CHAPTER SIX

QUALITY TEACHING PRACTICES: RESULTS FROM CLASSROOM OBSERVATION (VIDEO TAPES AND FIELD NOTES)

Introduction

Moving from policy to practices, this chapter aims to reveal results from the classroom observations to the answer the question: **what are the current quality teaching practices in Jordanian primary schools as judged by the NSWQT Model?** Despite the fact that a theoretical description of quality teaching and learning is exemplified in the MOE policy documents and the NSWQT Model, it cannot be assumed that descriptions suffice in exploring elements of quality teaching. To establish a reliable and complete picture of the applicability of the NSWQT Model to Jordanian classroom contexts, it is necessary to observe the teaching and learning activities in those classrooms. The results of the classrooms observations are presented in this chapter, and seek to explore the links between the MOE policies in the one hand, and to examine the applicability of the NSWQT Model on the other. Both the MOE framework and NSWQT Model assert that quality teaching and learning practices can be evidenced by observing teacher actions, students' actions and interactions between students and the teacher in classrooms. The results of classroom observations are analysed in relation to three questions:

- **What are the students' actions judged by NSWQT Model?**
- **What are the actions of the teacher judged by NSWQT Model?**
- **What are the interactions between students and teacher judged by NSWQT Model?**

It is expected that the analysed data of classroom observations will then be positioned to refer back to the theoretical dimensions of quality teaching in both the MOE and NSWQT Model documents. As well, the analysed data expects to refer forwards to an assessment of the applicability of the NSWQT Model to Jordanian classrooms.

The results are restricted to what happened in the classroom observations of 14 lessons. The 14 lessons were taught by 7 teachers and each teacher observed over two lessons. The

data in this chapter was derived from the analyses of field notes and videotape. First, the teaching context of each teacher is presented; after that the eighteen elements are reviewed, and how they were demonstrated over the 14 lessons is discussed. To ensure that the given scores for each teacher were valid and credible, a sample of videotaped lessons was given to an independent rater. This person was fluent in both English and Arabic, had knowledge of the NSWQT Model and had experience in primary school teaching (see chapter four). Since the main aim of this study is to examine the applicability of the NSWQT Model to the Jordanian primary classroom context, the interpretations of the field notes and the videotapes of observations were guided by a specific question for each item. For each item and the related question, a rating of 1-5 was given to each lesson; 5 being most evident, 1 being not evident (see chapter four). Table 6.1 shows these questions and items. In this chapter, the researcher also has used guidelines given in the following documents developed by the NSW Department of Education and Training:

NSW Department of Education. (2003). *Quality Teaching in New South Wales Public Schools: An Annotated Bibliography*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education and Training.

NSW Department of Education and Training. (2003). *Quality Teaching in New South Wales Public Schools: A Classroom Practice Guide*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education and Training.

NSW Department of Education and Training. (2003). *Quality Teaching in New South Wales Public Schools: Discussion Paper*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education and Training.

NSW Department of Education and Training. (2003). *Quality Teaching in New South Wales Public Schools: Continuing the Discussion About Classroom Practice*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education and Training

Table 6.1: *NSW-QT Classroom Observation Items and Guiding Questions by Dimension*

Intellectual Quality	
Deep Knowledge	To what extent is the knowledge being addressed focussed on a small number of key concepts and the relationships between and among concepts?
Deep Understanding	To what extent do students demonstrate a profound and meaningful understanding of central ideas and the relationships between and among those central ideas?
Problematic Knowledge	To what extent are students encouraged to address multiple perspectives and/or solutions? To what extent are students able to recognise knowledge as constructed and therefore open to question?
Higher-Order Thinking	To what extent are students regularly engaged in thinking that requires them to organise, reorganise, apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate knowledge?
Metalanguage	To what extent do lessons explicitly name and analyse knowledge as a specialist language? To what extent do lessons provide frequent commentary on language use and the various contexts of differing language uses?
Substantive Communication	To what extent are students regularly engaged in sustained conversations (in oral, written or artistic forms) about the ideas and concepts they are encountering?
Quality Learning Environment	
Explicit Quality Criteria	To what extent are students provided with explicit criteria for the quality of work they are to produce? To what extent are those criteria a regular reference point for the development and assessment of student work?
Engagement	To what extent are most students, most of the time, seriously engaged in the lesson? To what extent do students display sustained interest and attention?
High Expectations	To what extent are high expectations of all students communicated? To what extent is conceptual risk taking encouraged and rewarded?
Social Support	To what extent is there strong positive support for learning and mutual respect among teachers and students and others assisting students' learning? To what extent is the classroom free of negative personal comment or put-downs?
Students' Self- regulation	To what extent do students demonstrate autonomy and initiative so that minimal attention to the disciplining and regulation of student behaviour is required?
Student Direction	To what extent do students exercise some direction over the selection of activities related to their learning and the means and manner by which these activities will be done?
Significance	
Background Knowledge	To what extent do lessons regularly and explicitly build from students' background knowledge, in terms of prior school knowledge, as well as other aspects of their personal lives?
Cultural Knowledge	To what extent do lessons regularly incorporate the cultural knowledge of diverse social groupings?
Knowledge Integration	To what extent do lessons regularly demonstrate links between and within subjects and key learning areas?
Inclusivity	To what extent do lessons include and publicly value the participation of all students across the social and cultural backgrounds represented in the classroom?
Connectedness	To what extent do lesson activities rely on the application of school knowledge in real-life contexts or problems? To what extent do lesson activities provide opportunities for students to share their work with audiences beyond the classroom and school?
Narrative	To what extent do lessons employ narrative to enrich student understanding?

(Ladwig, 2005, p.77)

Hassnah

Teaching Context

Hassnah had 11 years of teaching experience at the time of this study. Hassnah's class was in small primary school located in Southwest Amman. In the village, most of the residents live in a tribal society, where their source of income is from farming as well as government employment. The school, built in 1979, and surrounded by olive trees, is part of the Jordanian government school system, and lies on the top of the West Amman Mountains, overlooking the Dead Sea. The school consists of 12 rooms, a computer room, a staff room, the principal's room and 9 classrooms. The school has a total of 201 students, with 13 teachers (including Hassnah). The majority of students in the school are girls. The boys study in this school from first grade to third grade, after which they transfer to boys' schools; Jordanian public schools are usually not mixed in upper grades. At the basic education level and in rural areas, some schools are mixed up to the third grade because there are not enough students to justify two separate school buildings. It is, therefore, not surprising to find in most of the villages the primary school is mixed (boys and girls). In secondary education, the public schools are not mixed under any circumstances. In most Jordanian villages, some students have to travel a long distance to reach their secondary schools.

From the researcher's field notes, the daily teaching in this school was well organised; all classes started as soon as the bell rang, with no time wasted. The researcher arrived at this school at 7:30 am on 25 February 2005. As soon as the researcher arrived, the bell for morning exercises was rung. After 15 minutes of exercises the students entered their classes. Hassnah asked the researcher to give her ten minutes to be ready for the observation. The classroom in which both lessons took place was on the second floor of the two-storey school building. The classroom was located at the end of a long corridor with large windows, which looked out over the school quadrangle and over the nearby olive fields. The door into the classroom opened off a corridor. The room was rectangular. The windows stretched across the side of the room facing the door and looked out over a green field behind the school. The students' desks were arranged in two blocks facing the front of the room and the chalkboard, and were divided by a walking space. One block consisted of seven desks and the other had six desks, each desk seating three students. In the far corner there was a cupboard containing papers and books. There were a few posters or charts and

some students' work on the walls of the classroom. The class consisted of 40 male and female students at grade three; one student was absent. The class included more girls than boys. The students were nine years old. The class had a wide range of learning abilities; some students achieving excellent results, some well below in ability. There were five students with learning difficulties; they were seated at the rear desks. The teacher, in her spare time, works voluntarily, teaching these students some reading and writing skills. The school does not have a resources room for students with learning difficulties. Some of the students were very quiet, especially those who had learning difficulties. Others were engaged and made frequent comments and contributions. The teacher teaches this class for the whole academic year because she was a 'Classroom Teacher'. According to the MOE 'The Classroom Teacher' is different to the 'Subject Teacher' as the 'Classroom Teacher' teaches particular classes in the lower primary cohort for the whole year and for all subjects, while the 'Subject Teacher' prepared to teach one subject (e.g mathematics) for different classes in the upper primary and secondary cohort. The teaching career in Jordan is a full time job and permanent for all teachers.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Hassnah's class was observed for two lessons, Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.2.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

Knowledge was treated unevenly during the two lessons. Most of the ideas in both lessons were addressed as part of the topics, but only in a general sense. The focus on the key concepts and ideas was not sustained during either lesson. The teacher's explanation of the concepts and ideas was clearer in the Arabic language lesson than the mathematics lesson. In the Arabic lesson the teacher explained the main concepts in the lesson, saying: 'Our lesson today is about the sound the letter 'Alif',(أ) in Arabic, in different parts of the word; in the beginning, middle and in the end of the word'. In this lesson, she provided different examples and tried constantly to connect the ideas and concepts with each other during the lesson. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher was not clear in explaining main concepts or ideas. For example, she did not explain clearly the meaning of 'multiplication by hundred'; some students could not understand the concept and mixed up addition with multiplication of the complex numbers given.

