalent feelings towards each other.
2. The daughters' uncertainty about their role in the family. This problem is further complicated when parents and/or older brothers adopt a dictatorial way of running the family affairs.
3. The parents' lack of appreciation of their children's problems, and the way they frequently criticize their decisions.

The Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese young woman, just like the Arab woman in general, continues to play a traditional role in the family. This role is based on civilizational, cultural, socioeconomic and religious considerations. Culture outlines for her a limited role and expects her to be a follower, either to her parents or to her older brothers, and after marriage, to her husband. Because of

this, she has no choice but to adopt a submissive position as the best form of adjustment available to her in these circumstances.

On the other hand, the Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese young man appears to be more comfortable in his role and position in the family. He is expected to be an important figure in the family, and as soon as he is mature enough, he begins to play a leading role in the family whenever the father is not around. The fact that Canadian society promotes different values does not seem to play a major moderating role. Young men and women accept their roles and only in exceptional cases such as the case of Sawsan, there is an open challenge to these customs. However, young women are now openly critical of these cultural values.

Without implying cultural determinism, it looks difficult for the Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese young woman to transcend the limits of this socialization. Moreover, Canadian society itself is just starting to come to terms with sexism. In this sense, both developing and developed societies should alter their sexist attitudes and practices and to re-name reality using a non-sexist language.

#### **Self-definition, Adjustment and Autonomy During Adolescence**

Adjustment during adolescence was difficult because participants had to deal with many new issues at the same



time. For instance puberty was considered as a relatively difficult time in spite of the fact that many participants claim that physiological changes were not an important issue. By comparison, the experiences of late adolescence and young adulthood were a better time because participants started to feel better about themselves.

Participants were able to adjust reasonably well during adolescence and young adulthood. With the exception of Sawsan who went through a full-blown identity crisis, the other participants were able to negotiate a happy end to their developmental crises. For example, many participants who made excellent academic progress, finished high school with high marks, and did not have any difficulty being admitted to university. However, their academic progress was irregular. Many participants procrastinated early in high school, and work hard for higher grades towards the end.

Autonomy is also an important issue during adolescence. By early adolescence, participants started to disassociate themselves from non-Muslim friends and adopt different attitudes (Islamic and cultural) towards dating, drugs and alcohol. Independence from parents is more difficult to achieve. Muslim women, in particular, are expected to live at home with the family until they are married. This limits their need for independence. Very often, parents do not

understand their daughters' normal need for autonomy and interpret it as rebellion against parental authority. Daughters also do not understand that independence, as known in Canadian society, will not be accepted by a Muslim family.

The participants' problems of self-definition are generally minimal, except in the case of Sawsan who suffers from self-concept contradictions and identity problems. The participants achieved a balanced view of self-definition in terms of self-reflection and interpersonal relationships. They also achieved high ego identity statuses and a healthy striving for autonomy. Only Sawsan showed more anxiety related to a lower ego identity status and difficulties in the area of separation-individuation, apparently an insecure attachment to her mother and a present detachment from all the members of her family.

### **Adolescence Developmental Issues**

Participants identify peer relationships as the single most important issue of adolescence. Female participants, in particular, face serious difficulties in the area of dating and marriage. It seems as if the more they interact with non-Muslims, the more difficult it is for them to adjust in this important area of adolescent life. Often, parents who are liberal and have even encouraged a high

level of assimilation, suddenly become conservative and overprotective when they realize the realities of dating non-Muslims. This is evident in Dalal's case and more so with Sawsan.

On the other hand, parents who were consistently conservative and provided clear guidelines to their daughters at a young age, helped them to go through this developmental milestone without any noticeable problems. It is when parents are not able to set up clear limits and expectations that problems of communication become common. Dalal did not have a clear parental guidance and did not know what to do or what not to do. She would have liked to have clear parental guidelines even if these were strict disciplinary measures. Nadia benefited from such parental guidance and does not seem to experience such developmental crises.

Therefore, the relationship with non-Muslim friends is a unique developmental issue facing Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults and particularly young women. Although they know that they cannot marry non-Muslims, they still find it difficult to accept the fact that they cannot be close friends at this stage of their lives. In spite of this, it appears that clear parental guidelines help young women to deal with this difficult issue. Young women who did not have specific guidelines experienced difficulties

resolving this developmental issue and consequently had major communication problems with their parents.

