

CHEATING BY STUDENTS IN ENGLISH TESTS
IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN THE UAE:
CHEATING TECHNIQUES AND TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSES

A THESIS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Presented to the Faculty of the American University of Sharjah

College of Arts and Sciences

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

by

Huda Al Jawabreh

B.A. 1994

Sharjah, UAE

December 2009

© 2009

HUDA AI JAWABRAH

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CHEATING BY STUDENTS IN ENGLISH TESTS
IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN THE UAE:
CHEATING TECHNIQUES AND TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSES

Huda Al Jawabrah, Candidate for the Master of Arts Degree
American University of Sharjah, 2009

ABSTRACT

Cheating has recently become an increasingly discussed problem in the field of academia. It is a common behavior of some students at schools, which concerns ESL/EFL teachers in educational settings. Cheating has developed into a great “science” for some students, and English teachers might be shocked to know how commonly it occurs in their classes without their knowledge. They would greatly benefit by knowing more about cheating which has a very destructive influence on students, therefore affecting their future.

Despite the rich research that has been done so far in this area, few studies have been done on cheating on ESL/EFL assessments, and particularly, little research has addressed the techniques that students use here in the United Arab Emirates in their English classes or their English teachers’ responses towards such dishonest actions.

This research investigated the techniques students used to cheat in English tests in some secondary schools in the UAE, and how EFL teachers in these schools responded towards such acts. Also addressed were the school administrators’ procedures taken against cheating students. The methods used were questionnaires, interviews and observations. Three questionnaires were distributed to 51 students, 16

EFL teachers and 17 school administrators. The students' questionnaire mainly focused on cheating techniques used by other students. In the teachers' questionnaire, the questions were about cheating techniques detected by teachers and how they tried to prevent them and respond to them when detected. The administrators' questionnaire investigated the procedures taken against this dishonest behavior. The on-site observations were of administration of some actual English tests at some secondary schools here in the Emirates. Student volunteers were interviewed about cheating techniques that they have observed and/or used, and some teachers were interviewed about the techniques that students used to cheat and how they would respond if such an action were to take place in their classrooms.

The findings showed many different techniques used by cheating students. Some of these techniques were technological such as I Pods, cell phones, wireless ear pieces, magic ink, etc. Others were unexpected like writing on body parts or using very inventive signals. The research also found more new procedures that teachers and administrators took to prevent and respond to cheating techniques. These findings would be useful for English teachers who might encounter cheating.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	1
Research Questions	3
Overview of the Chapters	4
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	5
High-stakes Language Assessment in TESOL	5
Validity and Reliability in English	7
Threats to Test Validity and Reliability in Language Assessment	9
Cheating in High-stakes English Tests	11
Consequences of Cheating	12
The Importance of Test Security	13
Electronic Techniques	13
Secure Test Administration.	14
Cheating Techniques	15
How Teachers Respond to Cheating	20
What Can Teachers Do to Prevent Cheating?	21
Reasons for Cheating	25

Students' and Administrators' Roles	26
3. METHODOLOGY	28
Purpose and Setting of the Study	28
Participants	28
Teachers	29
Students	29
Administrators	30
Data Collection	30
Teachers' Questionnaire	30
Students' Questionnaire	31
Administrators Questionnaire	32
Students' Interviews	33
Teachers' interviews	33
Observations	34
4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	35
Research Questions	35
Students' Questionnaire	36
Students' Interviews	42
Teachers' Questionnaire	48
Teachers' Interview	56
Classroom Observation	60
Administrators' Questionnaire	64

5. IMPLICATIONS	67
Research Question 1	67
Research Question 2	73
Research Question 3	74
Research Question 4	76
Usefulness of Such Research	77
Limitations	78
Suggestions for Further Research	79
REFERENCE LIST	81
Appendices	
A. Teachers' Questionnaire	85
B. Students' Questionnaire	87
C. Administrators' Questionnaire	89
D. Students' Interview Guidelines	91
E. Teachers' Interview Guidelines	92
F. Observation Checklist	93
G. Teachers' Questionnaire (Close-ended Questions)	94
H. Teachers' Questionnaire (Open-ended Questions)	95
I. Students' Questionnaire (Close-ended Questions).....	96
J. Students' Questionnaire (Open-ended Questions)	97
K. Administrators' Questionnaire	98
L. Teachers' Interviews (Open-ended Questions)	99
M. Teachers' Interviews (Close-ended Questions)	100

N. Students' Interviews (Open-ended Questions)	101
O. Students' Interviews (Close-ended Questions)	102
P. Classroom Observation (Grade 9 Boys)	103
Q. Classroom Observation (Grade 10 Girls)	104
R. Classroom Observation (Grade 10 Boys)	105

FIGURES

1. Students' Questionnaire QA1	37
2. Students' Questionnaire QA2	37
3. Students' Questionnaire QA3	37
4. Students' Questionnaire QA4	38
5. Students' Questionnaire QA5	38
6. Students' Questionnaire QD	39
7. Students' Questionnaire QE	39
8. Students' Interview Q4	45
9. Students' Interview Q5	45
10. Teachers' Questionnaire QA1	49
11. Teachers' Questionnaire QA2	49
12. Teachers' Questionnaire QA3	50
13. Teachers' Questionnaire QA4	50
14. Teachers' Questionnaire QA5	50
15. Teachers' Questionnaire QC	51
16. Teachers' Questionnaire QF	52
17. Teachers' Questionnaire QH	52
18. Teachers' Interview Q4	58
19. Teachers' Interview Q5	58

TABLES

1. Teachers' Profile (A)	29
2. Teachers' Profile (B)	29
3. Students' Profile	30
4. Students' Questionnaire QB	40
5. Students' Questionnaire QC	41
6. Students' Questionnaire QD	42
7. Students' Questionnaire QE	42
8. Students' Interview Q1	43
9. Students' Interview Q2	44
10. Students' Interview Q3	44
11. Students' Interview Q5	46
12. Students' Interview Q6	46
13. Students' Interview Q7	47
14. Students' Interview Q8	48
15. Teachers' Questionnaire QB	53
16. Teachers' Questionnaire QD.....	54
17. Teachers' Questionnaire QE.....	55
18. Teachers' Questionnaire QG	55
19. Teachers' Questionnaire QH.....	56
20. Teachers' Interview Q1.....	56
21. Teachers' Interview Q2.....	57
22. Teachers' Interview Q3.....	57

23. Teachers' Interview Q5.....	59
24. Teachers' Interview Q6.....	59
25. Teachers' Interview Q7.....	60
26. Teachers' Interview Q8.....	60
27. Classroom Observation Profile	61
28. Classroom Observation 9 th Grade (Boys) Invigilator Actions	62
29. Classroom Observation 9 th Grade (Boys) Student Actions	62
30. Classroom Observation 10 th Grade (Boys) Invigilator Actions.....	63
31. Classroom Observation 10 th Grade (Boys) Student Actions.....	63
32. Classroom Observation 10 th Grade (Girls) Invigilator Actions.....	63
33. Classroom Observation 10 th Grade (Girls) Student Actions.....	64
34. Administrators' Questionnaire QA	65
35. Administrators' Questionnaire QB	65
36. Administrators' Questionnaire QC	66

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would never have existed without the support of and insight of Dr. Betty Lanteigne. I am also very thankful to Dr. Rodney Tyson who taught me how to do research from the very beginning. I wish to express gratitude to Dr. Peter Crompton, my participants and my colleagues for their continuous help.

A special dedication is to you my husband Al Labadi; you stood by me all along the way. I'm really very grateful to you, my dear.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

In Egypt recently a big scandal was reported on BBC News (“Egypt School Exam Cheats Jailed,” 2008) causing outrage and prompting questions in the Egyptian Parliament because of Thanawiya English and Maths exams (the Egyptian equivalent of A-level exams or Standard Achievement Tests) being leaked, which spread among hundreds of thousands of students in the Minya district. The people accused of promoting cheating on these tests were sentenced from 3 to 15 years in jail, and the head of the examination committee was fired. A policeman and a school principal were also jailed for several years, and even parents who bought the exams were jailed for up to 10 years.

Cheating is a widespread dishonest behavior that occurs among students in different school settings, and this is a very serious problem faced by schools all over the world. A cheating student, if successful, gets higher grades than he/she deserves, so it is unfair to let such a problem go unaddressed. Cheating might also hinder competition, spread dishonesty in educational settings and reduce the efficiency of education of a whole country.

In particular, because of the high-stakes role of English tests in determining students’ future, especially for university admission or promotion of employees, the focus of this research will be on cheating in English tests rather than general classroom cheating. Cheating in English tests, especially in high-stakes ones, has a long-term effect on society by creating unqualified students who might not be able to make it at the university level, and unqualified people taking positions in different

fields all over the world. There is also an effect on non-cheating students who might be demotivated because of invalid scores and unreliable assessments.

It is quite probable that there are many cheating techniques of which English teachers may be unaware. Very likely students are cheating, especially in high-stakes English tests, because they want to get high grades by taking short cuts and not exerting enough effort to actually learn the course material. Fear and anxiety before tests might be other reasons for cheating. Parents might also be responsible for not helping their children to know that earning good grades is much better than getting excellent ones through cheating.

This research investigated the cheating techniques which ESL/EFL students in the UAE use while taking English tests, and hopefully will help English teachers overcome this challenging problem they face. This research also sought to discover more about the precautions that English teachers use to prevent cheating before a test is taken and also while it is being administered, as well as steps that administrators take to address cheating on English tests once identified. These observations might also help other English teachers to learn from their colleagues.

If cheating continues, it becomes a habit which spreads in school settings. It is unfair for both students who cheat when they get grades higher than they deserve and for those who study hard yet get lower grades compared to their classmates who cheat and then take the credit. If English teachers do not learn more about cheating techniques, tricks will be played on them by cheating students. English teachers who are unaware of cheating techniques may well be seen as naïve and easily deceived.

Since cheating has a very destructive influence on students and therefore on society, English teachers have to learn more about this matter, which may help them

address such dishonest actions. Research on this topic may be of a great help for English teachers in the UAE who are unaware of the different techniques that students might use during tests, or the procedures they as teachers and invigilators should take to prevent such actions from taking place in their classrooms. They should be well prepared to prevent cheating from occurring before tests are taken and to respond correctly to cheating if it takes place during tests, and yet this cannot happen unless they know about the techniques students use to cheat during English tests.

This research also raised the issue for administrators to consider that when cheating is addressed effectively, there will also be more valid English test scores to assess English language ability, and students may become better learners and more independent.

One last important point that encouraged me to research the issue of cheating is the small amount of attention in the language assessment literature given to cheating in language tests, particularly in the UAE, as one of the salient factors that affect the validity and reliability of English assessments.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed through questionnaires and surveys of ESL/EFL teachers, students, and administrators of private schools here in the Emirates:

1. What cheating techniques (if any) do students at some private secondary schools in the UAE report being used by other students (or themselves) during English tests?

2. What cheating techniques (if any) are English teachers at these private elementary and secondary schools in the UAE aware of/observe their students using during English tests?
3. What steps (if any) do invigilators at these private secondary schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to cheating during English tests?
4. What steps (if any) do the school administrators at these private schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to students cheating during English tests?

Overview of Chapters

Chapter Two mainly reviews some of the literature by pioneers of academic integrity on the issue of cheating. Those people have conducted some research on cheating that takes place in high-stakes tests and other school tests. This chapter also explains the importance of validity in English tests and how validity can be maintained and achieved, mentions some techniques that students use to cheat on tests, and finally discusses the role of teachers and administrators and the procedures they use in order to prevent cheating from taking place. Chapter Three focuses on the methodology I utilized in some private schools in the UAE, and on my participants. Chapter Four presents the data analysis and the findings of my research about techniques that students use to cheat on tests and the role of teachers and administrators in solving such a problem. In Chapter Five there is a summary of the implications of my study, a discussion of the limitations, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This research investigates the cheating techniques that secondary school students in the UAE use in their English tests. And it also addresses the procedures that teachers and administrators of these schools take before cheating takes place and once cheating is detected.

While reviewing the language assessment literature on this issue, it was found that there has been much research done on cheating at schools in general, or in different subjects like maths, science, etc., but little research has addressed cheating on English tests in particular. Also, much research has been done on the validity and reliability of assessments, but unfortunately there has been less research addressing cheating as one important factor that affects the validity and reliability of English assessments and test scores. There has also been very little research about cheating techniques used by students in private schools here in the UAE.

The literature reviewed here addresses validity and the threats to validity that high-stakes English tests face in language assessments. It also addresses the importance of test security, cheating in English tests, and the consequences of cheating on society. Finally, it addresses the students', teachers', and administrators' roles to stop cheating from spreading at schools.

High-Stakes Language Assessment in TESOL

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

A test, which is defined as “a method of measuring a person’s ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain” (Brown, 2004, p. 3), is one very essential means to evaluate students, and a high-stakes test such as the TOEFL (Test

of English as a Foreign Language) is an extremely important aspect of evaluation.

Nichols and Berliner (2007) describe high-stakes tests, such as the TOEFL and

IELTS (International English language testing System), saying that such

tests determine who is promoted and who is retained; who will receive a high school degree and who will not. Test scores can determine if a school will be reconstituted and whether there will be job losses or cash bonuses for teachers and administrators. (p. 2)

Nichols and Berliner also say, “We found reports and research about individuals and groups of individuals from across the nation whose lives have been tragically and often permanently affected by high-stakes testing” (p. 1). This is true, for example, when some people cannot go to university just because they did not pass the TOEFL or the IELTS, and as a result their lives are adversely affected in the extreme, even though perhaps their performance on the day of the test resulted in an atypically low score. McNamara and Roever (2006, pp. 15-16) agree when they say that high-stakes language tests such as TOEFL, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), and IELTS “are used to help decide whether a prospective international student should be admitted to an English-medium educational and social environment.”

One high-stakes English test in the UAE is the English section of the CEPA (Common Educational Proficiency Assessment). It is as important as TOEFL and IELTS for admission to government universities here in the UAE. According to Yousef (2005), a reporter for *Khaleej Times*, the CEPA English Test is a high-stakes English test used in the UAE. It is required for admission to the government-run universities (UAE University, Zayed University, and Higher Colleges of Technology). Yousef says students should achieve a minimum score of 150 to pass

the CEPA. If students in the UAE do not pass the English section of the CEPA, that means they lose an excellent opportunity to obtain good jobs in the future.