Table 6.2: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Hassnah*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	3	2
Deep Understanding	4	3
Problematic Knowledge	3	2
Higher-Order Thinking	4	3
Metalanguage	4	3
Substantive Communication	3	2
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	2	2
Engagement	4	3
High Expectation	4	4
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	4	4
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	4	2
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	3	2
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	2	2
Narrative	3	1

Deep Understanding

Most of the students demonstrated understanding of the concepts, especially in the Arabic language lesson. When the teacher asked them to give the meaning of some words, they did, being able to distinguish between some concepts (e.g. words meanings, connections between geographic locations). In the mathematics lesson, the students' understanding was uneven. Some students, demonstrated reasonable understanding of the subject's concepts, others only shallow understanding, when asked to explain how they came up with specific answers, especially the concept of 'Product' during the Arabic language lesson and 'Multiplication' during the mathematics lesson. Understanding was clear in the Arabic language lesson as students connected and applied their knowledge to the task of locating villages in Jordan and identifying new words in the reading section.

Problematic Knowledge

Knowledge was seen as socially constructed and multiple perspectives were presented and questioned through different ideas and concepts during the two lessons. Problematic knowledge was clearer and exhibited more often in the Arabic language lesson, whereas in the mathematics lesson some knowledge was open to multiple perspectives and questioning. For example, in the Arabic language lesson the teacher discussed with the students the sorts of weapons used in ancient times and asked students to compare them with modern weapons. Students and teacher discussed why these 'ancient' weapons had been used and why the people had not used aeroplanes. The teacher also linked some concepts with their social and political context (e.g. visiting of historic places, relationships between nations).

Higher-Order Thinking

Most of the students demonstrated higher-order thinking in the Arabic language lesson when asked: 'Give me another word with the same meaning as the word "trip"'. The teacher also asked: 'Why do we spell this word one (correct) way and not so other way'? In the mathematics lesson students primarily demonstrated routine lower-order thinking. There was only one question or activity in which students showed some higher-order thinking. The teacher had asked students to give a number, which could be the product of different ways of multiplication. Students demonstrated higher-order thinking in some situations. The teacher's presentation of the concepts of the lesson determined the higher-order thinking of the students. The teacher, in her interview, commented that some students

were having difficulties, especially n mathematics, and she attributed this to their earlier learning in first and second grade.

Metalanguage

Metalanguage was used frequently n both lessons, more so in the Arabic lesson. In the Arabic lesson, the students and teacher provided commentary on aspects of language at several points during the lesson. Also in the same lesson, the teacher stopped many times to explain the meaning of words and their significance and their opposites. The teacher and students discussed the usage of some words in different situations, such as 'trip', 'journey', 'excursion' and 'round'. In the mathematics lesson, metalanguage was used at some junctures of the lesson. For example some students did not understand that the 'three tens' is the same as the number 'thirty'. Some of them resolved the question 21 + 16 = X as 307 instead of 37.

Substantive Communication

Substantive communication among students and/or between teacher and students occurred occasionally, initiated more by the teacher than the students. Mostly, the teacher asked specific questions and sought answers, not giving students an opportunity to raise their own questions and build reciprocal interaction. For example, the teacher asked one student: 'What is the number if you multiply 10 by six? The student answered incorrectly; the teacher said the answer was wrong, but she did not give any explanation as to why, nor provide the correct answer.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

In both lessons, the explicit quality criteria were general statements regarding the desired quality of the work. Mostly, the teacher did not give students a criterion to allow them to compare their answers.

Engagement

Most of the students were actively engaged in the classroom activities, pursuing the substance of the lesson. In the Arabic language lesson, for example, most students were keen to answer and participate in he classroom discussion. In the mathematics lesson, most students were engaged in the lesson by trying their best to answer the questions, and raising their hands to volunteer answers to some questions on the chalkboard. Some

students appeared engaged in the classroom activities for fear that the teacher would punish them if they disrupted other students' work or if they were off-task. Two students at the back of the classroom were completely off-task; they did not raise their hands during the two lessons, but at the same time they were very calm and quiet. Their attendance was physical more than mental. I realised from the teacher's interview that these students had learning difficulties and they needed special attention from the teacher.

High Expectations

The teacher expected the students to answer most of her questions and understand the lesson's goals. The majority of students participated in challenging tasks to prove that they were able to do quality work. The teacher, in the Arabic lesson, expected the students to be able to understand and demonstrate knowledge in regards to recognizing, identifying and distinguishing letters in different words. She encouraged the students and acknowledged their efforts. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher expected the students to be able to demonstrate understanding and resolve mathematical issues. The students tried hard despite the fact that they did not sometimes demonstrate an understanding of some aspects of the lesson. For example, in both lessons the teacher asked students to come to the chalkboard to write the correct answer to specific questions. Most of the students responded positively to these challenges.

Social Support

The social interaction between the teacher and the students was conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The teacher encouraged students to participate and try their best regardless of whether their answers were wrong or right. The teacher gave positive feedback (e.g. that is good answer but needs more clarification) to all the students who tried to answer questions by asking other students to applaud them if they were correct, and corrected their answers if they were wrong without belittlement or put-downs. One student, when asked to answer a mathematical question, was unable to do so. At the same time other students were raising their hands and asking the teacher to let them answer the question. She told the class: 'Please let him try', and helped him answer the question. Students were also helping each other to learn, trying hard to resolve learning tasks in an atmosphere of mutual respect and warmth.

Students' Self-Regulation

Most of the students during the two lessons demonstrated autonomy and initiative in regulating their behaviour and there was very little disruption to the lessons. The teacher commented on or corrected students' behaviour about three times during the two lessons. Most of the students were focused and engaged with the teacher in the learning tasks, despite the classroom being overcrowded. Most of the students opened their textbooks and kept up with the teacher without the teacher wasting any time disciplining the students.

Student Direction

The structure of the lessons and the activities were determined, designated and dominated by the teacher. There was no evidence of student self-direction in the two lessons. The teacher chose the way the learning activities were conducted. The timeframe for the lessons and the assessment tasks was dominated by the teacher, the students having no choice in this area.

Significance

Background Knowledge

The teacher made several references to the students' prior knowledge. For example, in the Arabic language lesson, the class discussed distances between some Jordanian cities. In another example the teacher asked the students: 'who had asked his grandfather about the ancient historic places and the battles in ancient Islamic history and the kinds of weapons used in such battles?'. 'Who had ever been to Mu'tah University?' One student who answered that he had been there was asked: to 'Please tell us about it'. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher gave examples using the classrooms' rows of seats and desks.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons as all students were from hemogenous cultural backgrounds.

Knowledge Integration

The teacher made meaningful connections between subject areas. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher connected the knowledge of geography with the concepts of the lesson when she explained the location of Al-karak city and the distance between Amman and

that city. In the mathematics lesson, some minor or trivial connections were made. Knowledge was mostly restricted to the topic.

Inclusivity

Students from all groups were included in most aspects of the two lessons. Two students excluded themselves from the majority of the two lessons' activities. These students had learning difficulties and the teacher did not ask or give them any tasks or opportunity during the two lessons. The teacher treated the girls and boys equally during the two lessons, although the girls sometimes felt too shy to participate in the classroom activities.

Connectedness

The students and the teacher tried to connect what was being learned to the real world beyond the classroom, but the connection was superficial. For example, the teacher tried to connect what the students learned in the Arabic lesson with what they were going to do when they go on a trip or journey. That was the only connection made in either lesson and was not related to the core of the language lesson.

Narrative

Narrative was used for a sustained portion of the Arabic lesson to enhance the significance of the substance of the lesson. For example, in the Arabic language lesson, the teacher explained and illustrated the reading by giving the 'Hiteen Battle' as an example. The teacher mentioned some of the names of the leaders who were involved in that battle. In the mathematics lesson, narrative was not used.

Maha

Teaching Context

Maha had 12 years experience in teaching at the time of the research. Maha teaches at large secondary school for girls in the most crowded suburb of Amman. The school has a total of 773 students, from the first grade up to the last year of school education. There were 41 classroom teachers and six administrative staff. The school also has a childcare centre for the teachers' children. Maha's classroom consisted of twenty-five female students in grade three. The students came from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. This school is a part of the Jordanian government school system, and has been recently established. The building consists of four floors, surrounded by a high wall, houses and

high buildings. This school consists of 30 rooms: 22 rooms are classrooms and the other 8 rooms are for staff and school administration. Maha's classroom was observed on 16 February 2005. The class was located on the third floor of the school building, next to the internal stairs of the school. The room was rectangular with windows from roof to waist height covering the wall opposite the door. The windows look out over the school's rear quadrangle and the adjoining neighbourhood. The teacher's desk was at the rear of the room facing the chalkboard. A cupboard containing books and students' work were located in the back of the room. Next to the chalkboard, there was a reinforcement board, which hold different types reinforcing materials, such as stickers, gifts and sweets. The room opened off a large corridor. The 25 students, were nine years old, and seated at six circular tables. The students appeared to be a generally good natured and harmonious group. Most of the students made interjections, comments and contributions to the lesson and were significantly engaged with their teacher. It was clear that this teacher was not teaching for career or monetary reasons. Maha told the researcher, and this was confirmed by other staff members, that she teaches because she likes her students and treats them like her own children. She always tells the students: 'I teach you because I want God to send me to Heaven'. In the classroom there were two students with learning difficulties and they withdrew from the class to spend a short time with a specialist teacher.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Maha was observed over two lessons; Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6 3.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

Most of the content knowledge of the two lessons had depth. Sustained focus on the central ideas was occasionally interrupted by superficial or unrelated ideas or concepts. For example, in the mathematics lesson, knowledge of the multiplication of one hundred was treated in an in-depth way during the lesson. Despite this a few students did not understand, as they were confused between multiplication and addition, especially for complex numbers. For the Arabic language lesson, the concepts and ideas, about distinguishing, recognizing and contrasting between the past and present verbs, were clearer. The students and the teacher gave examples and kept connecting the major ideas and concepts during the lesson.