The issue of dating is best explained using Marcia's model. Dalal lived a crisis in this area but resolved it successfully. Sawsan continues to live a serious crisis, and is unable to resolve this conflict with her parents. It looks like a prolonged moratorium. Nadia did not experience any crisis in this area. She has foreclosed on this issue and does not consider it important.

Schiedel and Marcia (1985, p.149) found evidence for "differential developmental processes in male and female college students in the areas of ego identity development, intimacy development and sex role orientation." For both males and females, identity was related to masculinity. Intimacy was also higher in females than males. This low identity-high intimacy finding in women may explain one of the reasons why Canadian-born Muslim Lebanese young women experience more problems in the area of dating than males.

The other important factor is religion. The religious factor, regardless of Islamic commitment and practice, plays a crucial role in dating and marriage. In spite of the above-noted difficulties, Muslim Lebanese young adults appear to adjust better than their non-Muslim friends. This is attributed mainly to their conservative attitude towards sexual matters.

Recently, the claims of the so-called sexual revolution were questioned. The new trend is for a more conservative attitude towards sexual activity. Franz (1987, p.1) argued that "there is continuing evidence that sexuality courses increase knowledge about sexual facts but do not necessarily always change attitudes or behaviors." She even argues that, "actually, providing a range of choices only confuses adolescents and do not help them to make logical decisions." She also questions the myth that teenagers must inevitably engage in sexual behaviour prior to marriage. Without agreeing with Franz' interpretations, especially as they pertain to the effect of sex education on attitudes and behaviour, it is interesting to note that this is exactly the position taken by the parents of the participants. They believe in early marriage as an alternative to pre-marital sexual activity. All participants, with the exception of Majid, appear to have internalized these sexual values, and basically develop similar attitudes as their parents.

The participants' career choices are non-traditional. They reflect the values of the Canadian society in this regard. Male participants did not have any major difficulties in choosing a career. It seems that their career choice was influenced mainly by school and their own perception of the job market. Parents did not influence them because they are not well educated and/or very familiar

with the job market. In the case of female participants, their parents are more educated and familiar with the Canadian society, therefore, they played an important role in career choice. Mothers, in particular, played an important role in this respect because they worked outside the home prior to marriage. For instance, Nadia's mother, who recently migrated to Canada and never worked outside the home, did not have any influence on her daughter's choice of career. By comparison, Dalal and Sawsan's mothers worked prior to marriage and were familiar with the job market. They were able to influence and motivate their daughters to pursue university education and to choose non-traditional and rewarding careers.

But, in spite of this, career choice was not easy for the majority of female participants. Only Nadia had an easy choice of career because she decided to work in her family business. The other participants experienced difficulties and did not achieve their career/professional identity so easy. For example, Dalal started teacher's college then changed to another program. This initial difficulty was overcome, and right now she does not foresee any more career changes. Sawsan is still going through a serious crisis in this area. She is not able to reconcile Canadian values with Muslim Lebanese values. Her major is the theatre, an occupation Islam discourages, especially for women. Her

parents, who are very conscious of their image in the community, are anxious about her career choice. She went through a long painful period of conflicts with her parents, and only recently she realized that she needs to find a compromise acceptable to all.

Thus, Muslim Lebanese young women in particular, experienced many difficulties in the area of career choice. Their family, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds did not prepare them to deal with these difficulties. In spite of this, they received adequate guidance and have a clear preference for non-traditional and socially valued careers.

Ideological commitment, in both its religious and political dimensions, but especially in its Islamic (religious) dimension, appears to be the most important dimension of the participants' psychosocial development during adolescence. It has a direct bearing on their ability to adapt to Canadian society without losing their identity. Cultural and linguistic identity could be compromised and ultimately even sacrificed without serious personal injury, but all participants perceive the loss of Islamic identity as a personal tragedy with serious consequences. In spite of this, their Islamic commitment and practice remain minimal. Specifically, their Islamic knowledge, their commitment to the cause of Islam and their daily Islamic practices are still below a level that Islamic

scholars and leaders would consider an appropriate development of their Islamic personalities. However, with help from their community (eg., the Muslim Youth Club), they could make progress in the areas of Islamic knowledge and commitment.