Validity and Reliability in English Tests

Since tests are very important to determine people's life and future, it is crucial to have tests that are useful, valid and reliable. Validity is one very important factor concerning high-stakes test scores. It is necessary in tests and especially in high-stakes English tests which will determine students' futures.

Tests are taken for the sake of evaluating students' levels, and in English language tests, teachers should be very careful to design tests that are valid. Validity in general is defined by Messick, Chapelle, Jamieson, and Hegelheimer (2003, p. 410) as "the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of interpretations and actions based on tests scores." To illustrate, Brown (2004) gives a very simple example of validity in language assessment, saying that a valid reading test actually measures reading ability and not anything else such as the previous knowledge of a subject.

Before tests take place, all teachers, including English teachers, should be sure that their tests are valid. Cizek (1999), a professor of measurement and evaluation, says,

A test is commonly defined as a sample of behavior obtained under controlled conditions. The validity, or meaningfulness, of test results is the extent to which a person's performance on the sample of test questions can be used to make conclusions about his or her overall competence in the area of interest.

(p. 6)

He adds, “teachers, schools and agencies responsible for testing programs take great pains to ensure valid inferences” (p. 7).

There are many aspects of validity that affect test scores. Some of these types are face validity, which is defined by Brown (2004, p. 26) as “the degree to which a test *looks* right and appears to measure the knowledge or abilities it claims to measure” and washback, which is the effect of the tests on students’ future and how the students prepare for them (Brown, 2004). One very important component of validity is construct validity, which is defined by Bachman and Palmer (1996, p. 21) as “the extent to which we can interpret a given test score as an indicator of the ability(ies), or construct(s),” so it is very important for teachers to make sure that what has been taught is addressed in the tests they design.

Test reliability is also as important as the validity of a test. According to Brown (2004), a reliable test is a test which will give similar results if given to the same students in two different occasions, or given to different students in the same test occasion. One of the aspects of reliability is test administration reliability, and Brown points out that unreliability can be caused of any distraction such as street noise, or variations in light or temperature of the classroom. Another aspect of reliability that Brown mentions is test reliability, and unreliability can also be caused by poorly written tests or too long tests that students cannot finish in time.

TOEFL, which is a high-stakes English test, has always been required to meet very high standards for testing reliability, and this is achieved by Educational Testing Services. Some of these standards specifically referring to preventing/addressing cheating are the rule of cancelling the scores of anyone who attempts to take the test

for someone else, makes any marks or notes on the test sheet, copies test questions or answers, takes dictionaries or any other books into the exam room, creates disturbance, or cheats in any other way (*Institutional Testing Program*, 2006).

Threats to Test Validity and Reliability in Language Assessment

There are many factors that might affect the validity and reliability of tests. One of the main threats to validity is construct irrelevant variance, which is

a type of systematic measurement error where there is some variance in the test scores that is due to factors other than the construct in question. In a reading test, for example, construct irrelevant variance may be introduced through a factor associated with background or cultural knowledge. Such variance contaminates the interpretations that are made on the basis of test scores, and hence negatively affects the construct validity of the test. (Davies, Brown, Elder, Hill, Lumley & McNamara, 1999, pp. 32-33)

Bachman and Palmer (1996) have pointed out some construct irrelevant variances that might distract students' attention and therefore affect their scores during exams and as a result make the tests taken considerably less valid or reliable: Noise from outside or overheating or cold are a few sources of distraction. Banging doors, or bad quality tests, or even insufficient time are also more factors resulting in construct irrelevant variance.

Cheating is one of the most detrimental factors that can compromise the validity of tests. Cizek (1999, p. 3) defines cheating as "violating the rules." He also believes the biggest factor that might threaten validity during tests is cheating. He says,

It is during the administration of a test - at any level of the educational system - that cheating becomes the most serious threat to validity in testing today.

Because tests are used to assess in making important decisions about people, the legal system, test makers, and test administrators have demanded much more attention to validity than ever before. (p. 8)

Cizek (2001) also clarifies the negative effect of cheating on test validity. He says,

Validity is perhaps the single greatest concern in any testing situation. The concept refers to the accuracy of the interpretations about examinees based on their test scores. Phrased in only slightly more technical terms, validity is the degree to which evidence supports the inferences made about a person's knowledge, skill, or ability based on his or her observed performance. ... Any factor that attenuates the ability to make accurate inferences from the sample of performance threatens validity and jeopardizes the meaningfulness of conclusions about the test taker. When cheating occurs, inaccurate inferences result. (p. 5)

Test administration is one very important aspect of English testing that teachers should be concerned about to prevent cheating. There are many procedures that teachers can use during test administration to increase reliability, and thus validity. Bachman and Palmer (1996), referring to language assessment, say,

If one is concerned that test takers might exchange information, steps can be taken to provide adequate space between them... The intention behind these procedures is not to focus attention on “preventing cheating” but rather on maximizing the usefulness of the test, which includes the validity of interpretation of test scores. (p. 232)

Cheating in High-Stakes English Tests

Cheating can take place in any test, but if it happens during high-stakes tests, the problem will be more serious because of the impact of such tests on stake holders. Cizek (1999) also says that it is very important to detect cheating in such tests because these types of tests might affect university admission, promotions and recruitments in different institutions.

High-stakes English tests are of great importance all over the world. The TOEFL, for example, is required for university admission in the UAE and many other parts of the world. Brown (2004) says that the TOEFL, which is a standardized test, is widely used among candidates in more than 200 countries, and its continuous validation by Educational Testing Services is known for its rigorous research.

Despite the extensive security measures used in these tests, cheating still takes place in many parts of the world. Cizek (2001) describes cheating in the TOEFL in the United States. He says,

One method of cheating on large-scale examinations involves taking advantage of time zone differences when tests are to be administered at sites across the U.S. at the same time. Using this method, examinees at one test site in, say, New York City, complete an examination in time to telephone other examinees in, for example, Los Angeles, to communicate the content of the test in advance. (p. 4)

Brown (2004) mentions a similar story about cheating in the TOEFL, which occurred when the TOEFL was administered in some East Asian countries as much as eight to fourteen hours before it started in the United States. The task of the test takers was not to pass the test but to memorize as many answers to the questions as possible.

Then a complete form of the TOEFL was reconstructed and sold for thousands of dollars to customers in the Western hemisphere. Brown says that this story shows how much people are willing to pay for the sake of admission to universities and how important high-stakes English tests can be.

Cizek (1999) points out an additional problem in high-stakes test administration, which is when a student takes the place of another and answers the questions on his/her behalf. An example of such a scenario is a story reported in the *Telegraph* newspaper about police in New Delhi arresting three British Council employees who allowed fake candidates who were paid to take the IELTS on behalf of other applicants (as cited in "3 British Council Employees Among 16 Arrested over IELTS Cheating," 2009).

Consequences of Cheating

Cheating is not just a negative behavior done by some students at schools, such as violating the rules of discipline in a classroom or a morning assembly. It is in fact much more. It may badly affect people's lives. Commenting on the wider social effects of cheating, Taylor (n.d.), a professor of political science, illustrates how cheating results in unqualified people being given undeserved positions. He asks,

Would you want to be operated on by a doctor who cheated his way through medical school? Or would you feel comfortable on a bridge designed by an engineer who cheated her way through engineering school. Would you trust your tax return to an accountant who copied his exam answers from his neighbor? (¶3)

Cheating might also affect non-cheating students badly. Whitley and Kieth-Spiegel (2002, p. 4) say, "When students see other students cheating and do not see

faculty members and administrators addressing such behavior, they may decide that academic dishonesty is acceptable or at least permissible.” Whitley and Kieth-Spiegel also point out that those non-cheating students will be very angry and frustrated when they see their peers cheat and get away with it, especially when they feel that the instructors do not seem to care about such an action. In addition, they comment that students who succeed in cheating during school exams continue to cheat in their professional careers. They add that cheating will affect the reputation of an institution. And if cheating is not dealt with immediately, it will badly affect not only the academic community but also the society in general. Cizek (1999) also believes in the bad effect of cheating on non-cheating students. He says that cheating done by some students might prevent the admission to college of more qualified students. Magnus, Polterovich, Danilov, and Savvateev (2002, p. 125) also say, “Cheating distorts competition, diminishes the student’s incentive to study, and leads to inaccurate evaluation of the student’s abilities.”

The Importance of Test Security

Electronic Test Security

Since cheating is taking place, it becomes a must that English teachers try to keep tests secure. Long ago teachers kept their tests secure by locking them in a cupboard, but nowadays keeping tests secure has become a great challenge after the invention of databases and the internet. Lambert, Lousteau, and Page (2001) conducted a study among teachers asking them some questions about whether their electronic tests are considered secure or not. The researchers caution, “If [you] do not delete the file from the recycle bin, it is still on the hard drive. It would be easy for anyone with access to your computer to copy a test file from the recycle bin” (p. 2).

They also say that the test files can easily be retrieved from the computer drive if they were overwritten with new data. Lambert et al. say, "Formatting only clears out the directory and file allocation tables" (p. 2). They also state that when teachers access the internet to keep their tests, the files on the hard drives are vulnerable to hackers, especially when teachers use familiar passwords like names and dates. Lambert et al. advise teachers to use passwords, even for their Microsoft Word or Excel files, of at least six to eight characters in length and a combination of letters and numbers. They say that teachers should always create firewalls when their tests are in files connected to the internet. They advise teachers to keep their files offline on floppy disks and not keep them on the hard drives, write over the file before selling the computers, and keep the hard copies of the tests in a secure safe that is well locked and hard to remove. They also say, "Turning off data sharing will in many cases prevent unauthorized access through the network" (p. 3).

Secure Test Administration

In addition to the security measures that English teachers should utilize before tests are taken, there should be some security measures in place during tests administration. Specially referring to language assessment, Weir (2005) says,

If the test is not well administered, unreliable results may occur. Precise steps should be laid down to ensure that the test is administered in exactly the same efficient way whoever is in charge or wherever it takes place. This requires that exam invigilators are provided with a clear and precise set of instructions and are familiar and comfortable with all aspects of the test before administering it... [and] procedures for dealing with candidates' cheating should have been sorted out in advance with the invigilators. (p. 82)

Here in the Emirates, Yousef, (2005, ¶13) explains some security measures that are used during administration of the CEPA test, including the English section. He says, “As for the administration of the [CEPA] test, papers are scanned by computer and marked on [a] specially prepared database to ensure that every mark is allocated to the correct paper for the correct student- nothing is left to chance.”

Cheating Techniques

Despite all the security measures that English teachers in the UAE take, students still cheat. They also use different techniques that might be shocking sometimes. We can say that they have their own “art” of cheating. The techniques they use are various. Some of the techniques are familiar and can easily be detected. Others are unusual and cannot be easily noticed by invigilators.

Many invigilators have long been looking for a peaceful invigilation, but this might not be realistic since cheating commonly occurs in everyday school life and cheating in tests takes many forms. Cizek (1999) classified cheating into three categories or methods: 1) taking, giving, and receiving methods, 2) use of forbidden materials, and 3) the process of assessment. Some examples about taking, giving, and receiving methods are looking at another student’s paper, dropping a paper on the floor to allow others to look at it, and passing objects with answers on them. The second method, which is the use of forbidden materials, includes crib notes hidden in sport caps, pockets, belts, and shirts, or information written on desks, tables, and erasers. The third method is taking advantage of the persons giving a test or of the circumstances of the testing process. This can happen when a cheating student takes advantage of uncontrolled test administration, or claims, after receiving his/her test paper, that the test paper was misgraded.

Bushway and Nash (1977) mention some more cheating techniques. They say, "Cheating in the classroom includes many behaviors [such as] using crib notes on an exam, letting others copy a homework paper, plagiarizing, and ghost writing" (p. 623). In their study conducted about cheating techniques among school students, Davis, Grover, Becker, and McGregor (1992) concluded that 80% of the academic "thieves" copied from their classmates' papers or used crib notes. They also mentioned some of the techniques that the surveyed students used, such as working a system of hand and feet positions, touching a corner of a desk which stands for an answer A, B, C, or D. One student said, according to Davis et al. (1992, p. 18), "I have done everything from writing all the way up my arm to having notes in a plastic bag inside my mouth." Davis et al. cite another student who stated, "I would make a paper flower, write notes on it, and then pin it on my blouse" (p. 18).

The internet serves as a ground that facilitates cheating in its all means, and students nowadays are using up-to-date techniques to cheat. Pytel (2007) says,

The latest tools for cheating are iPods and Zunes. These devices are so small that they can be hidden easily under clothing. Students can download formulas, vocabulary definitions, and study guide answers. The day of the test, they send the wire up their sleeve, rest their head on their hand to hide the ear bud, and cheat. (p. 1)

Bramucci (2003) has published a document that he compiled after weeks of "lurking" on cheat sites. This document was directed to teachers, not cheaters. He mentions the places where students can hide their cheat sheets. These places can be their hair, desks, food and drinks, ankles, legs and fingernails. He also says that sheets can be hidden under clothing like shoes, hats, shirts, ties and belts. He also mentions

different tools that might be used, such as engraved pens and pencils, erasers, masking tape, tissues and sticky films. Telling what can be done with the sticky film, he quotes a student as saying,

[You can] use a good Laser printer to print your cheat notes using a very small font size (2-4) [point]. This way you can print off a lot of notes in a small area. You can buy transparent sticky film for laser printers, a transparency sheet, and if you print your cheat notes on these “stickies” you can stick them on your tools: calculators, erasers, rulers, etc. If you have a black pen or calculator, the transparent film will not be noticeable since they are clear and the laser toner is black. You can read the text when the light shines on it the right way. (p. 2)

Bramucci also mentions many ways of cheating using technology such as calculators, watches, pagers, Palm Pilots, walkmans, micro recorders, wireless monitors and cameras. He also mentions in his document some codes used by students to communicate. One student (quoted by Bramucci) says,

The old tap and eat some colored candy routine! On multiple-choice tests, I tap out a number like - --- (which I think Lina is trying to say is one tap, then 3 taps, thus 1-3 which becomes 13) is 13 and -- ----- is 25 you get the drift, really simple. Then the person answering gives the answer by eating an M&M or Skittle, where let's say red=A, blue=B, yellow--C, etc. (p. 3)

Bramucci also says that “there are dozens of codes students have devised: hand position, foot position or foot tapping, test position, noises like clicking of pens, clothing positions, etc.” (p. 3). Finally, in his document Bramucci mentions what students would do when they were caught. First, they would never admit cheating but

would keep denying; then, they would go to the teachers' office and plead with him/her; and they would also say that they did not know that it was wrong and then cry.