Table 6.3: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Maha*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	4	4
Deep Understanding	4	3
Problematic Knowledge	1	1
Higher-Order Thinking	4	4
Metalanguage	3	2
Substantive Communication	4	4
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	4	4
Engagement	3	3
High Expectation	3	3
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	3	3
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	3	3
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	2	2
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	3	2
Narrative	2	1

Deep Understanding

Students demonstrated uneven understanding of the relationship between and among the lesson ideas in the mathematics lesson. Some students were confused about the multiplication and addition of hundreds when the teacher tried to explain that 100+100+100+100 = 400 is the same as 100 × 4 = 400. Some students demonstrated a deep understanding of the multiplication process in this lesson by giving their own examples and solved problems and puzzles such as 'I am a number; if you multiplied me by 100 the answer will be 500, so what I am?' The students answered: 'I am number 5'. In the Arabic language lesson the students demonstrated in-depth understanding throughout the lesson. Most of the students explored the relationship between the past and present tenses of different verbs. The teacher asked the students to give examples of the past and the present verbs of some words; 'visited and visiting', 'opened and opening', 'clapped and clapping'. Furthermore, the teacher asked the students to complete some sentences with the suitable verb in the space; by answering correctly the students demonstrated their grasp of the central ideas and concepts.

Problematic Knowledge

Problematic knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons, as the teacher presented the content as facts, not open to questions.

Higher-Order Thinking

There were some questions and activities in which most students demonstrated higher-order thinking in the two lessons. The students were asked to give examples to answers. In the mathematics lesson some students were asked to 'Show the class how you answered this question' and 'Can you analyse the steps that you followed?' In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher and the students analysed words and their meanings; the students were asked questions such as: 'What will happened if we put this word in sentences'? 'Does the meaning change'? 'What is the right word for this sentence and why'? Furthermore, the students were able to give multiple meanings for one word and rewrote it in different forms. The students compared and contrasted some sentences and the different meanings of some words. Another example was the teacher asking students to think about two sentences, using the word 'visited' in the first sentence and 'visiting' in the second. However, some students in some parts of the lessons were involved in lower-order thinking, since the teacher asked closed questions for them so that they could be answered by 'Yes' and/or 'No'.

Metalanguage

Some use of metalanguage was demonstrated in both lessons, especially in the Arabic language lesson. In the mathematics lesson, the metalanguage use was low. There was no clarification or assistance provided regarding the language. For example, in the Arabic language lesson, the teacher explained the meaning of the past and present tense of verbs? ; What we mean by the word 'martyrdom'? On the other hand, in the mathematics lesson, the teacher did not stop to comment on or explain the meaning of the phrase 'multiplication of hundred' and 'addition of equal numbers'.

Substantive Communication

Substantive communication among students and/or the teacher and students occurred sometimes. Students were asked to engage in activities, requiring substantive communication among students, and sometimes between the teacher and the students, both in oral and written forms. Examples include: 'Attention everyone, some students are having difficulties in answering this question; give them some solutions/help', and 'How did you answer this question?' and 'Let's see how Marwah resolved this question'. The teacher asked the student Marwah to come to the chalkboard and show the other students. In the Arabic language lesson the teacher asked one student to do an activity, such as opening the door, and then explain what she did. The other students were asked to comment on what the girl did, that is, to explain the tense of that action 'opening' the door and 'opened' the door". The communication between the teacher and the students, and between and among the students, based on the substance of the lesson and the interaction, was reciprocal and sustained during the two lessons.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

Detailed criteria regarding the quality of work were made explicit and reinforced during the lessons and the students examined the quality of their work in relation to these criteria. For example, the teacher asked the students to write on their sheets of paper the answers to several questions and said: 'I will give the student who finishes their task correctly an extra 10 marks'. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher told the students: 'I expect you to get the right answer to the following question: '500 is the production of which two numbers? In another example, in the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked the students to answer

the questions in the textbook. While they did this, she walked around the tables and corrected the students' answers, reinforcing the correct answers.

Engagement

Most of the time, the students, working in small groups, were on task, worked hard and showed enthusiasm for the work. There were parts of the lessons, however, when some students appeared indifferent and inattentive. Some students were sometimes clearly off-task, talking with friends while the teacher was observing other groups. The teacher had to occasionally ask the students to pay attention to specific tasks. Some students demonstrated disciplined engagement more than mental engagement.

High Expectations

Some students participated in challenged tasks during at least half of the lesson. They were encouraged to try hard and take risks and were recognized for doing that. The teacher asked some students to try answering some questions on the chalkboard and she acknowledged their work. In the mathematics lesson, one student gave an incorrect answer; the teacher asked her: 'What is the right answer'? The student paused and other students started raising their hands to answer the question. The teacher told the class: 'Please put your hands down, she can work out the answer and we will try to do so, on the chalkboard'. After the student had answered the question, the teacher asked the other students to applaud her. The students responded positively when asked, in the Arabic lesson, to come forward to the chalkboard and to complete some sentences using the 'correct' word.

Social Support

Classroom support was positive, the teacher making strong affirmative statements to the students' responses. Student to student support was noted, when the groups of the students were answering questions with support by the teacher. The teacher gave feedback to all the students and treated them with respect. Students appeared to be confident when the teacher asked them to try to answer some questions, and during the two lessons she tried to help all her students, especially those who had difficulties in mathematics tasks.

Students' Self-Regulation

Most of the students demonstrated autonomy and initiative in regulating their own behaviour and the lesson proceeded as planned. However, during the two lessons, the teacher needed to control behaviour several times, making statements about behaviour to

the whole class. For example, some students disrupted the class by raising their hands and simultaneously called out and some of them were talking with their friends at the same table. When asking the students to answer questions, the teacher stated: 'No, I'll only ask those students who are disciplined and sitting down quietly'. The teacher was democratic, tolerant, lenient and kind toward her students. She said in the interview that she had never been indifferent to any of them; 'They misbehave sometimes but I can manage their behaviour at any time'. The teachers considered that as good action by controlling students and not allow them to control their own behaviours (see chapter eight)

Student Direction

The teacher directed the lesson in terms of, choice, time and criteria, but the students had some choice with pace, taking time to complete their work. She advised the students: "Don't write the answers faster than I do, let's keep pace with each other." In general, the structure and the lessons' activities were determined by the teacher, while some students made some decisions during the group activities.

Significance

Background Knowledge

There was some connection to the students' out-of-school background knowledge and this was connected to the substance of the lesson. For example, the teacher asked the students: 'How many cents are there in one Dinar (Jordan currency)?' and she showed them a Jordanian Dinar (JD) note. Another example from the Arabic language lesson: the teacher asked the students if they knew any names of people who had died as 'martyrs'. The students gave some names they had learnt from their parents.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons.

Knowledge Integration

Some minor or trivial connections were made. In mathematics the teacher connected the students' knowledge of adding with the lessons' concepts to enhance the students understanding of the main idea of the lesson. Knowledge was mostly restricted to that of multiplication in mathematics and the past and present forms of verbs in the Arabic language lesson.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were included and valued equally in the two lessons. Some students had difficulties in mathematics and writing; the teacher treated them equally and included them in the classroom activities. She gave them the opportunity to have a go at doing work on the board in front of the other students with encouragement from both the teacher and the other students.

Connectedness

The teacher and the students tried to connect what was being learned to the world beyond the classroom, but there were only two examples of this and these at superficial level. When the teacher asked the students 'How many cents in one Jordanian Dinar?', this was meant to be connect what was being learned to the world beyond the school in terms of buying and selling. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked one student to play the role of a new student and the other students those welcoming her to the class.

Narrative

Narrative was used as a minor part of the Arabic language lesson in relation to a new girl joining the class and the way in which she should be treated. The teacher asked one student to act as the new student and she observed how the students responded.

Jamal

Teaching Context

Jamal had 21 years experience in teaching at the time of the research. Jamal Basic School is a medium-sized old school located in one of the busiest and most crowded suburbs in Amman. The school has a total of 482 students with 20 teachers. It is located on the corner of two streets close to busy traffic lights; the students cannot even cross the street without help from their teachers. The building was built below street level and is protected by a high concrete wall designed to protect the school and students from the nearby traffic. In the middle of this small campus was a small dried garden. The students come from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The school is part of the government education system. The observation took place in a classroom located at the end of a corridor, passing a number of other classrooms. The classroom consisted of 25 male students at grade one. This class was located on the second floor of the two-storey building. The ground floor consisted of two rooms; one of them was a storage room for books and another was a

stockroom. There were 16 classrooms in the building. The room was small and the students in this class of 25 students were six years old. The students were divided into five groups on five circular tables. The room was roughly square, with windows at the back of the classroom facing the door and looking out over school quadrangle and playing fields. The teacher's desk was at the back of the classroom. In the room was a chalkboard; next to the chalkboard was a small cupboard, which was fixed to the wall and contained reading and writing materials. Posters and charts covered the internal walls. The class had four students with learning difficulties. The students in the class were very active and demonstrated a high level of contribution and engagement with their teacher.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Jamal was observed over two lessons, Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.4.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

Knowledge was deep because focus was sustained on key ideas or concepts throughout the two lessons. In the mathematics lesson, the main concept was 'the numbers 10 – 19'; the teacher wanted the students to recognize those digits and be able to count from 10 –19. Throughout the lesson, the teacher was constantly connecting the main ideas and concepts of counting from 10 –19. The teacher explained the ideas and concept of the lesson, presenting them in several different ways. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher read the lesson in different ways; words' cards, chalkboard, and the textbook. After that he asked the students to read and to distinguish specific words from the sentences of the lesson. The teacher stopped many times as the students read to explain the spelling of some words.