The participants were raised in families where Islamic commitment and practice were minimal. Often, parents were not practicing Muslims. Islamic socialization was not part of their childhood. Because they were busy, the parents did not present an inspiring example to their children. They grew up to become nominal Muslims like their parents. This explains why they still find it difficult to practice the routines of **Salah** (daily prayers) and **Sawm** (fasting during the month of **Ramadan**). Since these routines were not developed in childhood, they became a real burden for them later in life.

Participants are not able to promote the cause of Islam in Canada. For instance, Nadia reduces Islam to a sum of "dos" and "don'ts", and does not seem to be aware of the larger issues such as belief in One God, a complementary spiritual and material life and Islam's concern for human rights, the environment and the arms race. The other participants are more aware of these issues but do not have any knowledge or Islamic perspective on them. Thus, their ability to present Islam to their non-Muslim friends and to



participate in Islamic work in Canada is limited.

Does this indicate a failure of Islamic socialization? Participants share in the cosmopolitan and secular values of Canadian society and appear to be very comfortable. Their involvement in the affairs of the Muslim community is still negligible. However, they appear to have a strong sense of belonging to their Muslim Lebanese heritage. They are also aware of their weakness in terms of knowledge, Islamic commitment and practice. The fact that they are trying to remedy their situation by learning more about Islam and becoming more involved with the community, is a positive development. Some community members who think that the young adults are too Canadianized, do not appreciate their strong attachment to Islam and its basic values. In a sense, these young people are not different from many other Muslims, and with proper Islamic education, they could become more committed to Islamic values, principles and practices and ultimately good Muslim men and women. Then, they will be confident and play an important role in presenting Islam to their Canadian friends.

All participants are more involved in Canadian politics than the politics of their community. Female participants are not very involved in the political life of their community, and are critical of Canadian politics. For example, Dalal and Nadia are rather passive about politics.

Sawsan prefers an Islamic political system. None of the participants are actively involved in the Muslim Youth Club at the Mosque or the Muslim Students' Association on campus. This is an important factor because those who were involved at that level are now more committed Muslims and play an important role in Islamic work in Edmonton.

Therefore, Canadian Muslim Lebanese young adults have a strong emotional attachment to Islam and its fundamental values, but are not practicing Muslims. Since Islamic commitment is an expression of Islamic identity, it plays a crucial role in their adaptation to Canadian society. This noticeable weakness in Islamic commitment and Islamic practice among the majority of the participants prevents them from promoting the cause of Islam and its social and political ideals. At this stage in their lives, they appear to be satisfied with the cultural aspects of their Islamic heritage. Whether they will become more committed to Islam will depend on the opportunities available to them to learn more about Islam. It is very important to understand that their socialization, in spite of its weaknesses, is basically Islamic and constitutes a core upon which to build a stronger commitment to Islam. It is a serious misconception to discount some of these Muslim Lebanese young adults as too Canadianized.

Religious ideology appears to be an important dimension

in the participants' life. It plays an important role as an organizer of identity. Although religion, as conceived by Erikson (1963), has not received the attention it deserves by psychologists, it is becoming an important area of study. For example, Novak (1986, p. 189) criticized Erikson's epigenetic theory for its "failure to see the relationship between individual crises and the modern post-metaphysical worldview, where the meaning of life is in question." On a more positive note, Erikson's conception of religious identity is very suitable to the life situation of these participants. It provides a very useful tool to understand their religious life. This is a valuable tool to assess the salience of religion in their life, to understand the transmission of religious beliefs from one generation to another, in the analysis of structural dynamics involved, and in the relationship of religion to identity.

### **Young Adulthood**

All the participants are young adults, but they are not dealing with adult issues as yet. Although they talk about the issues of adult life, they are still involved in resolving adolescence issues. This may be so because they attend university. Adult issues are postponed until they finish their studies. The central issue of adulthood,

Intimacy vs. Isolation, is also not very relevant to them as yet because dating and sexual relationships prior to marriage are not common for Muslim Lebanese people. Therefore, participants are still living the dynamics of late adolescence, and are not expected to really face up to adult issues until they finish their studies and are part of the work force.