Plagiarism, another type of cheating which is frequently encountered in English assessments, is when people steal others' words or ideas and say that they are their own. It is also taking the opinions and beliefs of others without acknowledgement. It is a very serious crime that people might be sued for in court. Harris (2004, p. 1) believes that "the availability of textual material in electronic format has made plagiarism easier than ever." He says that plagiarism takes many forms such as downloading free research papers, buying papers from commercial paper mills, copying an article from the Web or a local source like students who took the courses before, copying and pasting passages to create a paper, and faking a citation. McCabe (2001) found, in one of his studies on plagiarism among school students versus university students that plagiarism spreads more widely among high school students. He says, "High school students are typically still learning about plagiarism and proper techniques for citation" (p. 4). Plagiarism is also a type of cheating that is spread among students in the UAE. In an article by Al Najami (2009), M.K., a student in a public school in the UAE, says that plagiarism is one of the most wide-spread techniques of cheating among students at school and some teachers realize this but choose to turn a blind eye.

Ghost writing is another type of cheating, which normally happens with English classes when long essays are to be written. It has been used for a long time. It is when writers lend their own work to others and allow those takers to assign their names to claim the work as their own. The ghost writers are usually paid for their

work. They can also be more professional if they have the ability to grasp the personality of the persons they are writing for and imitate their style. One ghost writer (Anonymous, 1939) published an article in the *English Journal*, explaining why some students might seek the help of a ghost writer. This ghost writer, who wrote about cheating 70 years ago and wished to remain anonymous, said, “the blame for students' patronizing ‘ghost writers’ is solely the teacher's” (p. 535). He/she adds, “The teacher assigns themes easy enough to write but, unfortunately, with titles that students fail to understand” (p. 536). This anonymous ghost writer points out that

there is another very important reason as to why students turn writing assignments over to other people to do for them. That is the foolish, unnecessary command to write a short paper, a long paper, or a paper of a determined length as of two or three pages. How is a student supposed to know what constitutes a short paper? For some subjects, six pages are scarcely long enough, even to make a short paper. (p. 537)

This is very true when teachers ask their students to write a paper and do not give them clear outlines of what they are supposed to write about, or when they do not give very clear instructions of what they want.

Al Najmi (2009) reports many different ways of cheating in some schools in the UAE. Some of these ways are the long sleeves, commonly worn by some students in this region, where students hide their crib papers. Students noting down data on their arms, palms and fingers is another well known way. One student said, according to Al Najmi, “There will never be an end to cheating or new methods to doing it even if it involves putting a student in an isolated room” (Copy and Paste section, ¶3).

In investigating cheating in the UAE, I included in my teacher and student questionnaires and interviews open-ended and close-ended questions about some of the cheating techniques mentioned by Cizek (1999), Bushway and Nash (1977), Bramucci (2003) and Al Najami (2009), including crib notes, looking at someone's paper, plagiarizing, and technology.

How Teachers Respond to Cheating

Some teachers take immediate procedures to prevent cheating from occurring, but others may ignore such actions. Whitley and Kieth-Spiegel (2002) mention that some teachers ignore cheating because reporting it will negatively reflect on their teaching abilities, and their school administration will consider reporting cheating a sign of lack of ability and a failure to take action to prevent such dishonesty.

Before addressing the procedures that English teachers in the UAE take to prevent cheating, it is important to address the point that cheating might take place from the teachers' side. Cizek (1999) stated that in one of the studies in the United States, teachers admitted giving extra time on timed tests, changing students' answers on their answer sheets, suggesting answers to students, and directly teaching sections of a test.

Actions of school administrators play a role in addressing cheating as well. In some schools in the UAE, there are certain established procedures to be taken against cheating students. Mohammad Al Mass, the Principal of al Ma'aref School, said that "if a student is caught cheating, he will not be allowed to complete his examination. The dishonest student will also be stopped from taking the rest of the tests" (as quoted in Al Najami, 2009, Copy and Paste section, ¶8).

These previous findings addressing issues such as ignoring cheating and not reporting it (Whitley & Kieth-Spiegel, 2002), or even helping students cheat indirectly (Cizek, 1999), helped me form some of the questions in my questionnaires and interviews about the procedures that teachers in the UAE use in response to cheating.

What Can Teachers Do to Prevent Cheating?

Teachers can be of a great help in reducing cheating if they utilize appropriate procedures before tests are taken, and during test administration. If teachers act professionally regarding such a problem, this might help reduce cheating among their students. McCabe (2001) emphasizes the role of the teacher in preventing cheating, saying that some people believe that greater vigilance and more severe punishments are the solutions to student cheating. These tactics are likely to reduce cheating, and that is certainly a worthwhile goal, but they will not address the attitudes that lead to cheating. To do so, schools need to change the culture that accepts cheating as a matter of course and replace it with one that places a higher value on academic honesty.

Barnett and Dalton (1981) have also given some advice to teachers to help them prevent academic dishonesty. Some of these suggestions are that teachers can clarify the academic standards to their students, make sure students know the criteria for the evaluation of their performance, explain plagiarism, explain that cheating will never be tolerated, encourage students to use the process approach in writing, use different exam versions, seat students randomly in alternate chairs, and clearly mark incorrect answers, so students cannot change the marked results.

Teachers should be alert enough to detect cheating; otherwise students will play tricks on their teachers, and will therefore encourage everyone else to cheat. Kerkvliet and Sigmund (1999) say that undetected cheating will result in encouraging students to cheat, but the severity of penalties imposed on cheaters will decrease cheating, and measures that increase the probability of detection will discourage cheating.

Harris (2004) suggests some strategies that may be useful for teachers to prevent cheating. He suggests that teachers should make the assignments clear and indicate whether individual work or collaboration is required or not. He also says that teachers should give the students a list of topics to choose from instead of allowing them to choose their own topics, and should change the topics used every semester. Teachers should also ask students questions about the projects they have done and also encourage them to use the process approach in writing and include an annotated bibliography.

Another option for teachers to prevent cheating is peer reporting. This practice is most commonly connected to establishing an honor code policy, and it may push students to be more responsible towards fighting dishonesty. McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2001) say,

[Reporting] peers who violate the rules provides a counterpressure to the strong norms supporting in-group loyalty. When an organization defines peer reporting as part of one's role, it becomes somewhat easier to do and to explain to others. It also provides explicit guidance regarding expected behavior. (p. 32)

Having a well implemented honor-code might also be effective in reducing cheating in academic settings and maintaining honesty. McCabe and Trevino (1993) suggest that implementing an honor-code might dramatically lead to low levels of academic dishonesty because it clarifies expectations and defines cheating behaviors. Therefore, justifying cheating may become difficult with these clear-cut standards. Billups (2000, p. 1) says, “Honor codes, which typically require a student to sign a formal pledge not to cheat, continue to be effective in curbing academic dishonesty.” She also says that an honor code is not a new concept, but it was implemented in the 1700s at the College of William and Mary in Virginia and it is still in use. McCabe and Trevino (1993) discussed a study by Campbell (1935) which compared cheating among students at the same university. They point out that students under an honor code system were less likely to cheat than students who did not sign an honor code. For this reason I chose to include a question about using an honor code in my questionnaires, to find out what teachers, students and administrators in the UAE think about such an approach.

Cizek (2001) believes that the problem of cheating will never disappear, but it must be addressed in order to ensure fairness, integrity and the validity of test results. He says the best way to do so is to be aware of the ways cheating can occur. This can be achieved by providing special testing programs that might help invigilators reduce cheating. In his article on high-stakes tests, he suggests some “pragmatic steps” (p. 19) that can help reduce cheating. Some of these examples are implementing honor codes, providing penalties for cheating and changing the system of investigation, improving test administration conditions, auditing test security

procedures, limiting the amount of testing and decreasing reliance on easily-corruptible test formats such as multiple-choice questions.

Hawkins (1932) gave advice about 80 years ago that is still valid today, saying that teachers can easily detect cheating if they ask suspected students to write in their presence the work which was supposedly done by the students at home. If the students are not able to do so, this scenario means that someone else helped those students do the homework. Hawkins also pointed out that teachers have to ask their students to keep their homework papers out of sight before they are called on to go to the chalk board to answer questions about the homework given. Doing so will promote honesty because teachers will be able to check that the students have done the homework themselves at home, because it will be evident if students did not do the homework themselves. Hawkins also believes that tests can offer many chances for cheating if the proctors sit and do not walk about the room, and he says teachers have to be alert, especially when students hand in their exam papers in order to prevent them from passing the answers to each other or cheating at a time when the class is less controlled. He also compares an efficient teacher to a skilful detective and a watchful policeman in not allowing students to play tricks on him. Hawkins also believes that teachers may reduce cheating if they put less emphasis on marking work done outside the classroom.

In the UAE, Bassel Al Deiry, a coordinator in one high school in Dubai, says a good seating plan, having different exam versions, and including analytical questions in exams, especially in English and Maths, are all good ways to stop students from cheating (Al Najami, 2009). Therefore, some of these procedures, such as using different exam versions, and signing an honor code before exams start, were

mentioned in my questionnaires and interviews to discover if teachers actually use these methods.

Reasons for Cheating

Finding out more about the reasons behind cheating is as important as finding the techniques that students use to cheat. If English teachers understand what pushes students to cheat, they may be more professional in dealing with such a problem. “Getting better grades” is the most popular reason that students give for cheating. Cizek (1999) reported that according to Trabue (1962), there are additional reasons for cheating than just getting better grades, which are pressure imposed on students, the difficulty of tests, and the easy nature of cheating.

At Zayed University in the UAE, Dr. Donald McCabe, who is a professor at Rutgers University and the founder and first president of the Centre for Academic Integrity in the United States, conducted a study on cheating in which “more than 2,600 students from ZU, Higher Colleges of Technology and UAE University participated in McCabe’s survey to gauge their attitudes to cheating” (Naidoo, 2008, ¶8). He found that students in the UAE justified cheating by saying that it is the faculty’s fault because the courses are very difficult, and there is continuous pressure caused by these courses. McCabe also said, “There were more similarities than differences between students in the UAE and their peers in the United States, and across the globe, when it came to their view on plagiarism and cheating” (as quoted in Naidoo, 2008, ¶18).

Cizek (1999) adds more reasons for cheating. He says that some students cheat because of the difficult nature of the assignments, the meaninglessness of some school-related assignments, the teachers leaving the rooms or not watching students

carefully during test administration, friends asking their peers for a favor or help which they can never refuse, the difficulty of the course material, the fear of getting low grades, not having time to study, and the habit of cheating that everyone else seems to be doing. Cizek (1999) also believes that the nature of the test could be a good reason for cheating. He adds that students tend to cheat more in multiple-choice questions, for example, than portfolios. Therefore, in my research, in light of Cizek's observations, I asked students about the expected reasons behind cheating. Thus, in my questionnaires and interviews, I included a question about students' reasons for cheating.

Students' and Administrators' Roles

Although teachers have a responsibility to prevent students' cheating, students and administrators do carry part of that responsibility, too. Students should keep in mind that while cheating might give them some extra grades, it can also destroy someone's whole life if caught. Therefore such a student would face a problem with finding employment, and if he/she did get a job, he/she might not be an honest employee. Klein, Levenburg, McKendall, and Mothersell (2007, p. 204) conducted a study about the negative effect of cheating on students in the future and concluded that "if students have lax attitudes towards one type of ethical behavior, they may carry that attitude with them into the workplace, where it has the potential to become a problem for future employers."

Students can also prevent others from cheating if they report cheaters as in the peer reporting mentioned by McCabe et al (2001). Self-interest has been around for a long time. Crawford, in 1930, said that "[it is the students'] duty to report cheaters, not for the sake of self-protection, but for the protection of the other members of the

class” (p. 777). Therefore, in this research, I asked the students I surveyed whether they are ready to report cheating done by their classmates or not.

Administrators also carry a part of the responsibility. They should help teachers to prevent cheating from occurring in classrooms. McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (1999, p. 233) say that “[honor codes] require a significant effort on the part of both students and administrators to implement and maintain.” In the UAE, according to a senior official at the Education Ministry, when cheating is discovered at schools, schools solve the cases internally, but a few cases are referred to the educational zones, councils or authority; each case is handled individually (as cited in Al Najami, 2009).

Information from educational measurement and language assessment experts helped considerably in forming the questions of the questionnaires and interviews. For example, the cheating techniques portrayed by Cizek (1999), Bushway and Nash (1977), Bramucci (2003), and Al Najami (2009) helped me design my questionnaires and interviews, because these techniques might be very similar to what the students I surveyed used or their teachers observed, also. The role of the teachers and administrators and the reasons behind cheating and the honor code were also more ideas I included in my survey. The role of the teachers and administrators stated by Crawford (1930) and McCabe et al. (2001) helped me design some questions in my questionnaires and interviews. The idea of the honor code was also addressed by McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (1999), and helped me form a question about the honor code and its importance.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Setting of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out more about the techniques that intermediate and secondary school students are using in private schools in one educational zone in the United Arab Emirates, and the procedures that English teachers in these schools take to prevent cheating and address it after it occurs. This research also points out some of the procedures taken by administrators at schools. The participants were of three groups: male and female intermediate and secondary school students; elementary, intermediate; and secondary English teachers; and administrators. Three tools of data collection were used in this research: three different questionnaires for teachers, students, and administrators (see Appendices A, B, and C); classroom observations of secondary school students during one of their English tests (see Appendix F); and personal interviews with students and teachers who agreed to participate (see Appendices D and E). I distributed the questionnaires and interviewed the participants before their final exams and observed their actual tests during final exams, using an observation checklist (see Appendix F).