Deep Understanding

There was evidence of deep understanding of the ideas and concepts of the two lessons. In the mathematics lesson, for example, in response to the question 'Who can count from 10 to 19?', most of the students were able to count and analyse the numbers and distinguished the tens' place and units' place. In the Arabic language lesson, most of the students were able to identify some words in the sentences and were able to spell complex words. The teacher also asked some students to match sentences with their respective pictures; most of the students were able to do so.

Table 6.4: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Jamal*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	4	4
Deep Understanding	4	3
Problematic Knowledge	1	1
Higher-Order Thinking	3	3
Metalanguage	2	3
Substantive Communication	4	4
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	3	1
Engagement	3	3
High Expectation	3	3
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	2	2
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	3	2
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	2	2
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	2	2
Narrative	2	1

Problematic Knowledge

All knowledge was presented as fact and not opened to questions. The teacher presented the facts to the students only and he neither discussed them nor allowed the students to discuss them. This work was neither open to questions nor contextualised. For example, the teacher presented the Arabic sentences in the textbook as fixed facts.

Higher-Order Thinking

Most of the students demonstrated higher-order thinking several times during the lessons. The teacher used open-ended and probing questions, asking the students: 'I am number 4, what is the number that is bigger than me by two digits'?; 'I am number 5, what is the number that is smaller than me by two digits'? And, 'Tell me how you answered this question'? The teacher asked the students to count the distance between the numbers by using the ruler. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked the students to synthesize some sentences and match them with suitable pictures.

Metalanguage

There was some use of metalanguage in the two lessons. There was some discussion of the terminology of the numbers' positions. For example, in the mathematics lesson, the teacher tried to explain the different between the 'tens' place' and the 'units place'.

Substantive Communication

Substantive communication with sustained interactions between the teacher and students occurred throughout the two lessons. In the mathematics lesson, as the teacher was explaining counting from 10 – 19, he discussed and focused on the substance of the lesson. In the Arabic language lesson, substantive communication occurred between the teacher and the students as the teacher read sentences with the students. Another example was, reciprocal interaction, when the teacher asked some students to identify the words 'house', 'came', 'new' in the sentences and discussed the meanings of these words with the students .

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

Detailed criteria regarding the quality of work were made explicit during the Arabic language lesson. For example, the students and the teacher answered the questions and

tasks in the textbook; the teacher told the students: 'I expect you to reorganise the story's sentences so that they give meaning to the – "helping our neighbours"'. In the mathematics lesson, however, there was no evidence that the students and the teacher were using specific criteria to examine the quality of their work. During the lesson the teacher asked questions, sometimes the answers were correct and at other times incorrect; while the teacher gave students feedback, they had no means to measure the quality of their work.

Engagement

Most of the students were on task, worked effectively in small groups, and were actively engaged in and attentive to most of the teacher exposition. Students were enthusiastic to answer questions asked by the teacher and most of them raised their hands and were eager to be asked to come to the chalkboard and write their answers. There were parts of the two lessons, however, when some students appeared indifferent and inattentive. Two incidents occurred in the classroom – one student was harassing his friend, hitting him with his belt and another student was writing something unrelated to the lesson subject in his textbook.

High Expectations

Most of the students participated in challenging tasks during the two lessons. They were encouraged explicitly to try hard and to take risks and were recognized for doing so. In the mathematics lesson, most of the students were asked to come forward to the chalkboard and answer some questions. The teacher asked one student to do so but the student was unable to answer the question and other students started to raise their hands to answer instead. The teacher, however, asked them to put down their hands and said: 'He can answer it'. He said to the student 'Let's try to answer this together'. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked the students to put the right sentence in the right place on the chalkboard and match it with its respective picture.

Social Support

The teacher gave strong positive support to the students. He encouraged one student to try hard to answer one of the mathematics questions, after the student answered, the teacher asked the other students to applaud him. The teacher in many cases demonstrated his special relationship with his students; he said: 'I'm now angry with you because you are so noisy, I don't want my children to be like this'. He considered the students as his children. The students also demonstrated support for each other during the teaching and learning activities. The teacher was always saying, 'Anyone who doesn't understand some thing

should let me know, I will help h m'. At the end of each lesson, the teacher asked the students to applaud themselves bec: use they did well in that lesson's activities.

Students' Self-Regulation

Some students demonstrated autonomy and initiative in regulating their own behaviour, but there were frequent interruptions to the lessons relating to discipline or regulations. In the two lessons, the teacher had to cc ntrol some students (see the two examples given in 'Engagement') and it took time to p it those students back on track.

Student Direction

In both lessons the teacher directed the flow, pace and content of the lessons. The students had no choice over their activities and their time, all of which was programmed and determined by the teacher and only the teacher. The teacher did not allow the students to select their learning activities.

Significance

Background Knowledge

Students' background knowledge w: s mentioned or elicited briefly; it was connected to the substance of the lesson. In the Arabic lesson, the teacher focused on helping our neighbours and asked the students in which way 'we can help them'. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher did not use the students' background knowledge in teaching counting from 10 – 19. The students used their background knowledge intuitively but it was not promoted and planned by the teacher. They knew how to count from 10 – 19 from their own experience, from their families and the community in which they live.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons.

Knowledge Integration

Knowledge was mostly restricted to that of specific topics. However, some minor or trivial connections were made. For example, the language lesson linked to the sentences with pictures. Little knowledge about how to design pockets in the cardboard was given. Social science and language was through the theme of 'helping our neighbours'.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were encouraged to participate and appeared to be involved in all aspects of the lessons. One of the students came from a different background to the classroom members, but he was treated well, participated in the classroom activities and was treated with respected by his teacher and the other students. The teacher expressed concern about a student who was absent; the other students told the teacher that the student he was ill.

Connectedness

The connection between what was being learnt and the world beyond the classroom was superficial. There were some attempts, such as the teacher using the rule and how to count from 10 – 19 to connect to the real world beyond the classroom. The teacher, in the Arabic language lesson, connected social skills with the concepts of the lesson by talking about how we can help our neighbours.

Narrative

Narrative was part of the Arabic language lesson as the topic of the lesson was 'helping our neighbours' and it was in the syllabus not initiated by the teacher. Narrative was not used in the mathematics lesson.

Samar and Sharefah

The School Context

On 22 March 2005 at 7 am the researcher started his day by going to Samar Basic School. This school is located on the top of the West Amman Mountains, in one of the Wadi Seer western suburbs. The area is regarded as the best in West Amman because of its location. It looks out over the west bank and Israel and the Dead Sea. It is a very clean and quiet area. The indigenous people who live there are from one of the largest tribes in Jordan; they mostly live in the West Amman Mountains and other nearby cities and towns. These tribes' people have olive farms and every family owns their property. The school has two separate buildings. The main building consists of eight rooms, six classrooms, one room for the principal and one for the staff. The school has a total of 174 students with 14 teachers, including Samar and Sharefah. The observation of Samar and Sharefah's classes took place in a separate building, consisting of three rooms. This building was about two kilometres from the main building where the principal's office was located. The grades, from first to third, have one of these rooms each. The three teachers who teach these three

grades were all recommended as effective teachers. The teacher teaching third grade declined to take part in the research project, and her room was the first room built in this school. The other two rooms in which Samar and Sharefah teach (first and second grade respectively) were built next to each other in the same size and design. These two rooms open off the quadrangle and a playing field built of concrete. A wall of concrete from the north side surrounds the three rooms. In the corner of this concrete yard, there was a small toilet. Alongside Sharefah's classroom door, there were three drinking-water taps for the students. Samar's class consisted of 32 male and female students in grade one and Sharefah's class 25 male and female students in grade two. The description of the two classrooms will be presented in the following section.