#### **E. SUMMARY**

The themes emerging from the data on the participants' cognitive and psychosocial development support Luria's and Erikson's theses. The comparison of the major themes with these two theses shows that they are valuable conceptual tools to understand the person in context. Their values are evident when they are compared to well established theories in these areas.

Luria's thesis of cognitive development has many merits. As a sociosemiotic model, it has many advantages over Piaget's cognitive theory. Piaget never abandoned his original theoretical framework for the understanding of human development, which posits that intelligence is essentially a biological phenomenon, and that its development is best understood as the development of a sophisticated adaptation device. By comparison, Vygotsky and Luria argued that the essential dimensions of the

semiotic and social nature of cognition must be recognized. The advantages of his framework were particularly evident in the case of the participants. It was clear that language plays a fundamental role in cognitive development, and that any discussion of cognition which does not take into consideration the semiotic dimension will not be complete. The importance of the sociogenetic characteristic of cognitive development was evident from the relevance of the socioeconomic and sociocultural context to cognitive development. Thus, as Heine (1989, p.1) suggested, "if the apparatus for cognition is psychological, the substance of the process is sociological. Cognitive development must be viewed as a social/semiotic process."

Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development also has many advantages. Perhaps its most important merit is that it avoids a biological view of human development by focusing on its social dimension. This perspective was very useful in the discussion of the participants' developmental milestones in the areas of identity, sexual relationships, career choice, ideological commitment and autonomy. Compared to Freud's psychosexual theory, Erikson's thesis looks comprehensively at all facets of human development. The use of Freud's psychosexual theory would have made the discussion incomplete. Moreover, there is no equivalent framework to understand development during adolescence but

Erikson's. It is also sensitive to the cultural and religious factors. For all these reasons, Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development is an important conceptual tool for the study of the person in context. This understanding will be further enhanced when the two theses are integrated. The next section discusses the value of this proposed synthesis.

## II. THEORETICAL INTEGRATION

### A. INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to demonstrate the value of the integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development. As it was shown in the previous section, these theses are valuable conceptual tools in themselves, but it is expected that their theoretical value will be enhanced by their synthesis. Therefore, it is important to know the theoretical and clinical value of these two theses combined in a single framework.

### B. THE VALUE OF THE THEORETICAL INTEGRATION

Natural science assumes that it can overcome the subjective experience. It wants to impose its model on the social sciences. Thus, Psychology, Reflexology and

Behaviorism assume that instrumental reason, or reducing people to objects, is sufficient for reliable knowledge. Knowledge is built on an instrumental type of reason which relies on logic-deductive mathematical models. On the other hand, social science puts the subject at the centre of its enquiry. The major difference in perspective centers around the conception of the dialectic between the totality and the individuality of the subject. Ideology becomes crucial in this debate about what constitutes reliable knowledge in the social sciences.

Kant tried to consider the subject and the context together. But this revolutionizing of phenomenology did not change the basic rationalist/idealist perspective to which he was committed. As a matter of fact Kant's phenomenology remained spatial and Kantian psychology became cognitivist and un-sociological. Piaget, the last major representative of cognitivist psychology talks about invariant developmental stages without consideration of "under what conditions." He also adopted a natural science methodology to describe human reality.

Hegel added the temporal dimension. Marx revolutionized the social sciences by adding the sociological dimension to Hegel's psychohistorical approach. He focused on social class and not as much on the subject. His synthesis goes beyond the phenomenologists' apperception (perception and

subjectivity) because it incorporates the historical dimension and labour (the body as instrumental reason, and the subject as a reflection on the world). Societal mechanisms of change become more important than just psychological processes. He failed, however, to recognize the individuality of the worker and took the ego for egotism. His radical focus on the class struggle undermined the development of a dialectic between individuality and totality. While he made socialism scientific, he had no place for the ecumenical, the aesthetic and the axiological.

Habermas (1972) argued that there are no social facts without subjectivity. More recently, he also argued for a "universal pragmatics," or how to develop a language which works for everyone in an emancipatory way. He thinks that Freud's Unconscious provides an important tool to uncover and critically analyze past legitimations, but Freud's bourgeois psychology remains classless and value-free. Fromm (1947) and especially Erikson argued that it is necessary to reintegrate psychoanalysis to the sociohistorical context.