Participants

I contacted administrators of four private schools in the UAE to take permission to survey their primary, intermediate and/or secondary school students, teachers and administrators. After obtaining consent, I surveyed and interviewed teachers and students, while administrators were only surveyed. Because of the sensitivity of the cheating issue to be discussed, I clearly communicated to the teachers, administrators and students that their answers would be kept confidential.

Teachers

The first group of participants was the teachers. I surveyed 16 elementary and secondary English teachers (12 females and 4 males), and they had different numbers of years of teaching experience. Eight of those teachers volunteered to be interviewed (three males and five females). Some of them had three years of teaching experience, while others had up to 23. Some of them had taught all grade levels, and some of them had taught one level only. (See Teacher Profile Tables 1 & 2.)

Table 1 Teachers' Profile (A)

Years of experience	Number of teachers
15+ yrs	7
6-14	4
1-5	3
n.a. *	2

*n.a. = no answer

Table 2 Teachers' Profile (B)

Grade levels taught	Number of teachers
Elementary	1
Elementary/middle	3
Middle	0
Middle/ secondary	2
Secondary	5
All levels	3

Students

The second group of participants in this study was the students. I surveyed 51 intermediate and secondary school students (30 boys and 21 girls), whose ages ranged from 13 to 17. Out of the 51 students, 15 volunteered to be interviewed (9 boys and 6 girls), and I then recorded two out of 5 interviews after taking the students' permission. Some of the students' first language was Arabic (42 students), and others'

first language was English (9 students). Some of those students talked to me in private, others were interviewed in a group. (See Table 3.)

Table 3 Students' Profile

First language	Gender	Number of students	Age in years	Number of students of each age	
English	Boys	7	17	3	
			16	3	
			14	1	
	Girls	2	16	1	
				15	1
Arabic	Boys	23	17	5	
			16	6	
			15	6	
			14	4	
			13	1	
			n.a.. *	1	
	Girls	19	16	5	
				15	10
				14	3
				13	1

*n.a. = no answer

Administrators

The third group of participants was the administrators (14 Arabic and 3 non-Arabic speakers). There were five male and twelve female administrators from four different private schools in the UAE. Those administrators were only surveyed and not interviewed because their busy schedules did not allow time for them to participate in interviews.

Data Collection

Teachers' Questionnaire

The first questionnaire was for the English language teachers and thus was written in English. 19 questionnaires were given to the teachers and 16 were

completed. These teachers were asked about cheating techniques that they have noticed their students using during exams, the procedures that they take before the exams to prevent cheating from occurring, and what they usually do after incidents of cheating in the exams, such as involving the administration. Some of these cheating techniques mentioned in the questionnaires such as the crib notes and copying from a peer were reported by Cizek (1999). And others such as plagiarizing, copying from a peer with his knowledge and also the crib notes were reported by Bushway and Nash (1977). There was also a question about Honor code, and the idea was taken from Billups (2000). There were some blanks provided for the teachers to talk about. These questions were about the other techniques that their students might use to cheat, how they could if a student is cheating, the preventive measures that the teachers take before exams, and why/why not they think that signing a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating. (See Appendix A.)

Students' Questionnaire

In the students' questionnaire, there were 51 questionnaires completed out of the 56 questionnaires I gave to students. (See Appendix B.) Students were not asked directly about the techniques that they themselves use to cheat, but instead were asked about techniques that other students have used. This approach was to give the students more freedom to speak frankly about this sensitive issue of cheating. This idea was suggested by Bramucci (2003). The questionnaire contained close-ended statements about cheating techniques the teachers were asked about, including copying, plagiarizing, use of technology and crib notes (Cizek, 1999; Bramucci, 2003; Bushway & Nash, 1977), and students were requested to tick the appropriate response: "yes," "no," or "don't know." There were also some open-ended statements

for the students to express their ideas about other techniques that had not been mentioned earlier, as well as which techniques they thought were acceptable, whether or not they would report someone cheating (as mentioned by McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001), and the effectiveness of signing a pledge not to cheat (Billups, 2000). The questionnaire was translated into Arabic in order to make the points clearer for the Arabic-speaking students to understand. The first language of the non-Arabic speaking students was English; thus the English version was sufficient.

After gaining administrators' approval, I led a group discussion before students started filling out their questionnaires to give the students some clues about what they were going to do, and to explain that their identities would be kept anonymous. The surveys took place sometimes in classrooms and other times in the administrators' offices. The participating students were from four different private schools in the UAE. (See Appendix B.)

Administrators' Questionnaire

The last questionnaire was for the administrators of the targeted schools. There were 18 questionnaires given, and 17 were completed. There were 17 administrators that were asked about the procedures they usually take if students were caught cheating. This questionnaire was translated into Arabic to make sure that the Arabic-speaking participants who had limited English ability understood exactly what they were being asked. The administrators' questionnaire focused on procedures to prevent and to respond to cheating, which were procedures commonly used in UAE schools, except for the honor code which was suggested by Billups (2000) and the practice of ignoring cheating identified by Whitley and Kieth-Spiegel (2002). (See Appendix C.)

Student Interviews

There were also optional interviews with any students/English teachers who wished to talk in private about the cheating issue. Since cheating is a sensitive issue, the private interviews gave them more freedom to talk about cheating without any constraints. The number of students interviewed was 15. Because of time constraints, administrators said only two interviews could be recorded while I took notes, and thus after students agreed, I recorded two out of five interviews. The first one was in the Grade 9 Boys class and I interviewed four students in the classroom, but the recording was not of high quality because of the background noise. The other interview was in the Grade 9 Girls class, and the recording was of good quality. In the recorded and the unrecorded interviews, I took notes of the students' answers. The open-ended questions in the interviews were about students' observations of cheating by their fellow classmates, reasons for cheating, justification for cheating, as well as what teachers do that either facilitates cheating or makes it more difficult. The incident in Egypt where teachers and others actively participated in leaking test questions to students ("Egypt School Exam Cheats Jailed," 2008) raised the issue of teacher involvement in cheating, and thus two questions were included that addressed this issue. Finally, students were asked to speak about their own experience in cheating. (See Appendix D.)

Teacher Interviews

Eight teachers were also interviewed about the techniques that their students usually use in their classrooms, the preventive measures that they used to prevent cheating from taking place, and the ways they responded if students were caught cheating. Six questions were the same as Questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the students'

questionnaire, and in addition, the teachers were asked about procedures taken in response to cheating. (See Appendix E.)

Observations

Finally, I conducted three classroom observations during final English exams. These observations were done in Grade 9 Boys, Grade 10 Girls, and Grade 10 Boys classes. Observing high-stakes final exams was more useful for the purposes of my study than observing classes during five- or ten-minute quizzes because there was very likely a greater possibility of students cheating in final exams. An observation checklist was prepared after the interviews and the surveys took place, and it was based on information gained from the interviews and questionnaires. The observation checklist included some questions about the number of invigilators, invigilators' procedures taken before and during exams, and if/when cheating took place. The checklist also included students' actions during the exams. (See Appendix F.)

It is important here to clarify that I intended, from the beginning, to compare what the teachers I surveyed and interviewed said about the procedures they take before and during exams with what I would actually observe in my observations of three classes, but unfortunately the English teachers were not the same as the invigilators. There is a rule in the schools I went to that all subject teachers are not allowed to invigilate their own classes' exams in case they help students cheat during exams. This procedure, of course, is considered to be one of the procedures that administrators take to prevent cheating.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed through questionnaires and interviews of ESL/EFL teachers, students, and administrators of private schools here in the Emirates:

1. What cheating techniques (if any) do students at private secondary schools in the UAE report being used by other students (or themselves) during English tests?
2. What cheating techniques (if any) are English teachers at private elementary and secondary schools in the UAE aware of/observe their students using during English tests?
3. What steps (if any) do invigilators at private secondary schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to cheating during English tests?
4. What steps (if any) do the school administrators at private schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to students cheating during English tests?

I developed charts and tables for the results of the questionnaires, interviews and observations. The charts include answers to the close-ended questions for the teachers, students, and administrators, and the tables include answers to the open-ended questions by teachers, students and administrators, the students' and teachers' profiles, as well as the information from the interviews. Additional tables were prepared for the observation data. The charts and tables included student-reported and teacher-reported cheating techniques, teacher-reported methods of prevention, and administrator-reported response to cheating, as well as observation of the extent to

which teacher-suggested cheating prevention techniques were followed. There were 51 questionnaires completed out of the 56 that were given to students, 16 questionnaires completed out of the 19 that were given to the teachers and 17 out of the 18 that were given to the administrators. The results of the questionnaires and the interviews are presented in the order of the questions in the questionnaires and interview guidelines.

Students' Questionnaire

Close-ended Questions for Students

The first five questions of the students' questionnaire included close-ended questions addressing cheating techniques other students use as (Research Question 1). The students responded as follows. In the students' questionnaire, the first question (QA1) the students were asked was if they had ever noticed students copying from other students without their knowledge. 37 out of 51 students said "yes," 10 said "no," and 4 said "don't know." The second question (QA2) was if the teachers had ever noticed their students copying from other students with their knowledge. 47 out of 51 students said "yes," 1 said "no," and 3 said "don't know." The third question (QA3) was if they had ever noticed students using crib notes to cheat. 36 out of 51 students said "yes," 12 said "no," and 3 said "don't know." The fourth question (QA4) was if they had ever noticed students plagiarizing. 34 out of 51 students said "yes," 9 said "no," and 8 said "don't know." And the fifth question (QA5) was if they had ever noticed students using technology to cheat. 24 out of 51 students said "yes," 21 said "no," and 6 said "don't know." (See Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

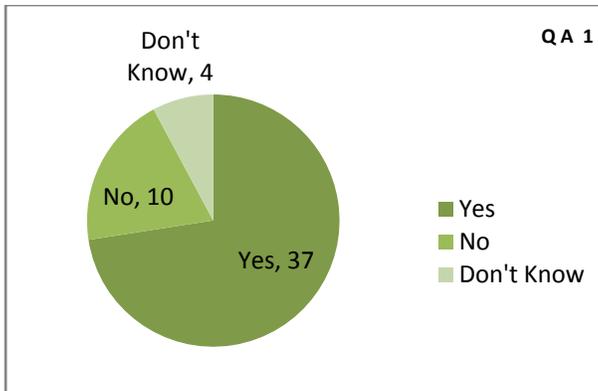


Figure 1: Students' Questionnaire QA1: Copying from another student without his/her knowledge?

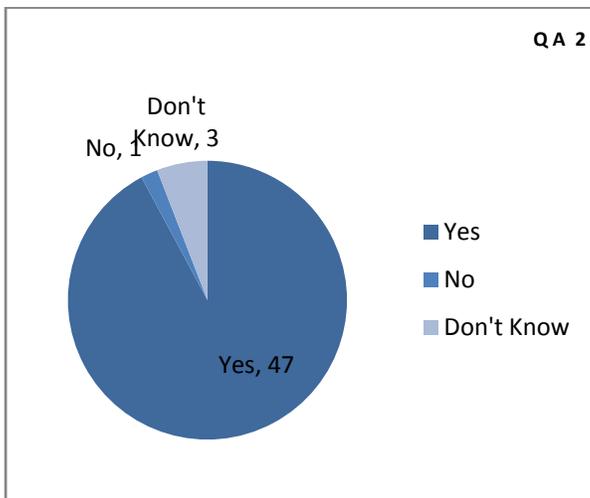


Figure 2: Students' Questionnaire QA2: Copying from a student with his/her knowledge.

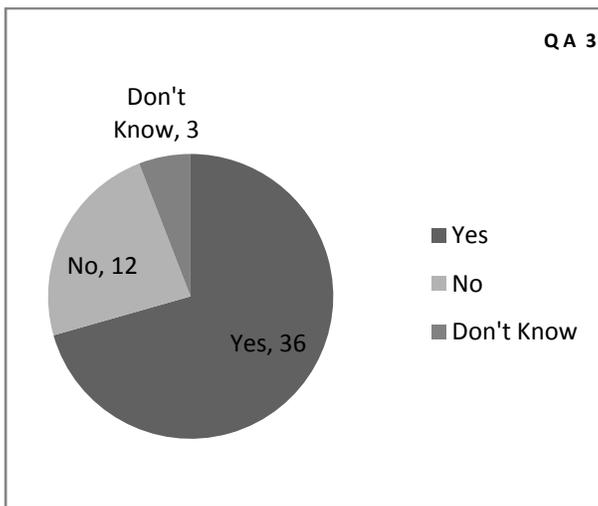


Figure 3: Students' Questionnaire QA3: Using crib notes or any other cheat sheets?

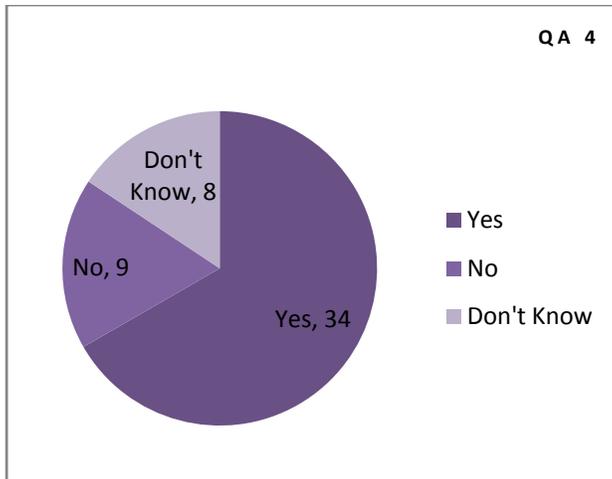


Figure 4: Students' Questionnaire QA4: Plagiarizing

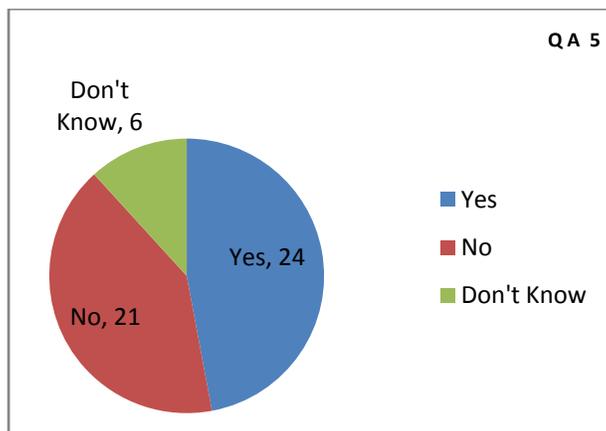


Figure 5: Students' Questionnaire QA5: Have you ever seen students using technology to cheat?