Samar

Teaching Context

Samar had 13 years experience in teaching at the time of this research. The room, in which all Samar's lessons took place, opened off a concrete playing yard directly opposite the classroom door. The room was roughly square, with windows across the side facing the door. At the front of the room was a chalkboard flanked by a cupboard containing books, reading and writing materials and materials for the teacher and the students. Beside the chalkboard was a first aid kit. The students' desks were arranged in three blocks facing the chalkboard at the front of the room and these blocks were divided walking space. Each block consisted of four desks, most desks seating three students and some desks two. Next to the cupboard was a barrel of kerosene for the heater, which was located in the corner opposite the door. Next to the heater was a stove for making tea and coffee. These were present in the classroom because the teachers have no other place for them. The ceiling of this room was corroded and anyone entering the room would see the corroded iron bars. The teachers had written to the MOE about the situation on several occasions, but so far nothing had been done. Nevertheless, the three teachers and their students were happy. Samar's class had 32 students; all six years old, with more girls than boys. The students were full of life – happy and active most of the time. They seemed to have the feeling that they had been given the freedom to contribute to the lessons and were engaged with their teacher. Samar indicated she knew them, their parents and their circumstances well. She liked teaching them despite the poor conditions of the classroom. Samar herself was from the same area and the same tribe. There were two students with learning difficulties her class and Samar helped them with their reading and writing in her spare time. The students

saw their class as being part of their homes, some of the students calling their teacher 'mum' doing what she asked of them with enthusiasm.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Samar was observed over two lessons; Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.5.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

In the Arabic language lesson, there was sustained focus on the significant language concepts for reading and writing and all activities and questions related to that central idea. During the lesson the teacher asked most of the students to read and write (with correct spelling) all the topic words. Another goal of the lesson was about conversation; the teacher explained each sentence and commented on it so that the students' used prior knowledge as well as acquiring new knowledge. In the mathematics lesson, the topic was about the 'numbers 1 – 39'. The knowledge was treated unevenly during instruction. Significant ideas were addressed as part of the lesson, but in general the focus on key concepts and ideas was not sustained throughout the lesson. The students and the teacher dealt with the ideas and the concepts of the topic superficially.

Deep Understanding

Most of the students demonstrated deep understanding of the concepts of the two lessons but more so in the Arabic language lesson than in mathematics. In the Arabic language lesson, the students explained the meaning of each sentence in the topic sufficiently well. For example, the teacher asked: 'Why do sheep eat grass?', to which the students answered: 'To grow up'. In another example, the teacher asked the students to provide a sentence with the same meaning as the sentence, 'The lamb drinks milk'; one of the answers was 'The baby drinks milk'. Most of the students in the class were able to identify and write all of the words included in the topic. In the mathematics lesson, some students were able to count the numbers from 1 to 39 and write down the numbers in sequence. Some students were able to pick up specific numbers when the teacher asked them.

Table 6.5: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Samar*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	4	3
Deep Understanding	4	3
Problematic Knowledge	3	1
Higher-Order Thinking	4	2
Metalanguage	3	2
Substantive Communication	4	3
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	1	1
Engagement	4	4
High Expectation	4	4
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	2	2
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	4	2
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	4	2
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	4	3
Narrative	4	1

Problematic Knowledge

In the Arabic lesson, knowledge was seen as socially constructed and some perspectives were presented and questioned through their basic assumptions. For example, one topic sentence was: 'The dog is guarding the sheep'. The teacher asked 'Why doesn't the dog eat the sheep?', to which the students answered: 'Because he grew up with them'. In another example, the teacher asked: 'Why should we drink milk?'. The students answered: 'To grow up and to keep our teeth and bones strong'. On other hand, in the mathematics lesson, all knowledge was presented as a fixed body of facts not open to questioning.

Higher-Order Thinking

In the Arabic language lesson, most of the students demonstrated higher-order thinking. The students generalised some ideas and concepts of the lesson to other examples, such as 'Not all dogs are wild', and 'So we should drink milk regularly, especially children'. The students explained the benefits of having sheep, such as sheep can produce milk to drink, wool to make clothes, meat to eat, and the sheep's waste can be used as fertilizer for the land. Moreover, the teacher asked: 'What products can we produce from the milk?'. The students answered: 'Butter, yoghurt and cheese'. In the mathematics lesson, the students mainly demonstrated routine lower-order thinking, but at some points, some students demonstrated higher-order thinking as a minor diversion within the lesson.

Metalanguage

There was some use of metalanguage at different stages in the two lessons. For example, in the Arabic language lesson the teacher explained the difference between the 'wheat is grass and wheat is also crop'. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher explained the meaning place value of numbers, example one in ten and in hundred.

Substantive Communication

Substantive communication, with sustained interaction, occurred over most of the two lessons, especially in the Arabic language lesson. For example, the teacher and the students discussed the benefits of sheep and dogs with the teacher listening to the students, the students asking each other and then answering under the supervision of the teacher. Their interactions and communication focused on the substance of the lesson. In the mathematics lesson, there was communication between the teacher and the students and among the students but it occurred briefly and was interrupted by some of the students.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

Quality criteria for the students' tasks were not made explicit.

Engagement

For most of the time, most of the students, during the two lessons, were on-task pursuing the substance of the lessons. Most seemed to be taking the work seriously and trying hard. They were enthusiastic to come up to the chalkboard and write answers to the teacher's questions. The teacher was alert to any interruptions or off-task actions by the students and kept encouraging the students to keep on-task.

High Expectations

In the Arabic language lesson, most of the students were engaged in challenging tasks in reading and writing. In the mathematics lesson, the students took risks to answer questions and wrote their answers on the chalkboard. The teacher encouraged all the students to participate, and targeted the students who did not raise their hands and encouraged them to write and read. The students were happy to be asked answer questions by the teacher.

Social Support

The teacher, during the two lessons, provided support and comments to all students. She helped them collectively and individually and reinforced their responses by sticking 'stars' on their foreheads and asking the other students to applaud them. The students were confident answering any question from the teacher. The teacher helped some students to overcome their mathematical difficulties.

Students' Self-Regulation

Some students demonstrated autonomy and initiative in regulating their own behaviour, but there were substantial interruptions to the lesson for disciplinary and regulatory matters. The teacher tried many times to calm down some students who were talking over the teacher and being noisy while they were raising their hands to answer questions. The teacher was tolerant and lenient with her students not controlling the students' behaviour harshly and strictly.

Student Direction

The teacher controlled the choice, time, pace and criteria. The structure of the two lessons and the activities were determined by the teacher and the students had no choice in the teaching and learning process. The teacher did not give the students any opportunity to select their learning activities in either mathematics or the Arabic language lesson.

Significance

Background Knowledge

The students' background knowledge was mentioned several times and connected to the substance of the lessons. In the Arabic lesson, the teacher built on the students' knowledge of the alphabet and their knowledge of farming (the students come from rural areas). The students were familiar with words such as 'shepherd', 'sheep' and 'lamb'. The teacher employed this knowledge to obtain new knowledge.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons.

Knowledge Integration

Several meaningful connections were made between subject areas by the teacher and students during the lessons. In the Arabic lesson, the teacher asked the students to count the sheep and other animals in the picture and connected that with the mathematics subject. Another example: the teacher gave examples from the science subject, such as 'grains' and she asked the students to provide examples of grains. She also differentiated between 'grass' and 'plants' and she reminded the students that they had this information from the science subject.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were included and valued equally in the lesson. The teacher gave both genders equal opportunity to participate in the classroom activities

Connectedness

In the Arabic language lesson, the connectedness was visible when the teacher focused on farming activities. Furthermore, the teacher and the students highlighted some of the usage of writing and reading skills to read the 'signs' in the street and other places. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher connected the knowledge of calculating and counting with

the real world beyond the classroom as she gave examples of how the students should count and calculate money. In another example, the teacher and the students explained the products from milk, such as butter, cheese, yoghurt. Further, they highlighted the benefits of the sheep for producing wool, meat, milk and manure as a fertilizer.

Narrative

Narrative was used during the Arabic lesson to enhance the significance of the substance of the lesson. The topic was a story of a shepherd and how he looked after his sheep with help from the dog; among the flock was a lamb drinking milk. This story included some words and sentences to be spelled and written by the students.

Sharefah

Teaching Context

Sharefah had 13 years experience in teaching at the time of this research. The room, in which the two lessons were observed, opened off a concrete playing yard directly opposite the classroom door. The room was roughly square, with windows across the side facing the door. At the front of the room was a chalkboard. The teacher's desk was in the front corner of the class; on the desk were some books and papers. The walls were full of posters and student's work. The students' desks were arranged in two blocks facing the front of the room and were divided by a walking space. Each block consisted of five desks, most desks seating three students and some desks seating two. In the front of the room there was a chalkboard. There were 25 students in this class, aged seven years old; there were more girls than boys. In the front of the classroom there were steps, which could be dangerous for the students when they walked to and from the classroom. The researcher visited this class on 27 February 2005. It was supposed to be on 22 February, the same date as Samar, but because Sharefa was busy she postponed the classroom observation. The class was very quiet with good contributions and engagement with the teacher and with less interruption. In Sharefah's class there were two students with learning difficulties and she helped them in her spare time, because this school has no resources room for students with learning difficulties.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Sharefah was observed over two lessons; Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.6: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Sharefa*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	4	4
Deep Understanding	4	4
Problematic Knowledge	2	1
Higher-Order Thinking	3	2
Metalanguage	3	3
Substantive Communication	2	2
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	3	3
Engagement	3	3
High Expectation	3	3
Social Support	3	3
Students' Self-Regulation	3	3
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	3	2
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	4	1
Inclusivity	3	3
Connectedness	4	3
Narrative	4	1

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

In the two lessons, the content knowledge of the lesson was deep. Sustained focus on central concepts or ideas was occasionally interrupted by superficial or unrelated ideas or concepts. For example, in the Arabic language lesson, the topic was about conversation and recognizing some words and letters; during the lesson the students and the teacher connected the main ideas and concepts with each other and they discussed the content of the lesson and how it was connected with the main ideas and concepts. At the beginning of the two lessons, the teacher reviewed the prior knowledge of the students as an introduction to the lesson. In the mathematics lessons she reviewed some numbers before she started to present new numbers and in the Arabic language lesson she reminded the students about letters they had learnt before starting to talk about the new letters.