Marxism and psychoanalysis want to reclaim humanness by overcoming all forms of alienation and false consciousness and by unmasking what was internalized uncritically during childhood. The general characteristics of a reliable knowledge capable of addressing the complex issues with



which social sciences are grappling in the 1990's are:

- (1) An element of psychohistory provided by psychoanalysis.
- (2) A sociological element coming from Marxism.
- (3) An epistemological and dialogical element coming from phenomenology (Merleau Ponty) and Critical Theory (Habermas).

In addition, this emancipatory thrust should challenge the prevalent norms of objective research as far as they:

- (1) can distance the researcher from the subject matter;
- (2) rely on objective questions which do not fit the subjective/personal experience of the participant;
- (3) widen the gulf separating knowledge and the use of knowledge, i.e., scientific rigour divorced from social concerns, from the others and even from the self, and;
- (4) promote a patriarchal view of life motivated mainly by control. The alternative lies in a new objectivity which values relatedness and social responsibility.

This new objectivity will also enhance the need for autonomy in the individual.

The importance of this theoretical integration lies in the widening of the conceptual horizons beyond the particular psychological perspectives of the two dominant worldviews of idealism and materialism. Materialist psychology pays special attention to social factors at play

in individual development. Whether these social factors are basic to personality is still a matter of debate in academic circles, but there is no argument that they play an important role in ontogenesis. On this matter, psychologists in general, and Vygotsky and Luria in particular, offered important insights which helped to re-define and perhaps revolutionize child psychology in general, and cognitive psychology in particular.

Vygotsky/Luria were not radical materialists. They could not conceive of psychology without the person. They tried to accommodate the concerns of materialist psychology and idealistic psychology by proposing a social individual, who, in spite of all forms of social encapsulation, is somehow capable of having an intramental life. Although this Vygotskian perspective appears somewhat artificial, it helped none the less to put a major focus on the sociogenetic dimension of human development. Luria in particular saw the possibility of the synthesis of materialistic psychology with psychoanalysis. He even charted the conditions of such synthesis by specifying that psychoanalysis should pay more attention to sociogenesis.

Erikson's psychosocial thesis deals with an irreducible dimension of the human being, namely the psyche, the inner life, the unconscious mind, the individuality, or the personality. Whether individuality is primordial to social

life or not is also a matter of controversy in psychology, but it is now clear that even such a basic dimension should be looked at in its social context. The great merit of Erikson is that he was able to address the issue of personality in its social context. His new perspective separated psychoanalysis from its biological trappings and brought it closer than ever to materialist psychology. In this way, Erikson fulfilled Luria's desire to see psychoanalysis become more attuned to the sociogenesis of human behaviour.

Researchers are now considering the possibilities offered by the unification of the theses of Vygotsky/Luria and Erikson/Marcia. For example, Heckenmueller and Keller (1984, p.1) proposed an "age integrated learning (AIL)" model which encompasses both the cognitive/intellectual and the affective/emotional underpinnings of individual psychosocial development." They argued that, from Erikson's life span developmental theory, a connection can be made with recent theoretical statements from experimental social psychology and empirical sociology. The literature on personal control, stress, and social support is consistent with an age integrated approach to learning and is a logical extension of Erikson's thinking. This kind of integration was attempted in the 1970's (eg., Taylor, McIntyre and Wood, 1977-78). Since it was the integration of Erikson and

Piaget's theses, these authors were forced to add to cognitive development and psychosocial development, a third category, language development.

Smolucha and Smolucha (1988, p.1) proposed a "synergistic psychology" as a meta theory for synthesizing different psychological theories into an explanation of how social, cognitive, and biological factors interact in human behaviour. The basic theoretical assumption in synergistic psychology is that internalized social interactions become higher mental functions that regulate lower biological functions. These authors specified that the synthesis of Vygotskian and psychoanalytic theories can be woven around six common issues:

- (1) the integration of thought and language in cognition;
- (2) The role of adults as mediators of the infant's early object manipulations;
- (3) the role of internalized social interactions in the regulation of thought;
- (4) the collaboration of imagination and logical thought in creative thinking;
- (5) the role of nonverbal unconscious thought in cognition; and
- (6) the role of internalized social interactions involving speech and object manipulations in the

development of self-concept and world view.