There were two more close-ended questions in the students' questionnaire. The first (QD) was about whether students would report cheating done by their classmates or not. 42 out of 51 students said "no," 4 said "yes," and 5 said, "don't know." The second question (QE) was about whether requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating or not. 13 out of 51 students said "yes," 37 said "no," and 1 said "don't know." (See Figures 6 and 7.)

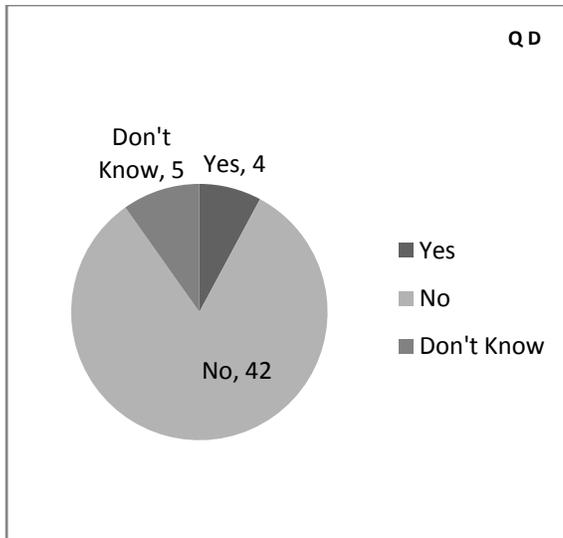


Figure 6: Students' Questionnaire QD: If you notice a classmate cheating during exams, would you report it?

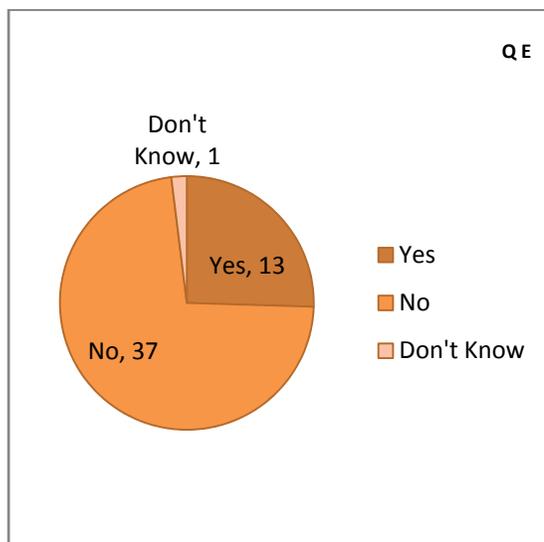


Figure 7: Students' Questionnaire QE: Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating?

For a summary of the students' responses to the close-ended questions, see Appendix I.

Open-ended Questions for Students

It is important here to mention that the comments in quotations in the tables are the students' actual words. There were four open-ended questions asked of the

students about cheating. The first (QB) was about techniques used by their classmates to cheat. 12 out of 51 students said that they had noticed other students using body signals, which included hand signals and eye signals. There were also 12 students who had noticed other students whispering answers to each other or sometimes talking loudly with each other. 6 more students said that they had noticed other students writing on objects such as chairs, desks, erasers, tissues, books, rulers and cribs. 2 students had noticed others writing on their body parts such as hands, legs, clothes and shoes. 9 students had noticed students opening their books during exams or sometimes going to the bathroom and opening the hidden books there. 5 students said that they had seen other students using technology in cheating such as I Pods, head sets, mobile phones, blue tooth, and even magic pens with secret ink that never appears except when the blank paper is shaded. 8 students talked about other techniques such as changing exam papers, taking answers from other students during break time, asking teachers for clues, and passing answers while teachers are collecting the papers (listed as “other” in the table). (See Table 4.)

Table 4 Students’ Questionnaire QB: What are other techniques that your classmates might use?

Cheating techniques	Number of students
Bodily signals “eye signals,” “hand”	12
Verbal “whispering,” “talking”	12
Writing on/in objects “erasers,” “chairs,” “desks,” “tissues,” “books,” “rulers,” “cribs”	6
Writing on body parts “hands,” “legs,” “clothes,” “shoes”	2
Books “opening books,” “hiding books in the bathroom”	9
Using technology: “Ipods, mobiles, magic pens”	5
Other	8

The comments in quotations in the tables are the students' actual words. The second open-ended question (QC) was if they considered any of the mentioned techniques to be wrong or to be acceptable. 32 students thought that all cheating techniques are wrong. 7 students said that they are all wrong except copying from a peer with his knowledge, 3 said that plagiarizing is OK, 1 said that hiding cribs is OK, and 1 said that using technology is OK. 7 students did not answer here. (See Table 5.)

Table 5 Students' Questionnaire QC: Which of these techniques are considered OK, and which are wrong?

Cheating techniques	Number of students
All are wrong	32
Copying from a peer is acceptable	7
Plagiarizing is acceptable	3
Using technology is acceptable	1
Hiding cribs is acceptable	1
No answer	7

The third open-ended question (QD) was about whether students would report cheating or not. The 42 students who said "no," they would never report it, gave several reasons for that, and some of them gave more than one reason. 9 of them said because everyone does it, 24 said that the cheaters might be their friends, 12 said that if they report it they will get into trouble with the other students, 20 said it is not their business, and 1 said that students who cheat will continue to cheat no matter what teachers do to them. The 4 students who said that they would report cheating gave some other reasons. 3 of them said it was because cheating is not acceptable, 2 said that the cheating students will get higher grades than them, and 1 said he/she does not like this cheating person. (See Table 6.)

Table 6 Students' Questionnaire QD: If you notice a classmate cheating during an exam, would you report that/why/ why not?

Reasons why they will not report it	Number of students	Reasons why they will report it	Number of students
Everyone does it	9	Cheating is not acceptable	3
He/she is my friend	24	He/she will get higher grades than me	2
It is not my business	20	I don't like this person	1
Will get into trouble	12		
"He will continue cheating"	1		

The last open-ended question (QE) was about whether signing an honor code would reduce cheating or not and why? 37 students said that nothing will stop cheaters from cheating. 11 students said that signing an honor code will make students become afraid to cheat. 3 students did not give a reason. (See Table 7.)

Table 7 Students' Questionnaire QE: Do you think requiring students to sign an honor code would reduce cheating? Why/Why not?

Signing an honor code	Number of students
No, nothing will stop cheaters from cheating	37
Yes, they will be afraid to cheat	11
Gave no reason	3

For a summary of the students' responses to the open-ended questions, see Appendix J.

Students' Interviews

There were 15 students interviewed from private schools in the UAE, further addressing Research Question 1 about students' observations of cheating techniques. There were nine male and six female students who discussed cheating by other students.

The first question asked of the students was about the cheating techniques used by the students' classmates. All the interviewed students said that they noticed other students cheat. 3 out of 15 students said that they noticed students using bodily signals, such as hand signals. 1 student talked about whispering answers to others. 10 students noticed others writing on objects such as chairs, tables, walls, tissue papers, crib sheets and books. 1 student talked about writing on body parts such as hands, legs, and shoes. 2 students talked about using technology, and 9 students talked about copying from a peer. And 2 students saw students looking at others' papers while the teacher was passing out the exam papers or collecting them. (Students here gave more than one answer). (See Table 8.)

Table 8 Students' Interview Q1: Have you ever seen other students cheat during exams? What did they do?

Cheating techniques	Number of students
Bodily signals "hand"	3
Verbal "whispering"	1
Writing on/in objects "erasers, chairs, desks, wall, tissues, books, cribs"	10
Writing on body parts "hands, legs ,shoes"	1
Technology "mobile phones, magic pens"	2
Copying from a peer	9
Other: "looking at papers while teachers are passing out papers or collecting them"	2

The comments in quotations in the tables are the students' actual words. In the second question, the students were asked about cheating techniques used by other students which teachers could not detect. 2 out of 15 students said that teachers do not catch them when they hide crib notes. 3 more said that students distract the teachers' attention for others to cheat. 3 students said that teachers do not catch those who write

on objects, especially bandages on students' arms and hands. And 1 student said that teachers do not catch those who copy from their peers. (See Table 9.)

Table 9 Students' Interview Q2: How did your classmates cheat so that teachers could not catch them?

Cheating techniques	Number of students
Hiding crib notes	2
Distracting teachers' attention	3
Writing on/in objects "erasers, tissue, cribs, bandage"	3
Copying from a peer	1

The comments in quotations in the tables are the students' actual words. In the third question, the students were asked about the reasons behind students cheating. 11 out of 15 students said that the main reason is that students want to get better grades, 2 students said that cheating has become a habit that students will always do in exams, and 4 students said that cheating is easier than studying. 1 student said it is because of the pressure placed upon students from their teachers. (See Table 10.)

Table 10 Students' Interview Q3: Why do you think students cheat?

Reasons behind cheating	Number of students
Getting better grades	11
Habit	2
Easier than studying	4
Pressure from teachers	1

In the fourth question, the students were asked if cheating can ever be justified. 10 out of 15 students said no, none of them said yes, and 5 of them said sometimes. (See Figure 8.)

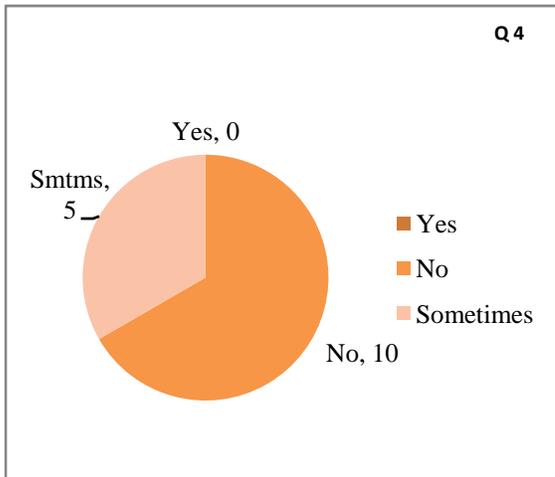


Figure 8 Students' Interview Q4: Is cheating ever justified? When?

In the fifth question, the students were asked if teachers might indirectly help them to cheat. All of them said “yes,” and none of the 15 students said “no.” (See Figure 9.)

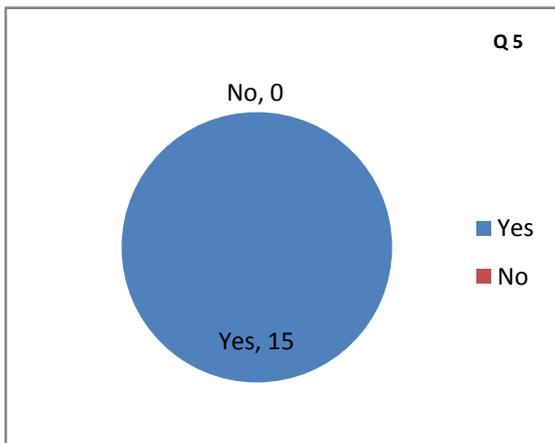


Figure 9: Students' Interview Q5: Do you think teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat?

When the students were asked to explain how teachers might indirectly help them cheat, they answered as follows: 4 of the 16 students said it is when invigilators are busy doing something during invigilation, 3 said it is when the teachers do not do anything about cheating and do not punish cheaters, which will encourage cheating in

the future, and 9 of them said it is when teachers give clues to the students during exams. (See Table 11.)

Table 11 Students' Interview Q5: Do you think teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat? If yes, how?

Teachers make it easy for students to cheat	Number of students
Teachers busy	4
Teachers ignoring cheating	3
Teachers giving clues	9

The students were also asked a sixth question about how teachers can make it hard for students to cheat. 3 out of the 15 students said that it is when teachers include different exam versions, 11 of them said teachers should watch students very carefully during invigilation, 1 student said that teachers should teach well, 3 of them said there should be more than one invigilator, 2 said that teachers should punish cheaters in order to prevent cheating in the future, and 4 said that teachers should take some preventive measures before exams start, such as searching students, separating the desks, placing cameras in the classrooms and making exams not easy to be cheated on. (See Table 12.)

Table 12 Students' Interview Q6: What do some teachers do that make it hard for students to cheat?

Teachers make it hard for students to cheat	Number of students
Different exam versions	3
Watching carefully	11
Teaching well	1
More than one invigilator	3
Punish cheaters	2
Take preventive measures	4

The last two questions in the students' interview were about any related points they would like to discuss and about their own experience in cheating. 6 students out of 15 gave their opinions about cheating, and 9 did not answer. 1 student said that

cheating is not fair and there should be something done about it, another student said that teachers should teach well and give very clear exam questions so that students understand and do not need to cheat, and 2 students said that some teachers directly help students to cheat. This is when they have private tutors who give the students the answers of the exam ahead of time, or when they give direct answers on board. 1 student said teachers should watch students very carefully, and 1 student talked about the threatening that students might be exposed to from their classmates if they do not let them cheat. (See Table 13.)

Table 13 Students' Interview Q7: Do you have any other point related to cheating you would like to talk about?

More related points	Number of students
Cheating is not fair	1
Teachers should teach well	1
Sometimes teachers help students cheat directly	2
Teachers should watch carefully	1
Threatening from other students	1
n.a.	9

n.a.= no answer

The last question in the interview was about the interviewed students' personal experiences in cheating. All of the 15 students admitted cheating. 9 out of the 15 students said that they had copied from a peer, and one student mentioned asking teachers for clues. 3 students acknowledged writing on objects such as calculators, tissue papers, and desks, 2 students talked about using cribs, and 2 more talked about whispering answers. 1 student cited showing others the exam papers, another talked about the use of the bodily signals, and the last mentioned exchanging papers. (See Table 14.)

Table 14 Students' Interview Q8: Can you talk about your own experience of cheating?