Deep Understanding

Most students provided information, arguments and reasoning that demonstrated deep understanding for a substantial portion of the lessons. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked the students to provide examples using the word 'cooperation'. Most students understood the meaning and gave examples in their own words and from their own experiences. In the mathematics lesson, the students were keen to answer the teacher's questions, and were able to transfer the knowledge of place value for different numbers. In the Arabic language lesson, the students understood the ideas of the lesson, the teacher asking them several times about them. They were able to explain and connect these ideas. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher asked the students to subtract some numbers and the students were able to do that.

Problematic Knowledge

In the Arabic language lesson, some knowledge was treated as open to multiple perspectives. For example, the teacher asked: 'Why should we wash our hands and faces after playing sports?' In the mathematics lesson, the knowledge was presented only as fact and not opens to questions. In general, the teacher and the students learnt what was required in the syllabus.

Higher-Order Thinking

In the Arabic language lesson, the students were encouraged to provide examples from their own experience as illustrations of the generalisation of the concept of 'cooperation'. In the mathematics lesson the teacher asked the students to analyse the numbers' components (tens place or units place) and synthesize new numbers. However, in some parts of both lessons the students were involved in lower-order thinking.

Metalanguage

There was some usage of metalanguage, especially in the Arabic language lesson. For example, the teacher stopped and explained and asked the students to give examples of the words 'cooperation', 'colleague', 'lost', 'results', and the meaning of a 'question mark'. The nature of the Arabic language lesson encouraged the teacher and the students to make the element of metalanguage visible and a main feature of the lesson. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher used metalanguage a few times, such as explaining the meanings of 'subtraction', 'addition' and 'zero has no value'. Furthermore, the teacher mentioned the vertical and horizontal ways in answering mathematical questions, so she explained the meaning of 'vertical and horizontal'

Substantive communication

Substantive communication among the students and between the teacher and students occurred briefly. In the Arabic lesson the teacher and the students exchanged ideas about cooperation, for example, but generally most communication took the form of the teacher delivering information and asking routine questions and the students giving short answers.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher established explicit quality criteria by constantly modelling the correct spelling and pronunciation and encouraged the students to try again when their pronunciation and spelling were not the expected quality. She also asked some students to read from their textbooks correctly by referring them to the correct pronunciation and spelling. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher encouraged some students to try to resolve questions on the chalkboard and asked the other students to applaud them for their work. At the end of both lessons, she asked the students to answer some of exercises in their textbooks, and while the students were doing this, she walked around the desks correcting and reinforcing their answers.

Engagement

All the students were actively engaged for almost the entire two lessons. They were on-task throughout and seriously involved in pursuing the substance of the lessons. Some students seemed to be working but they were not really thinking about the work, that is, they did not really understand what was going on. From the observations, the students were very quiet because of the disciplinarian; the students were afraid to anger the teacher.

High Expectations

In both lessons students were expected to respond when asked. Some tasks were challenging, involving new letters (both spoken and written). For example, the teacher asked some students to come forward to the chalkboard and identify some letters and pronounce them in different words. Another example, in the mathematics lesson, the teacher asked some students to answer complex questions and write their answers on the chalkboard. Some students met these challenges and they accepted and responded positively to the challenges.

Social Support

Social support was neutral or mildly positive in both lessons. While no undermining behaviours were observed, supportive behaviour and comments were directed at those students most engaged in the lessons, rather than those students who were more reluctant.

Students' Self-Regulation

Most students, most of the time, demonstrated autonomy and initiative in regulating their own behaviour and there was very little interruption to the two lessons. A few times during the lessons, the teacher commented on and corrected students' behaviour and movements. For example, during the lessons, one student asked to go to the toilet and another one asked to go for a drink of water, in both cases the teacher said: 'No, you can go after the lesson'.

Student Direction

The students had no choice of the activities as the teacher controlled the time, pace and criteria of assessment. The content and the structure of the lessons were determined and presented by the teacher.

Significance

Background Knowledge

Students' background knowledge was mentioned and elicited several times and was connected to the substance of the lesson. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher connected the students' background knowledge regarding cooperation and asked them to tell their stories about that. One student told about helping her sister in writing. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher used a string to hang some numbers as a 'washing line'.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons.

Knowledge Integration

During the Arabic language lesson several meaningful connections and integrations were made between topics such as sports, health, social science, religion, trust and responsibilities. The topic of the lesson was cooperation, and the teacher integrated sports and health when she said: "When we play sports, what should we do when we finish?" The students replied: 'We wash our faces and hands'. In each aspect of the lesson, the teacher gave examples. Another example was when the teacher asked the students to provide examples from the Holy Qur'an that supported the concept of help and cooperation. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher and the students restricted the knowledge to that specific to the subject area.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were included and valued equally in the lesson. For example, the teacher gave both genders equal opportunity to participate in the classroom activities

Connectedness

Students recognized the importance of the classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom, in a way that can create personal meaning and highlight the significance of that knowledge. For example, the students learnt how to be cooperative and helpful in their communities. Furthermore, the students knew that learning to write and read was important for them to manage themselves in the new complex world. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher explained the importance of being able to calculate sums when buying and selling. Helping others in their community was dependant on literacy and numeracy. Some

students with illiterate parents, grandparents. and family friends, knew they would be able to help those people to manage their daily lives by using their new knowledge.

Narrative

Story telling was used at several points in the two lessons to enhance the significance of the substance of the lessons. For example, the teacher in the Arabic language lesson asked the students to tell their stories, from their own experiences, about cooperation. Moreover, the nature of the topic itself was about cooperation, as it was embodied in the story of a student in this class who lost his eraser; his friend in the class lent him his eraser and the teacher expressed approval with their actions in cooperating and helping each other. In the mathematics lesson, narrative was not used.

Mahmmoud

Teaching Context

Mahmmoud had 8 years teaching experience at the time of this research. Mahmmoud teaches in a small school in a small and old village. The demographic of this village is the same as another neighbouring school in which Samar's school is located. The village has a population of about 300, all from the same family or tribe. The story of this village and other villages in West Amman is that the people in the village have been living there for a long time and initially their land was not expensive. Since 1980 the price of this land has increased sharply with the land in demand because the climate is temperate, the terrain is mountainous, it is close to the city and at the same time the initial population was low. Some wealthy families started building their 'palaces' close to this village, which overlooks the West Bank and the Jordan Valley. These high socio-economic newcomers have bought the area around the village. This new type of living, culture and civilization did not make any sense for the original people, and they protected their legacy and culture without any ill effects. Nevertheless, they became rich because they sold some of their land. It is important to remember though that the original inhabitants' way of life and way of thinking cannot be readily changed by such a new culture. The new residents do not send their children to the public schools, simply because they are wealthy and do not want their children to mix with the 'children from a low socio-economic background'. Consequently, this school accommodates the children of the village. The observation of Mahmmoud's teaching took place in the village school, which consists of seven rooms and seven teachers, a principal and a cleaner. The school has a total of 95 male students. All the

classrooms opened off an outside concrete quadrangle. This quadrangle was used as a car park for the teachers' cars. High walls surround the school. The classroom was located in the middle of the other classrooms and the class consisted of 13 male students in grade one. The room had one window, which looked out over the concrete school quadrangle. Opposite the door in the corner next to the chalkboard, was a cupboard containing books, papers and instruction materials for the teacher's use. The students' desk were arranged in two blocks facing the chalkboard and divided by a walking space. One block consisted of three long desks, each seating three students and the other block consisted of two desks, each seating two students. The room was very small, but the students and the teacher were very happy and enjoyed being there. The class had one student with learning difficulties. The teacher informed the researcher that he was happy with his class and liked his students. Because he had such a small number of students, the teacher managed to give extra time helping the student with learning difficulties.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Mahmmoud was observed over two lessons; Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.7.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

During the two lessons, the teacher focused on the central ideas and concepts. In the Arabic language lesson, the ideas were to explain the concept of 'The mum's products'. The teacher and the students read and wrote the sentences and explored the meaning of each sentence and pictures. The teacher, during the lesson, focused on the central ideas and concepts by discussing the content of each picture and connecting them with their respective sentence. After that the teacher asked the students to read the sentence, helped them to identify some words from the sentence, explained their meaning, and asked the students to read the words. The teacher reviewed students' prior knowledge by asking them some questions about the uses of soap and olive oil. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher and the students focused on the concepts and the ideas of the lesson by exploring the numbers 20 to 39. The teacher connected the lesson's concepts by explaining the value of the tens place and the units place He asked the students to come to the chalkboard to recognize, write and read numbers. He started reviewing the students' prior knowledge when he asked them to count the numbers from 1 to 19. However, from the observation of

teacher and the students, I noted some ambiguous points in the synthesis of the concepts. The students were confused between some numbers such as 15 and 50 and the sequence of some numbers and the meaning of the tens and the units places.

Deep Understanding

There was evidence of deep understanding at some points in the two lessons. Nevertheless, the undertanding between the students was uneven, with only some students understanding the concepts. For example, in the Arabic language lesson, the concepts were clear to and understood by most of the students in conversation but not in recognizing some letters/words. In the mathematics lesson, some concepts, such as counting from 1 to 39, were understood by the students. Distinguishing between 'the tens place and units place' was not understood by all students.

Problematic Knowledge

Some knowledge was treated as open to multiple perspectives in the Arabic lesson, but in the mathematics lesson the knowledge was presented as facts and not open to any questions. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher and the students discussed the process of making soap from olive oil and why we need to wash our hands and faces by using soap?