Added to these issues should be, in the case of adolescence and young adulthood, the analysis of various developmental milestones in the areas of sexual identity, career choice, ideological commitment and autonomy. The analysis of the data using Grounded theory showed clearly that these major themes constitute important concepts in any comprehensive understanding of personality development during these two stages of human development.

#### C. SUMMARY

The value of the theoretical integration resides in:

- (1) the synthesis of Marxist psychology and psychoanalysis, two paradigms of psychological thinking existing in two worldviews;
- (2) the combination of two psychological disciplines, namely cognitive psychology and personality theory, in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the person, and;
- (3) the application of this theoretical integration to a sample of Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults to see the merits of this theoretical integration.

In the final analysis, the integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of

psychosocial development is an important step towards the unification of psychology. Psychology, in its quest for scientific respectability, has become too atomistic in outlook. In spite of numerous, highly specialized studies, real knowledge of the person continues to evade psychological research. Perhaps the time has come for a major shift in focus and perspective. This integration has important implications for psychology and education. They will be discussed in the next section.

#### **D. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

##### **Implications for Vygotskean and Eriksonian Psychology**

There is now a great interest in Vygotsky's, Luria's Erikson's and Marcia's theses. They are rapidly replacing Piagetian and Freudian psychological theories. The strength of the Vygotskean thesis of cognitive development lies in its social/semiotic thrust. However, as was discussed in this study, a neo-Vygotskean psychology should pay more attention to personality and give more prominence to the intrapsychic dimension of human development. The strength of the Eriksonian thesis of psychosocial development lies in its focus on both the ontogenesis and the sociogenesis of the healthy personality. However, as was also discussed in this study, a neo-Eriksonian psychology should pay more attention to the cognitive aspects of psychosocial

development. It is clear now that cognition plays an important role in the resolution of developmental crises.

The integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development can open up new vistas for psychological investigation. Already important insights have been made in such important areas as age integrated learning, and adolescent cognitive abilities and sexual decision-making, to name just a few. These mini integrations, focusing on one or two aspects of the two theses at a time, can show the merits of such an integration. Perhaps the time has come to establish centres for such studies at major universities.

#### **Implications for Psychological Research**

Grounded Theory was used in this study as a qualitative research methodology. It provided numerous insights into the lived-world of the participants. It showed the richness of their life, especially in terms of the socioeconomic and sociocultural factors. In particular, the cross-cultural perspective of the study provided an appreciation of the participants' life as members of an ethnic minority group. The major issues which they face were seen in their real human dimensions. But the real value of Grounded Theory resides in theory development from the facts provided by the data. Since research in psychology involves the development

and validation of theories, and since qualitative methods are more suitable for research in the social sciences, Grounded Theory can be a very useful method. However, Grounded theory, like the other ethnographic methods are complex and time-consuming. Therefore, it is desirable that systematic training in Grounded Theory be provided for those involved in psychological research. In the future, Grounded Theory may moderate quantitative methods.

#### **Implications for Cross-cultural Research**

There is an urgent need for cross-cultural research, especially in Canada. As was shown in this study of Canadian Muslim Lebanese late adolescents/young adults, cultural research can inform mainstream psychology, focusing on the role of specific cultural practices in organizing human behaviour. Luria's and Erikson's theses provided a cultural perspective which can be useful in advancing research on Canadian children with different cultural backgrounds.

There are also important implications of this study for the Muslim Lebanese community. In the area of cognitive development, more sustained and systematic efforts should be made to promote the Arabic language. The progress made through the English-Arabic bilingual program could be enhanced by making the program true Arabic immersion. The



Islamic schools should become bilingual schools. They have the potential to become even more successful in this endeavour than bilingual schools because of their Islamic/Arabic cultural and religious atmosphere.

In the area of psychosocial development, the Muslim Lebanese community's task is twofold; one, to reinforce Islamic identity; and two, to promote the cause of pluralism by stressing the positive aspects of the Canadian society. The role of the family is important, but the role of Islam is perhaps more crucial. However, traditional and official versions of Islam are not suitable for this role. The kind of Islam needed is the universal Islam which is open to a dialogue with other religions and ideologies, and which promotes the cause of peace, social justice and respect for human dignity.