Cheating techniques used	Number of students
Copying from a peer	9
Asking teachers for clues	1
Write on objects (tissue papers, calculators, desks)	3
Cribs	2
Whispering answers	2
Showing papers	1
Body signals	1
Exchanging papers	1

For a summary of the interviewed students' responses to the close-ended and open-ended questions, see Appendices N and O.

Teachers' Questionnaire

Close-ended Questions for Teachers

Addressing Research Question 2 about cheating techniques which teachers were aware of, the teacher questionnaire consisted of open-ended and close-ended questions. The first five questions of the teachers' questionnaire were yes/no questions about if their students used five types of cheating techniques. The teachers responded to them as follows. In the first question (QA1), the teachers were asked if their students had ever copied from other students without their knowledge. 12 out of 16 teachers said "yes," 3 said "no," and 1 said "don't know." In the second question (QA2), the teachers were asked if their students had ever copied from other students with their knowledge. 11 out of 16 teachers said "yes," 4 said "no" and 1 said "don't know." In the third question (QA3), the teachers were asked if their students had ever used crib notes to cheat. 7 out of 16 teachers said "yes," 6 said "no" and 3 said "don't know." In the fourth question (QA4), the teachers were asked if their students had

ever plagiarized. 10 out of 16 teachers said “yes,” 4 said “no,” and 2 said “don’t know.” In the fifth question (QA5), the teachers were asked if their students had ever used technology to cheat. Out of 16 teachers, 1 said “yes,” 12 said “no,” and 3 said “don’t know.” (See Figures 10, 11 , 12 , 13 and 14.)

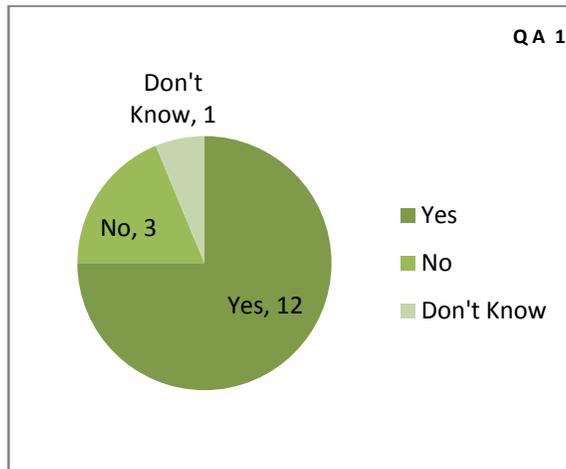


Figure 10: Teachers’ Questionnaire QA1: Copying from a peer without his/her knowledge.

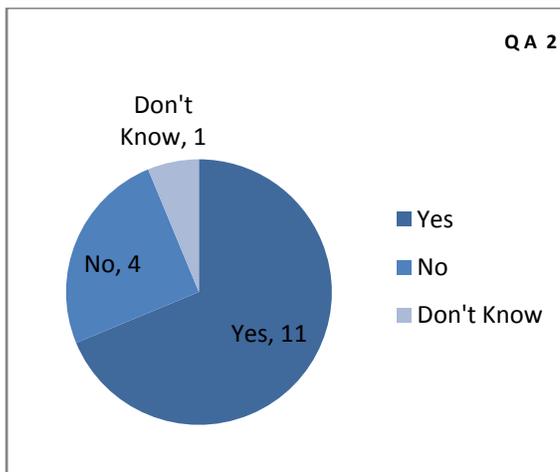


Figure 11: Teachers’ Questionnaire QA2: Copying from a peer with his/her knowledge.

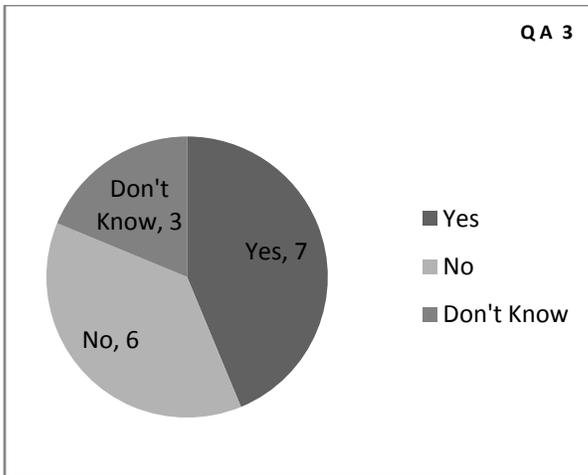


Figure 12: Teachers' Questionnaire QA3: Using crib notes or any kind of cheat sheets.

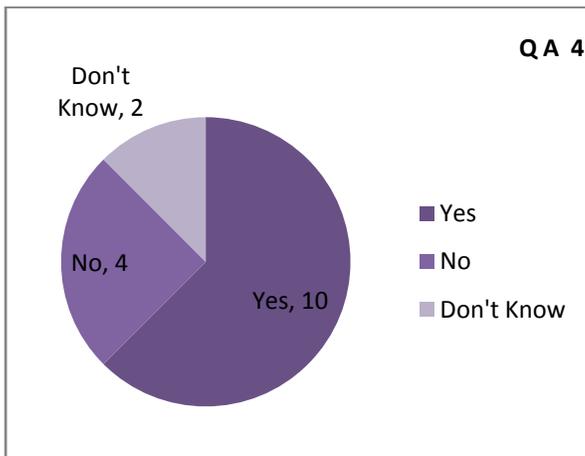


Figure 13: Teachers' Questionnaire QA4: Plagiarizing (taking information from another source and submitting it as their own work).

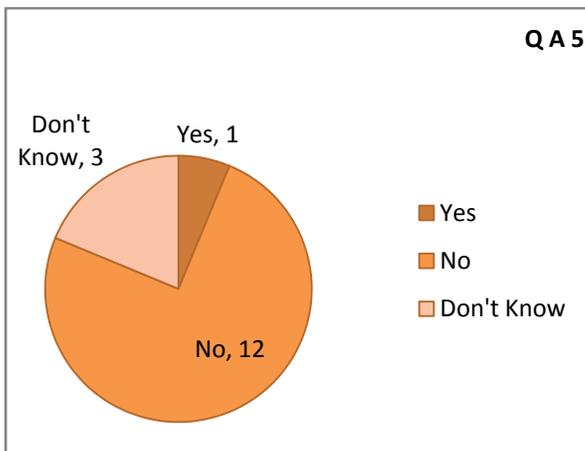


Figure 14: Teachers' Questionnaire QA5: Using technology such as cell phones, IPods, etc.

There were three more close-ended questions asked of the teachers, and one of them (QC) was whether teachers consider plagiarism to be a serious problem or not. 7 out of 16 teachers said “yes,” 6 said “no,” and 3 said “don’t know.” (See Figure 15.)

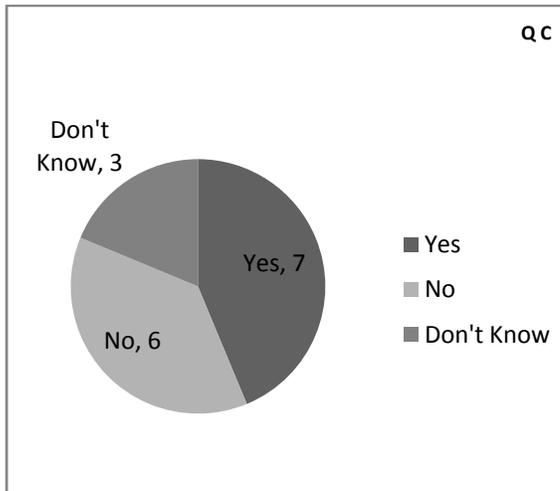


Figure 15: Teachers’ Questionnaire QC: Do you consider plagiarism to be a serious problem?

The second close-ended question (QF) was about the procedures that English teachers take if students are caught cheating. There were seven variables, and the teachers were supposed to tick one or more variable. In this question, the teachers gave more than one answer. None of the 16 teachers said, “ignore cheating or yell at the students who cheated.” 10 teachers said, “reduce grades.” 10 teachers said, “report to administration.” 8 teachers said, “make the students repeat the exam with clearer observation.” And 7 teachers said, “give zero.” (See Figure 16.)

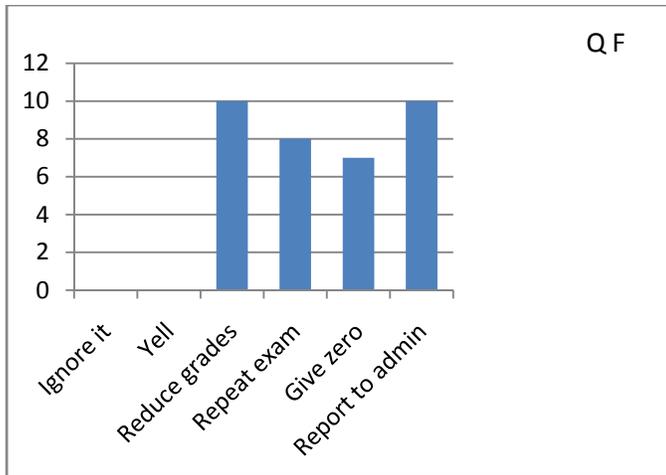


Figure 16: Teachers' Questionnaire QF: How do you deal with students if they are caught cheating?

The last close-ended question (QH) asked if teachers thought that requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating. 5 out of 16 teachers said “yes,” 9 said “no,” and 2 said “don’t know.” (See Figure 17.)

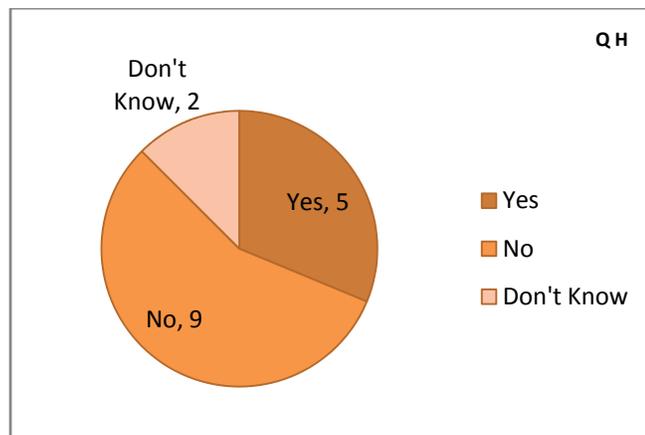


Figure 17: Teachers' Questionnaire QH: Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating?

For a summary of the teachers' responses to the close-ended questions, see Appendix G.

Open-ended Questions for Teachers

In the open-ended questions, the teachers were asked different questions about cheating. It is important here to mention that the comments in quotations in the tables are the teachers' actual words. First, teachers were asked about any other techniques that they thought might have been used by their students to cheat on tests (QB). 6 out of 16 teachers said that they had noticed students using body signals of various kinds, which included hand signals and eye signals. There were also 2 teachers who had noticed students whispering answers to each other or sometimes talking loudly. 5 more teachers had caught students writing on objects such as chairs, desks, erasers, tissues, books and cribs. 2 teachers had noticed students writing on body parts such as hands, legs and shoes. 1 teacher had noticed students opening their books during exams. (See Table 15.) Some teachers here explained that some of the techniques they mentioned were reported by other students.

Table 15 Teachers' Questionnaire QB: What are other techniques that your students might use?

Cheating techniques	Number of teachers
Bodily signals "eye signals," "hand signals"	6
Verbal "whispering," "talking"	2
Writing on/in objects "erasers," "chairs," "desks," "tissues," "books," "cribs"	5
Writing on body parts "hands," "legs," "shoes"	2
Books "opening books," "hiding books in the bathroom"	1

The comments in quotations in the tables are the teachers' actual words. In the second open-ended question (QD), the teachers were asked about how they could tell that students were cheating. 8 teachers said that they knew that their students were cheating because they were acting nervously and looking around. 7 more teachers

said that after the exams were finished, they noticed that weak students were getting higher marks than their actual level and they noticed identical wrong answers. 4 teachers did not answer this question, but 3 gave more than one answer. (See Table 16.)

Table 16 Teachers' Questionnaire QD: How could a teacher tell if a student is cheating?

Description	Number of teachers
Students' manner "nervous," "looking around"	8
After correction "higher level," "identical wrong answers"	7
n.a.*	4

*n.a. = no answer

In the third open-ended question (QE), the teachers were asked about general procedures they take to prevent cheating during exams. The answers were categorized into three groups: preventive measures before exams, procedures taken during exams, and procedures taken if cheating takes place. Out of 16 teachers, 1 said that before cheating takes place, teachers warn students about the consequences and punishments they might be exposed to if they are caught cheating. 9 teachers said that they usually take actual preventive measures before exams such as searching desks for crib sheets, separating the desks, and changing seating. 8 teachers said that during tests, they watch students carefully to prevent cheating. 2 teachers said that if cheating takes place, they punish the cheating student in order to prevent cheating from taking place next time. (Some teachers here gave more than one answer.) (See Table 17.)

Table 17 Teachers' Questionnaire QE: What do you do to prevent cheating from occurring in classroom?

Description	Number of teachers
Verbal procedures before cheating "verbal warning"	1
Actual procedures before cheating "separating desks," "search students and desks," "change seating"	9
During exam "watch carefully"	8
After cheating "punish cheaters"	2

The comments in quotations in the tables are the teachers' actual words. The fourth open-ended question (QG) was about the other procedures that are taken at the teachers' schools if students are caught cheating. Teachers gave more than one answer. 6 teachers said that they call parents. 2 teachers said, "punish students." 5 teachers said, "reduce grades." 4 teachers said, "report to administration." 2 teachers said, "talking to students personally," and 1 teacher said, "give a warning." (See Table 18.)

Table 18 Teachers' Questionnaire QG: What are any other procedures taken at your school?

Description	Number of teachers
Call parents	6
Punish students	2
Reduce grades	5
Report to administration	4
Talking to students personally	2
Give a warning	1

Finally, teachers were asked about whether or not they think that asking students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating and why (QH). 9 out of 16 teachers said "no" because students usually do not keep their word and they would cheat no matter what teachers do. 5 teachers said "yes," it might reduce cheating

because students would be committed to what they have signed. 2 teachers said, “don’t know.” (Some teachers gave more than one answer.) (See Table 19.)