Higher-Order Thinking

The teacher asked the students some probing questions to encourage them to connect and generalise some ideas from the lesson. For example, the teacher asked them: 'What would be the problem if we don't wash our hands and face?', and 'If my mother can make soap from olive oil, what can she make from wheat, roses, and fruit?' The teacher asked other questions: 'Which sense do we use when we taste juice?', 'What are the benefits of the roses?' In the mathematics lesson, the students demonstrated only lower-order thinking because they participated in routine practices. There were no activities that went beyond simple' rote learning'.

Metalanguage

Some use of metalanguage was evident in both lessons. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher explained and talked about the words 'fruits' and 'industrialization'. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher stopped and explained the meaning of the 'tens place and units place'. Further, he explained the meaning of 'bunch' in the context of the lesson, where each bunch consisted of ten straws.

Table 6.7: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Mahmmoud*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	4	4
Deep Understanding	3	3
Problematic Knowledge	3	1
Higher-Order Thinking	4	2
Metalanguage	3	3
Substantive Communication	4	3
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	3	3
Engagement	3	3
High Expectation	3	3
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	2	2
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	4	1
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	4	1
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	3	1
Narrative	3	1

Substantive Communication

Some substantive communication occurred at different parts of the two lessons, such as when the teacher and the students discussed the process of producing soap and juice, and sultanas from grapes. The students and the teacher were reading and writing the sentences cooperatively. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher and the students talked about the sequences of numbers and how they should write each number under its correct place (tens place or units place). However, in some parts of both lessons, the teacher gave information and asked routine questions, with the students giving very short answers and trying to second-guess the answers wanted by the teacher.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

In the Arabic language lesson, quality criteria were evident in the requirements of reading and writing words and pronouncing the lesson's words and sentences. The teacher used quality criteria by modelling the correct pronunciation and encouraged the students to try again when their reading and writing were not the expected standard. In the mathematics lesson, the teacher used explicit quality criteria when he asked the students to count correctly and write the numbers in their correct places under the tens and units columns. He also asked the students to answer questions in their textbooks. The teacher marked the students' answers and he reinforced the correct answers by asking the other students to applaud the students who answered correctly and giving feedback to the students who did not answer correctly.

Engagement

Most of the students were deeply engaged during some parts of both lessons, but during other parts a few students were off-task. Some students appeared to 'go through the motions' in the lesson because the teacher tried to engage them even if they did not understand the material. Some students talked to their peers about non-class matters. The teacher tried to keep control and asked the students to pay attention. Generally, most of the students showed sustained interest, attentiveness, enthusiasm for their work and helping each other.

High Expectations

Most of the students were challenged by the substance of the lesson, exploring their own experience and applying it to their new experience and knowledge. The teacher encouraged them to participate and think deeply about some concepts of the lessons. For example, the teacher constantly asked the students to pronounce, write and answer different questions. The teacher asked one student: 'Ahmad, would you like to tell us, how we can make oil from olives?' He asked another student; 'Mazin, can you tell us about the process of making bread from wheat?' In the mathematics lesson, the teacher asked the students how to analyse and refer some numbers to their respective tens and units' places. Most of the students met these challenges and responded positively to the requirements.

Social Support

Social support was clearly positive during the two lessons. The teacher tried to help the students to resolve any problems and commented positively on their answers. The teacher encouraged reluctant students to pronounce words, write them on the chalkboard, and asked their peers to applaud their efforts. In one instance, a student was unable to pronounce the word 'fruit'; the teacher helped him, asking the rest of the class to be quiet as he did so; he gave the student enough time until the student pronounced the world correctly. However, a few times I noted that some students mocked their peers for an incorrect answer or pronunciation; the teacher always stopped this and asked them to help instead.

Students' Self-Regulation

This teacher seemed to be lenient, easy and tolerant with his students. Because students were talking over him at times it would appear that they did not respect the interaction between themselves and the teacher. Their manner was not intentionally disrespectful, but more to do with not knowing the bounds of being in class. Teachers are not only expected to ensure teaching and learning but also to be educators and modifiers of children's behaviour (Carighead et al., 1981; McInerney & McInerney, 1994). This teacher, from the researcher's point of view, was not aware of that point. He taught academic skills but did not teach expected social behaviour. The teacher spent a significant amount of time in trying to control the behaviour of his students, until his patience ran out and he slapped two of his students on their faces. He acted in such way, not because he was aggressive or violent, but because he had established a pattern of behaviour in the class such that he could not control the students' behaviour when he wanted to teach. The teacher told the

researcher that most of the students in this class came from an orphanage and as orphans had been affected by the conditions and expectations in the orphanage.

Student Direction

The students had no choice in the classroom's activities, the teacher controlling the time, pace and criteria of assessment. The content and the structure of the lessons were determined and presented by the teacher.

Significance

Background Knowledge

Prior school and out-of-school knowledge were aspects of the lessons, especially the Arabic language lesson. Some students were asked to give examples of the kinds of juice they preferred to drink, the making of soap from olive oil, sultanas from the grapes, and how their mothers would arrange roses in vases to decorate the house. The students told stories from their own experiences with these things and the preferences of their parents. The teacher made the concepts and the ideas of the lesson clear to the students giving them examples from their daily life. In the mathematics lesson, the students' background knowledge was not mentioned or elicited.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of the two lessons.

Knowledge Integration

The teacher made meaningful connections between the topics and other subject areas during the two lessons. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher asked the students to count and add the roses in a picture. In this example, the teacher connected what the students already knew from mathematics with the Arabic language lesson to obtain new knowledge. Another example was when the teacher connected science with the Arabic language subject by asking the students: 'How many senses do we have?' and 'What kinds of fruits do you know?' In the mathematics lesson no meaningful connections were made. All the knowledge was restricted to that topic.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were included and valued in all aspects of the lessons. The significant number of students from the orphanage were included and valued and treated fairly in all aspects of the two lessons.

Connectedness

In the Arabic language lesson, the task was connected to the world outside the classroom, with the teacher and the students discussing the skills needed to get sultanas from grapes, juice from fruit and bread from wheat. All these skills are aspects of the students' daily life. In the mathematics lesson, the lesson had no clear connection to the real world. It was presented as fixed knowledge; neither the students nor the teacher offered any justification for the lesson.

Narrative

The topic, in the Arabic lesson, was about a story of a mother and how she could make different products from different resources. The sentences of the lesson were about the mother who could make sultanas from grapes, soap from olive oil, and juice from fruits. In the mathematics lesson, narrative was not used.

Nada

Teaching Context

Nada had 19 years experience in teaching at the time of this research. The school, in which Nada's teaching observation took place, is large and located in the most crowded suburb in the north of Amman. The school is part of the government education system. The school has a total of 1200 male and female students (girls more than boys) with 50 teachers. The students have diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, with the school lying between the University of Jordan in the east and poor suburbs in the north and west. The school has three floors with 29 classrooms, and is surrounded by a high wall to protect the children from the traffic, which is very close to the school. The first floor is an administration floor, consisting of eight rooms, for the principal, the principal's assistant, the education counsellor, teachers, the secretary, a kitchen, an assembly hall, a canteen and toilets. The classrooms are on the second and third floors. At the school entrance there is a guard's room. Nada's class was located on the second floor beside the internal stairs. The classroom was somewhat large or wide. Windows from the roof to waist height covered

the wall opposite the door. The classroom opened off a large corridor. The windows looked out over the school quadrangle and the neighbourhood houses. The teacher's desk was at the corner in front of the room. Seven circular tables were arranged in the middle of the room; there were 36 students, aged six years old in grade one. There were more girls than boys. A chalkboard was in the front of the room. Beside the chalkboard was a small cupboard containing books, papers, and instruction materials used by the teacher. The class walls had some posters and students' works. The class had mixed abilities. Four of the students in this class appeared to have learning difficulties. There is no official diagnosis of learning difficulties until the second year and these students could not go to the resources room in the school, but from what the teacher had noticed, and when she was shown a list of characteristics of learning difficulties, she felt she had four students in this category.

Results of the Classroom Observation

Nada was observed over two lessons; Arabic language and mathematics. The coding of observations is presented in Table 6.3.

Intellectual Quality

Deep Knowledge

Most of the time, the teacher focused on the central concepts of counting by tens in the mathematics lesson and recognizing the letter 'N' in words and sentences in the Arabic language lesson. The teacher diversified her strategies in delivering the information. However, all the methods that the teacher used were connected to and sustained by the key ideas and concepts of the skills of reading, writing and counting by tens. The teacher connected the prior knowledge of the students with new knowledge by verifying their knowledge about letters and numbers.

Deep Understanding

Students demonstrated deep understanding answering different kinds of questions asked by the teacher; counting by tens, recognizing the letter 'N' among different letters, reading the lesson's sentences and giving sentences from their own experiences. However, the level of understanding was not even; some students confused the number 20 and 60 and it was hard for some students to recognize the letter 'N' when it was written in different positions in some words. In general, most of the students provided information and reasoning that demonstrated their deep understanding.