#### **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The integration of Luria's thesis of cognitive development and Erikson's thesis of psychosocial development will provide psychological theory with a powerful model for a more comprehensive understanding of human development. The research methods used in this study showed the value of such an integration. At least empirically, Luria's and Erikson's theses appear to qualify as theories capable of explaining these two important areas of human development.

However, it is important to keep in mind that this research was exploratory in nature, and that its conclusions should not be generalized to much larger populations.

Moreover, important philosophical issues still need more reflection. Materialist psychologists argue that there is no specific human essence, and that human beings can be studied objectively without ever raising the important philosophical questions of human existence. If one now leaves this understandable but dull "scientific" model and turns to literature, philosophy, art or psychoanalysis, he/she will find that this child of nature is continuously opposing nature and is not that often controlled by the principle of utility and efficiency. Moreover, he/she is besieged by frightening, confusing and strange beliefs and taboos.

To move beyond these symmetrical illusions - impotent spiritualism or mechanistic materialism- we must realize two things: On the one hand, objective conditions are not inert metaphysical "givens" but rather the work of men, human projects achieved historically and, consequently, historically modifiable. On the other hand, consciousness is not passive reflection but an act. As this particular project acts on these objective conditions, there is constant give and take, a necessary unity and homogeneity between the ends pursued and the means utilized to attain them. A purely "spiritual" action (postulating a dualism of soul and body, consciousness and world, man and God) cannot change the world. But neither can a purely technical revolution of structural change lead to making every man the builder of his own history. Only the coalescence of all the struggles for self-management can be an effective school of self-management.

The keystone of every system of self-management is the constant interaction between the functioning of institutions and the education of individuals by real participation in this functioning. The dialectic unity of structural change and changing consciousness is the very principle of self-management (Garudy, 1972, p.60-61).

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## Appendix 1 - Preliminary Questionnaire

As with nearly all questionnaires, there may be some questions which seem unnecessary to you. However, the questionnaire has been made as brief as possible and each item meets a specific objective. Please answer all the questions carefully and honestly. Remember that your responses will remain absolutely confidential. It should take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance.

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Place \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother Tongue \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been in Canada? \_\_\_\_\_

Status in Canada:

Landed immig. \_\_\_ Canadian \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status (Check one)

Single \_\_\_ Married \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children? yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

If yes, what are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_

B. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Do you have living parents? Mother \_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Father \_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Neither \_\_\_

Have your parents ever separated or divorced?

yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Have one of your parents or the other ever remarried?

yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Do you have any brothers and sisters? yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

If yes, what are their ages?

C. EDUCATION

Can you describe your formal education by including years of schooling, institutions you attended and any degrees, diplomas and/or certificates that you obtained in particular areas of study?  
(e.g.: 1980-1983 University of Alberta ... B.A.)

D. WORK EXPERIENCE

Can you explain in a similar fashion, any part time, full time, contract work and/or volunteer work that you have experienced?

(e.g.: 1977 summer part time counsellor at the Muslim children's camp, Lac La Biche, Alberta).

E. CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Childhood is an important stage of life. A good knowledge of childhood helps to understand the person one has become. How do your parents talk about you as a child? How would you describe your childhood?

F. ADOLESCENCE AND BEYOND

Your life as an adolescent may be still fresh in your memory. How did you live your adolescence? What were the important issues in your adolescence? Do you still consider yourself as an adolescent?

G. PERSONALITY

What kind of a person are you? What are your thoughts about being a Muslim Lebanese Canadian?

#### H. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

How do you evaluate your language skills and your grasp of mathematical and scientific concepts? How is the acquisition of knowledge and problem-solving for you?

#### I. BILINGUALISM

Do you consider yourself to be bilingual (Arabic-English)? What are your thoughts about this type of bilingualism in your community?

J. FUTURE PARTICIPATION AND COMMENTS

Would you be willing to be interviewed about your personality make-up, your cognitive development and your Muslim Lebanese background?

yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any comments about either the format of the questionnaire, the nature of the questions, or about the content of what you have written?