Table 19 Teachers’ Questionnaire QH: Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating? Why/Why not?

Description	Number of students
No, students won’t keep their word	9
Yes, students will be committed	5
Don’t know	2

For a summary of the teachers’ responses to the open-ended questions, see Appendix H.

Teachers’ Interviews

In order to answer Research Question 2, eight teachers were interviewed to further explore cheating techniques teachers have observed. They were four male and four female teachers from private schools in UAE. The first question the teachers were asked was about the cheating techniques their students use during exams. 4 out of 8 teachers said that they noticed students copying from other students. 3 teachers said that they noticed students writing on objects such as erasers and desks. 1 teacher said he caught students whispering answers. 1 teacher said he saw students opening books, and 1 teacher talked about students changing answers after the teachers’ corrections. (See Table 20.)

Table 20 Teachers’ Interview Q1: Have you ever seen any of your students cheat during exams? What did they do?

Cheating techniques	Number of teachers
Copying from a peer	4
Whispering/ talking	1
Writing on/in objects	3
Opening books	1
Other: Changing answers after the teachers’ corrections	1

The second question for the teachers was about the cheating techniques that students use during exams in their colleagues' classes as reported to them by their fellow teachers. One teacher said that he/she had noticed students copying from a peer. Another teacher talked about students using hand signals, while one teacher talked about students' writing on clothes, desks, chairs and walls. Another teacher talked about students opening books, and one teacher talked about students using wireless devices. (See Table 21.)

Table 21 Teachers' Interview Q2: Have you been told about cheating techniques taking place in any of your colleagues' classrooms? What did they do?

Cheating techniques	Number of teachers reporting
Copying from a peer	1
Bodily signals	1
Writing on/in objects	1
Opening books	1
Other: wireless devices	1

The third question was about the reasons behind students' cheating. 4 out of 8 teachers said that the main reason is that students want to get better grades, 3 teachers said it is carelessness, and 1 teacher said it is dishonesty and lack of confidence. Also, 1 teacher said it is the pressure placed upon students from their parents. (See Table 22.)

Table 22 Teachers' Interview Q3: Why do you think students cheat?

Reasons behind cheating	Number of teachers reporting
Getting better grades	4
Carelessness	3
Dishonesty and lack of confidence	1
Pressure from parents	1

In the fourth question, the teachers were asked if cheating can ever be justified. None of the 8 teachers said yes, 7 said no, and 1 did not answer. (See Figure 18.)

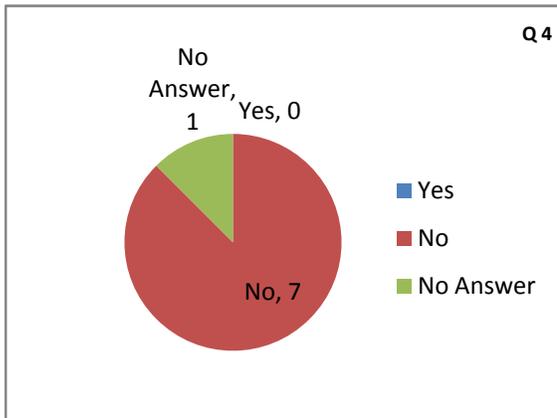


Figure 18 Teachers' Interview: Q4 Is cheating ever justified? When?

In the fifth question, the teachers were asked whether or not they can indirectly make it easy for students to cheat. 3 teachers out of 8 said "no," and 5 said "yes." (See Figure 19.)

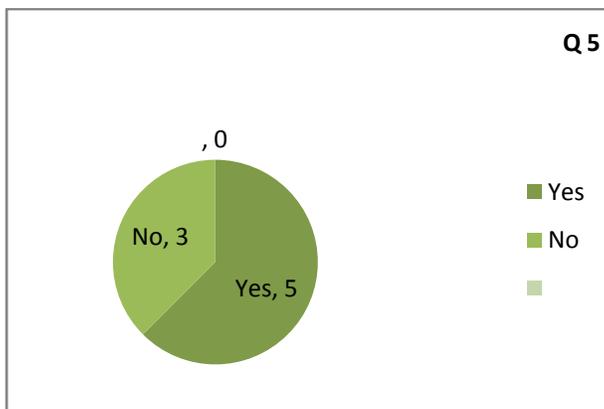


Figure 19 Teachers' Interview Q5: Do you think that teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat?

In the open-ended part of question 5, the teachers were asked if they can indirectly make it easy for students to cheat, and if yes, how? 5 out of eight teachers

said “yes” teachers can make it easy for students to cheat. 3 of those 5 said it is possible when teachers are busy correcting or not watching very carefully. 1 teacher said it is possible when teachers ignore cheating, and 1 teacher said it is possible when teachers give clues to students. Yet another teacher said it is possible when teachers do not teach well. (One teacher here gave two reasons). (See Table 23.)

Table 23 Teachers’ Interview Q5: Do you think that teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat? If yes, how?

Teachers make it easy for students to cheat	Number of teachers
Busy	3
Ignoring cheating	1
Giving clues	1
Not teaching well	1

The sixth question was about what teachers do to make it hard for students to cheat. 4 out of the 8 teachers said that using different exam versions is one thing. 6 teachers said when teachers watch very carefully, students will not be able to cheat, and 1 teacher said when teachers teach well they will make it hard for students to cheat. (See Table 24.)

Table 24 Teachers’ Interview Q6: What do some teachers do that make it hard for students to cheat?

Teachers make it hard for students to cheat	Number of teachers
Different exam versions	4
Watching carefully	6
Teaching well	1

In the seventh question in the teachers’ interview, the teachers were asked if there were other related points they would like to talk about. 2 out of 8 teachers said that there should be severe punishments for cheating students in order to stop this phenomenon, and 1 teacher said that sometimes teachers directly help students cheat by giving clues or ignoring cheating. (See Table 25.)

Table 25 Teachers' Interview Q7: Do you have any other points related to cheating you would like to talk about?

More related points	Number of teachers
Severe punishments	2
Sometimes teachers help students cheat directly	1

In the eighth question, the teachers were asked about the procedures that they take against students caught cheating. 3 out of eight teachers said that they call parents, 4 said that they deduct marks, 1 said they suspend students from school, 2 said they warn students, and 4 said they report it to administration. (See Table 26.)

Table 26 Teachers' Interview Q8: What are the procedures taken against cheating students if they were caught cheating?

Procedures taken	Number of teachers
Call parent	3
Deduct marks	4
Suspend temporarily	1
Warn the students	2
Report to administration	4

For a summary of the interviewed teachers' responses to the close-ended and open-ended questions, see Appendices L and M.

Classroom Observations

To investigate steps taken by invigilators concerning cheating (Research Question 3), I observed three classroom observations of final English exams for Grade 10 Boys, Grade 10 Girls, and Grade 9 Boys. Each exam took an hour and a half. The invigilators were not English teachers, because these schools have a policy not to allow teachers to invigilate exams in their own subjects. The checklist prepared was based on the results from the questionnaires and the interviews. This checklist included some of the procedures that the teachers and the administrators provided. I

also wanted to compare some of the procedures the teachers and administrators talked about and the actual implementation of these procedures. (See Table 27.)

Table 27: Classroom Observation Profile

Grade level	Gender	Number of students	Duration	Number of invigilators
9 th	Boys	11	90 min.	2
10 th	Girls	17	90 min.	2
10 th	Boys	15	90 min.	1

Before the students of Grade 9 Boys came to the classrooms, their desks were searched, and when they arrived, the invigilators searched their pencil cases. During observations of this class’s final exam, students were talking almost all the time during the exam. Some of them were asking about the time, and others were talking with the students outside the classroom because the door was open all the time. One student asked another about the meaning of the word “punctuate” in Arabic, which was a question in the writing exam, and the other student answered him. The invigilators were not English teachers, so they did not understand the word “punctuate.” Two students asked for permission to go to the bathroom, and the teachers allowed them to do so. Some students asked the rotating supervisor who was also their English teacher for clues when she came, but she refused to give them answers.

I did not observe cheating taking place, except for the student asking for explanation of the word “punctuate,” but it was not a quiet and peaceful invigilation. The teachers were continually asking the students to keep quiet. Students were not allowed to pass objects or bring electric devices. And there was a note written on the board saying “No talking – No borrowing of materials.” Although I saw some

students looking at others' papers, I cannot confirm that they were cheating because I did not see them writing anything immediately after looking at someone else's paper. They did not stare at the papers for a long period of time. Their glances were very short and it would have been unlikely for them to be able to cheat with such quick glances. In other words, I did not observe extensive cheating taking place. (See Tables 28 and 29 for more details.)

Table 28: Class Observation 9th Grade (Boys) Invigilator Actions

Invigilator actions	Yes/no
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Response to students speaking	Yes
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	No
Giving clues to students	No

Table 29 Class Observation 9th Grade (Boys) Student Actions

Students Actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	Yes
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Yes
Reading instructions	Yes

In the 10th Grade (Boys and Girls) classes, the exam was GCSE a version of (General Certificate of Secondary Education), which includes only unseen comprehension and composition. I did not observe cheating taking place during the exam. There were two invigilators in the girls' section and one in the boys' section. Invigilators searched the students' desks before students entered the room, and did not allow books or any other devices in the classroom. In addition, there were cameras placed in one of the corners of the classroom so that people in the

administration could easily watch students in their classes. Students were talking during exams but not cheating; they were simply asking about the time and when they could go out. The one invigilator in the boys' classroom was busy for some time doing paper work, while students were talking to each other during that time. (See Tables 30, 31, 32, and 33.)

Table 30 Class Observation 10th Grade (Boys) Invigilator Actions

Invigilator actions (one invigilator)	Yes/no/somewhat
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Responding to students speaking	Yes
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	Somewhat
Giving clues to students	No

Table 31 Class Observation 10th Grade (Boys) Student Actions

Students' actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	No
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Not observed
Reading instructions	Yes

Table 32 Class Observation 10th Grade (Girls) Invigilator Actions

Invigilators' actions (two invigilators)	Yes/no
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Responding to students speaking	Yes,
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	Yes
Giving clues to students	No

Table 33 Class Observation 10th Grade (Girls) Student Actions

Students' actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	No
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Not observed
Reading instructions	Yes

For a summary of the classroom observation responses by students and invigilators, see Appendices P, Q and R.

Administrators' Questionnaire

Addressing Research Question 4, a questionnaire for school administrators was given to the 17 (5 male and 12 female) administrators from private schools in the UAE participating in this research. Some of the administrators were Arabic speakers, which is why the questionnaire was translated into Arabic, in addition to the English version for the English speakers. The questionnaire included three questions. The first and the second questions included close-ended and open-ended questions, and some of the administrators' responses to the open-ended portion overlapped with the close-ended portions, so the data were analyzed with the open-ended components. The answers of these two questions were also classified into two groups: procedures taken before exams, and procedures taken if students were caught cheating.

The first question (QA) about the procedures taken before exams included four alternatives. The administrators ticked more than one variable and gave more than one answer in the open-ended section. 11 out of 17 administrators said that they explain how cheating might be useless. None of the administrators said that they ask their students to sign an honor code. 5 out of 17 said that they provide different exam versions. 15 out of 17 said that they explain the punishments for their students. 1 said

that he/she separates the desks. 7 out of 17 said that they mix different exam levels.

And 6 said that they search students and their desks. (See Table 34.)

Table 34 Administrators' Questionnaire QA: What procedures do you take before exams to prevent cheating from occurring?

Procedures taken	Number of administrators
Explain how cheating might be useless	11
Ask students to sign an honor code	0
Ask teachers to provide different exam versions	5
Explain the punishments	15
Other: Separating students	1
Other: Mix different grade levels	7
Other: Searching students and their desks	6

In the second question (QB), the administrators were asked about the procedures they take if students are caught cheating. There were seven alternatives listed. None of the 17 administrators said that they ignore or tolerate cheating students. 12 administrators said that they call on parents. 10 out of 17 said they ask teachers to give a grade of zero. 5 administrators said they fail the students in the subject. 5 administrators said they suspend the students temporarily. And none said they suspend the students permanently. 9 administrators also gave more procedures such as deducting grades. 4 said that they warn the students. (See Table 35.)

Table 35 Administrators' Questionnaire QB: What procedures do you take with students who are caught cheating in exams?

Procedures taken	Number of administrators
Ignore it	0
Tolerate it	0
Call on parents	12
Ask teachers to give zero	10
Fail the students in the subject	5
Suspend the students temporarily	5
Suspend students permanently	0
Deducting grades	9
Warn students	4

The last question (QC) in the administrators’ questionnaire was about whether signing a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating or not. 8 out of 15 said “no” and explained that nothing will stop cheating students from cheating no matter what has been done, and 7 said “yes,” pointing out that it will make students become afraid to cheat. 2 administrators said “don’t know” and did not answer the question why/why not. (See Table 36.)

Table 36 Administrators’ Questionnaire QC: Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating? Why/ Why not?

Signing an honor code	Number of students
No, nothing will stop cheaters from cheating	8
Yes, they will be afraid to cheat	7
Don’t know and gave no reason	2

For a summary of the administrators’ responses to the close-ended and open-ended questions, see Appendix K.

CHAPTER 5 IMPLICATIONS

The information collected in this research was of three types: questionnaires, interviews and observations. After obtaining consent, I surveyed and interviewed three groups of participants: teachers, students and administrators of private schools in the UAE. This research was very useful for me personally as an English teacher and a mother of school children, and I expect it to be useful for many other English teachers, too, who think, as I used to think, that they are very successful teachers and no students can play games on them and cheat during exams.

This research addressed the cheating techniques used by students in private schools in the UAE, the cheating techniques that were observed by the teachers of these private schools, the preventive measures and the teachers' responses to cheating once it occurred, and finally the procedures taken by the administrators of these schools to prevent and respond to cheating.

Research Question 1:

What cheating techniques (if any)

do students at some private secondary schools in the UAE report being used by other students (or themselves) during English tests?)