Table 6.8: *Classroom Teaching Practices: Nada*

Intellectual Quality		
Element	Scores: 1 – 5, 5 being most evident	
	Arabic Language Lesson	Mathematics Lesson
Deep Knowledge	3	3
Deep Understanding	4	3
Problematic Knowledge	1	1
Higher-Order Thinking	3	2
Metalanguage	3	3
Substantive Communication	3	3
Quality Learning Environment		
Explicit Quality Criteria	4	4
Engagement	3	3
High Expectation	3	3
Social Support	4	4
Students' Self-Regulation	3	3
Student Direction	1	1
Significance		
Background Knowledge	4	2
Cultural Knowledge	1	1
Knowledge Integration	2	2
Inclusivity	4	4
Connectedness	3	3
Narrative	2	1

Problematic Knowledge

In the Arabic language, the know edge was presented only as fact and not opened to questions. In the mathematics lesson, problematic knowledge was not a feature of the lesson.

Higher-Order Thinking

Some students demonstrated higher-order thinking when the teacher asked students to provide some words that included the letter 'N'. In the Arabic language lesson, the teacher wrote the letter 'N' in different parts of the words and asked the students to recognize the letter and use it in another word. As a result, some students manipulated the information and ideas in ways that allowed them to transform their understanding and apply it to recognize the letter 'N' and find new words with the letter. In the mathematics lesson, the students demonstrated lower-order thinking. They received specific knowledge and participated in routine activities; no activities went beyond simple rote learning.

Metalanguage

The nature of the Arabic language lesson encouraged the teacher and the students to use different words and to explain some words and symbols; the teacher asked some students to provide new words with the letter 'N' and explained the meaning of these words. In the mathematics lesson the teacher commented on terminologies such as the 'tens place' and the 'units place' in terms of their meanings and their applications in the mathematics context.

Substantive Communication

There was reciprocal interaction between the teacher and students during the two lessons. The teacher and the students discussed the use of the letter 'N' and the meaning of different words. The teacher gave students the opportunity to participate by asking them to give examples. She gave the students feedback and asked some students to teach each other and to discuss the uses and the pronunciations of some letters and words. Therefore, there was sustained interaction between the teacher and the students most of the time during the two lessons. However, in some parts of the lessons, the teacher gave information and asked routine questions. The students replied with short answers and tried to guess what the teacher wanted in the replies. There was no opportunity to process initiatives, respond and evaluate.

Quality Learning Environment

Explicit Quality Criteria

Quality criteria were evident at more that one stage of the two lessons. During the Arabic language lesson some students assessed the quality of their work using these criteria. For example, the teacher divided the students into equal mixed groups. She gave each group some words written down on paper, gave them sheets of paper and asked them to read the words and circle the letter 'N' in the words. She asked the students to write down in their sheets the letter in the word; at the beginning, the middle or the end of the word. The leader of each group was asked to read out the word and the letter, with reinforcement from the teacher at each stage. The teacher was modelling the correct pronunciation of the words and encouraging the students to try again. In the mathematics lesson the teacher asked one male student and one female student to come to the chalkboard where she drew a table and with two columns. Each column started with the number 20 and the two students were asked to fill the cells by tens, up to 60. She told the students that this was a competition between girls and boys. After the students completed their tasks, she went through the two sets of answers and discussed the answers with the class. Finally, she restated the corrected answers and gave feedback on the uncompleted answers.

Engagement

Most of the students, most of the time, were on-task pursing the substance of the lesson. Most of the students took their work seriously and tried hard when they worked in groups. They were keen to answer the questions asked by the teacher and they helped each other in the group work. However, some students were off-task some times. As an example, I observed two students at the back of the classroom were talking to each other but not about the lesson. Other students were punching each other. When the teacher noticed the students talking, she asked both to come forward. She asked them about the tasks in which the other students were engaged; they did not respond. The teacher said: 'See, you weren't able to answer because you were not paying attention; so you need pay attention to what we doing'.

High Expectations

Most of the students participated in the tasks during both lessons. The teacher encouraged most of the students to try hard. There were some instances where the teacher explicitly challenged students to increase their level of performance, for example, in the group work

recognizing the letter 'N' in the Arabic lesson. Also the teacher required each student to give examples of words containing the letter 'N', and to pronounce each word and letter correctly. In the mathematics lesson, two students were asked to come forward to the chalkboard and complete tables counting by tens. Most of the students accepted and met these challenges and responded to them positively.

Social Support

The teacher supported and praised her students during the two lessons. The students, also, supported each other by listening and responding to each other most of the time. The teacher tried to include the reluctant students and encourage them to be good participants in the classroom discussion and activities. The teacher commented on the students' answers and gave feedback to each student, and asked other students to applaud the work of their peers. The teacher awarded stars for good work.

Students' Self-Regulation

Many students demonstrated autonomy and regulated their own behaviour. Students worked with each other in groups without any interruptions to the lesson or need for the teacher to discipline the class. There were two incidents in the classroom: one student punched another student and another two students were talking about 'non-class' matters with each other; the teacher had to discipline these students. The teacher also needed to spend time disciplining the class, asking the students to sit down and raise their hands before answering any question. The researcher believe that these behaviours were part of the social context in which these children growing up. These issues will be discussed in more detail in the discussion chapter.

Student Direction

The students had no choice of the activities, with the teacher controlling the time, pace and criteria of assessment. The content and the structure of the two lessons were determined and presented by the teacher. Again, these issues will be detailed in the discussion chapter.

Significance

Background Knowledge

The teacher regularly drew on the students' prior knowledge of letters in the Arabic language lesson and of numbers in the mathematics lesson. In the Arabic lesson, the topic was about the 'Yoghurt factory' as the students had visited a factory before. The teacher

connected what the students knew already about the industrial process of making yoghurt with the sentences of the lesson. A so the teacher went over the letters the students knew and connected them with knowledge of the new letter 'N'. Furthermore, the teacher compared the shape of the letter 'N' (ن), in the Arabic language with a dish that has a stone in it.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge was not a feature of these lessons.

Knowledge of Integration

Some minor and trivial connections were made. For example, in the mathematics lesson, the teacher asked one student to jump while she counted by tens; each jump meant ten; the student jumped and counted by tens until she had jumped 9 times, which was 90. Also she compared the shape of number 4 with a dancing girl. The teacher made connection between the knowledge of sports with the knowledge of mathematics. However, the knowledge, most of the time, was restricted to the subject being taught.

Inclusivity

Students from all social groups were included and valued in all aspects of the two lessons. Only a few students had learning difficulties in mathematics, reading and writing; the teacher treated them fairly and asked them to participate in the class activities and encouraged them during the two lessons.

Connectedness

The teacher made connections to the world of literacy and numeracy. The teacher explained the importance of reading and writing and how to count to buy anything from a supermarket. For example, she asked the students to count beads, chickpea grains, rabbits and birds.

Narrative

Narrative was used on one occasion as a minor part of the Arabic language lesson, when the teacher told the story of the letter 'N' and how it was welcomed by the other letters.

Summary of Congruity Across the Seven Teachers

From a general examination of the teaching and learning practices, the following points can be concluded. First, the three main dimensions and the 18 elements of the model were congruent with teaching and learning practices in Jordanian primary schools, with scores mostly 3 and 4. Second, the dimension of quality learning environment and most of its elements were congruent with the teaching and learning practices more than the other two dimensions, with most scores 3 and 4. However, during Jamal's lessons, the dimensions of intellectual quality and quality learning environment and most of their elements were most congruent with the teaching and learning practices, more so than the dimension of significance. Some elements in the dimension of significance scored lower than the other dimensions (scores were between 1 and 2). Third, from the observations, it can be suggested that the applicability or congruence of the three dimensions were clearer in the Arabic language lessons more than the mathematics lessons, as the scores were higher in Arabic language lessons. Fourth, from close examination of the congruity of the elements across the three dimensions, it can be shown that the elements of student direction, cultural knowledge, problematic knowledge and narrative were either not evident or low during the 14 lessons. Nevertheless, during the two lessons of Jamal, the elements of problematic knowledge, student direction, cultural knowledge and narrative were not evident during the mathematics lesson and low in the Arabic language lesson. Further, during the observed lessons of Jamal, the element of students' self direction, knowledge integration and connectedness were scored lower than other elements. During Samar's two lessons, the elements of problematic knowledge, higher-order thinking, metalanguage, background knowledge and knowledge integration were more congruent in the Arabic language lesson, with scores mostly 4, than in the mathematics lesson with scores mostly 2. The element of student self regulation was low during the two lessons scoring 2 in both. During Sharefa's two lessons, there was significant unevenness in the scores between the Arabic language lesson and the mathematics lesson on the elements of problematic knowledge, knowledge integration, connectedness and narrative, the scores being 2 and 1, 4 and 1, 4 and 3, and 4 and 1 respectively. During Mahmmoud's two lessons, problematic knowledge, background knowledge, knowledge integration, connectedness and narrative scored significantly higher and were more evident during the Arabic language lesson than the mathematics lesson; scores were: 3 and 1, 4 and 1, 4 and 1, 3 and 1, and 3 and 1 respectively. Finally, the element of cultural knowledge was not a feature of any the 14 lessons. The congruity of the

three main dimensions and the 18 elements and of the NSWQT Model will be discussed in more detail in chapter eight.

Chapter Summary

This chapter is the second part of the results. It discussed the quality teaching and learning practices of seven primary school teachers in Jordan. The results in this chapter were derived from data from the field notes and the videotapes. This chapter started with a description of the teaching context of each teacher and then moved to the results of the classroom observations. The results were presented in tables displaying the 'agreed' scores of each element for each teacher over two lessons and then the significance of the observed element and its score were explained with examples. The next chapter presents the third section of the results which is the school stakeholders' perspectives of quality teaching.