It was very interesting and useful to learn from the students themselves about the cheating techniques that are used, because they are the main experts here in such a field. Some of the techniques found in my research are similar to what was addressed before by Cizek (1999), Bushway and Nash (1977), Bramucci (2003), and Al Najami (2009), but there were a few additions. Using cribs, for example, is a cheating technique known by teachers to be very popular, but students of this study admitted

that they hid cribs in places that might be very difficult for teachers to discover, such as clothes, shoes, pockets, etc. Passing notes is also a very well known technique, but if students were passing them on erasers, rulers, tissue papers, etc., this would be less likely to be detected. Writing on papers or desks is also very popular and well known by teachers, but writing on other places such as walls, calculators, and body parts might be more difficult to detect. Hand signals and whispering answers are also popular techniques, but eye or face signals might be more difficult to detect, so to speak. There is also the use of technology in cheating, such as I Pods, blue tooth, ear pieces, mobile phones, and more importantly, magic pens with secret ink, which can never be seen unless the blank paper with notes written with this colorless pen is shaded. Hiding books is also easily detected, but hiding them in the bathroom and asking for urgent permission to go to the bathroom is less easily discovered by teachers. One student said, “Ask for permission to go to the bathroom and open the book there.”

Plagiarizing might also be very difficult to detect unless teachers have very up-to-date plagiarism-checking programs for this purpose, or use Google, or are able to recognize the students’ writing style. Copying from a peer might also be easily detected, but making others distract the teachers’ attention to allow copying from that peer is really more tricky to detect.

The aspect which was very interesting about these techniques mentioned by the students was that almost all of the 51 surveyed students admitted that cheating is wrong, except for a very few who said that cheating is wrong unless the help comes from the other student’s willingness to help and a few more who said that plagiarizing is acceptable. And it was really very shocking that they all said that they had noticed

others cheating. One student said, “we distract the teacher’s attention to allow others to cheat.” Another interesting observation was that all of the 15 interviewed students admitted that they had cheated at least once in their life. Here we are talking about 100% of students acting dishonestly in schools, which is really a very sobering research result. After asking students in the interviews about the techniques that students used in cheating and what they think of cheating, it was very important to ask them about the reasons behind cheating. They said that getting higher grades is the most important reason behind cheating, some of them said that through time cheating becomes a habit that students might not be able to get rid of, and others said that it is the teachers who are to blame because of the great pressure they impose on students, especially when they give more than one exam a day or too much work to do at home. One student mentioned teachers not teaching very well could encourage cheating. This idea of teachers not teaching well is very essential to think about as one strong reason that can push students to cheat, because if students do not understand the material explained by their teachers they may be more likely to resort to cheating, and the opposite might be true as well, meaning that if students do understand the material very well, they may be less tempted to cheat.

In spite of the large percentages of students talking about the techniques that others used to cheat, there was a sizeable percentage of students who were against the idea of reporting cheating even though they believed that cheating is wrong and can never be justified. Being a teacher, I tried to figure out more about this issue of not reporting cheating, and the reasons given by the surveyed students were that some students will get into trouble if they report cheating. One of those students said, “I will be in a big trouble if I report cheating.” Another said, “who cares, it’s not my

own business.” More importantly for the students, they might lose others’ friendship. More surprising was that a great number of students do not support the idea of signing an honor code, thinking that it is not going to stop cheaters from cheating. They reacted negatively and did not welcome such an idea. One student said, “no one will care about a piece of paper that says you can’t cheat.” Another student said that “lying is as easy as cheating, so it would be pointless.”

Another alarming finding was that 100% of the interviewed students said that teachers sometimes help students cheat indirectly, and more importantly, two students mentioned in their interview that their teachers directly help them cheat. One said that “our teacher helps us cheat directly by giving us answers on board.” I think that if students no longer trust their school authorities, who are the teachers and the administrators, nothing will stop them from cheating, and they will no longer feel that academic institutions are fair.

From the students’ questionnaires and interviews, we as English teachers might learn some valuable lessons. For example, teaching well, that is being well prepared and professional, might prevent cheating from occurring in classroom. If teachers find themselves not professional enough to teach they might take more training sessions or ask for help from those who can really help them become better teachers such as the teaching institutions, the teacher development courses that their schools might offer them, and online teacher training programs. And also not placing too much pressure on students, especially during exams, might help. According to the interviewed students, teachers might make it hard for students to cheat if teachers taught very well, gave clear questions in exams, reduced the easy cheating question types such as multiple-choice questions, stopped helping students indirectly when

giving students clues during exams, arranged for more than one invigilator in the classrooms, watched students very carefully, designed more than one exam version, and took some preventive measures before exams such as searching students and separating desks. The students also said that the teachers should take other measures if cheating takes place, such as punishing the cheating students and reporting cheating to the administration. Another piece of advice given by students was that teachers should stop helping students directly, such as when giving answers to the students they are tutoring at home. This practice of teachers tutoring students is allowed in some schools and strictly forbidden in other schools. Also, sometimes teachers are friends with students' parents, or sometimes they tell students the answers of the questions directly in the exams, thinking that if students' scores are higher, this will improve the teachers' reputation or the teachers' end-of-year report.

It was very important to observe students and invigilators "live," so to speak, and to notice their responses during an English final exam. The classroom observations were very useful in order to make sure that what teachers, students, and administrators were saying they did was actually implemented. The tenth grade exam was a GCSE exam which is distributed to schools on line and printed and photocopied at schools. In the tenth grade exam, it was very difficult for students to cheat because the exam, which I had a look at, involved writing and unseen reading comprehension. In other words, students could not even bring cribs with them because the exam was not directly related to the students' textbooks that they study from throughout the year. What is notable about the particular school where I observed the tenth grade exam is that there is no strict punishment for cheating students. The administrators, when they were surveyed, said that there were no

particular punishments for cheating students. What was noticeable about the students' response to me while I was sitting and watching them taking their English exam was that they did not even care about my presence in the classroom. However, it was not the same for the teachers, who wanted to know who I was and what I was doing there. Teachers might have been more curious because they feared that my watching them might have a negative impact on them in case cheating took place and reports were sent to the administration. I explained to the teachers that I was doing a study that involved watching procedures taken during exams.

Although students act dishonestly when cheating, these students somehow seemed to be honest in admitting this action, and even to criticize it as an unjustified means of getting higher grades. In other words, students might cheat because teachers sometimes enable them to do this, indirectly and/or directly, but they know it is wrong. If teachers were to take precautionary measures to prevent cheating before it occurs, students might become less likely to cheat. And if teachers were to punish cheating students, this phenomenon might be lessened.

More importantly, it is crucial that teachers themselves act honestly if they want their students to be honest. This can also be achieved when they do not allow students to cheat by watching very carefully, punishing those who cheat, and taking precautionary procedures before exams start. Teachers also need to do their best to teach well, prepare well, and work hard.

Research Question 2:

What cheating techniques (if any)

are English teachers at private elementary and secondary schools in the UAE aware of/observe their students using during English tests?

Sixteen teachers were also surveyed and interviewed in this study. They talked about the cheating techniques that they observed students using in their classes. Some of these techniques I asked the teachers about were mentioned by Cizek (1999), and others were mentioned by Bushway and Nash (1977). Examples of these techniques are crib notes, looking at another student's paper, writing on objects, and body signals. Others were very close to what the students mentioned. These techniques were whispering answers, using crib notes, bodily signals, opening books, copying from a peer, and writing on erasers. Although the techniques detected by teachers were in some ways similar to those reported by students, the students were more expert in describing their techniques in more detail. The teachers also said in the interviews that most of the techniques they had detected were with the help of other students who wanted to report cheating. Also, some teachers learned about these techniques from students who told their teachers stories about cheating. It is logical that teachers know less about cheating techniques because they might not be aware of many techniques used by "professional" student cheaters.

It was really very ironic that teachers were fully blaming the students for cheating, while students were blaming teachers for encouraging them to do so. It is important for both teachers and students to be very straightforward and start learning from each other's mistakes in order to achieve an honest and high quality level of education.

Research Question 3:

What steps (if any)

do invigilators at private secondary schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to cheating during English tests?

McCabe (2001), Barnett and Dalton (1981), Cizek (2001), and Hawkins (1932) reported procedures and advice given to teachers to prevent cheating from taking place and even to keep tests highly secure. There were many procedures teachers reported taking to prevent cheating from taking place during exams. Some of the procedures were observed by me during my three class observations, and others were just reported by the English teachers I surveyed and interviewed. Some of these procedures that the teachers reported were separating desks, warning students about the consequences of cheating, searching for crib notes in desks, pencil cases or even pockets, designing different exam versions, and preparing exams that make it hard to cheat. Teachers reported watching students very carefully, not ignoring cheating if it took place, and acting immediately by punishing the cheating student, and mixing different grade levels in order to make it hard for students to look at someone else's paper or even talk to a peer. After cheating took place, especially when teachers were correcting the exams, teachers mentioned calling parents, reducing marks, and reporting cheating to the administration.

In my actual observations, some of the procedures that the teachers reported were implemented, while others were not. For example, desks were separated, no devices were allowed into the classrooms, and no crib notes were seen with the students. But there were some students speaking, and invigilators unsuccessfully tried to stop them, and there was only one exam version.

When asked about what they thought of the idea of making students sign an honor code, 9 out of 16 teachers did not support such an idea. One teacher said, “honor code is useless here. There seems to be a culture of cheating.” None of the teachers, too, said that they ignored cheating or even tolerated it, in spite the fact that students were saying that teachers sometimes ignored cheating.

When teachers were asked about the reasons behind students cheating, they gave reasons similar to those the students gave, such as students wanting to get higher grades, being dishonest, and finding exams hard, and their parents not telling them about the negative consequences of cheating. Teachers also admitted that sometimes they indirectly help students cheat, which occurs when they are busy doing something during invigilation, or when they ignore cheating. One teacher mentioned cheating can occur when teachers do not teach well. One very important and effective procedure that teachers said the administrators use to prevent cheating during exams is mixing different grade levels of students, especially in final exams, which makes copying from a peer, which is considered to be the most popular technique of cheating, almost impossible. I noticed how important this point was when I observed an English final exam for grade 9 students who were looking at each others’ papers quite often because they were all from the same grade level and not mixed grade levels.

One of the main purposes I intended to achieve from the beginning was to compare what the English teachers told me about the procedures they take before and during tests are taken and between what I actually observed during my three classes observation. Unfortunately, this was hard to do because the English teachers I surveyed and interviewed were not the same as the invigilators. However, the fact

that English teachers were not invigilators was revealing. English teachers (like teachers in all subjects) were not allowed to invigilate because school administrations feared that those teachers might help students during exams or give clues to students.

Research Question 4:

What steps (if any)

do the school administrators at private schools in the UAE take to prevent and/or respond to students cheating during English tests?

Administrators also said that there are certain procedures to address the issue of students cheating. Some of these procedures are explaining the punishments that students might face if they are caught cheating, asking teachers to provide different exam versions, mixing different grade levels of students in the same classroom so that students will not be able to cheat from other students around them, getting rid of books and other devices before exams start, and searching students and their desks before exams start. After cheating takes place, there are many other procedures that are taken by administrators. Some of these are calling parents, giving students written warnings, reducing marks, giving zeros, and suspending students temporarily. When surveying the administrators, it was surprising that 8 out of 17 administrators also did not support the idea of making students sign an honor code. None of the administrators I surveyed said that they used an honor code as a procedure to prevent cheating.

Another revealing issue was when I tried to compare what the teachers and administrators said about the procedures they take before and during exams and what I actually observed during my three observations of Grades 9 and 10. Some of the stated procedures were followed, such as searching students and separating desks, and

others were not, such as warning students, punishing those who cheat, and watching students very carefully. It is important here to mention that the English teachers whom I surveyed and interviewed are not the same as the invigilators whom I observed. So it is not fair to say that what the teachers said about the procedures was not implemented. But at the same time, I expected to see somewhat similar procedures because school instructions are issued by school administrators and invigilators should implement those roles. Not allowing teachers to invigilate their own classes is a good procedure taken by the school administration because it might reduce cheating. Students are not allowed to ask the invigilator for any clarification but must wait for the supervisor who passes by and clarifies points if needed. If English teachers invigilate their own classes' exams, this might push students to keep asking questions which might disturb other classmates and create opportunities for other students to cheat while the teachers is distracted, and the teacher might also give students some clues when clarifying points in the tests.

The Usefulness of Such Research

This research can be of great help for teachers who might not know what to do to prevent cheating, or what actions to take during invigilation if cheating takes place. It was very useful to me personally, because I have always thought that I am a very tough teacher who can easily detect cheating and respond to it. Unfortunately, after surveying and interviewing the students, I realized that cheating might have occurred many times in my class without my awareness of it, especially when I was allowing students to go to the bathroom without knowing that they might have been hiding books there or hiding cribs in their pockets and wanting to have a look at them in the bathroom. I was also not aware of most of the body signals that my students might

have been using, or their passing tissue papers with notes on them to each other, claiming that they were sick and so on, or passing notes written on objects such as erasers, rulers and even calculators.

Another thing teachers might be mistaken about is the blame that they always throw on the students' shoulders. These teachers did not blame themselves for giving too much work for students to do at home, or for when the instructions in the exams are not clear for the students to understand, or when they do not respond appropriately to cheating when it occurs. It is important for teachers to start looking at the cheating issue from a different perspective, recognizing their responsibility to address cheating, which might help with finding more efficient solutions to solve this problem.

Limitations

There were some difficulties I encountered when I started conducting this study. First of all, out of the six schools I went to, I only received permission from four schools to give out the questionnaires and interview the participants. Secondly, there was a small number of teachers and administrators participating in my study. Thirdly, I was able to observe classes at one school only, and the teachers that I surveyed were not the same as the invigilators I observed so I was not able to compare what they said with what I actually observed. Fourthly, time was a serious limitation because teachers, administrators, and students were very busy, and I did not have time to discuss thoroughly issues raised in the interviews. Finally, one of the two recordings was not of a high quality because of the background noise. Also because of time constraints, only two interviews were tape-recorded, and the other interviews were reported by my notes.

Suggestions for Further Research

This kind of research is really very important because cheating sometimes takes place on a daily basis in teachers' classrooms. This particular issue can have a very bad effect in the future on people's social life. This can be clear when a cheating student becomes a cheating engineer or a cheating doctor. Cheating also might have an extremely negative effect on the reputation of education in general. If dishonesty spreads all over schools, this might affect even non-cheating students who believe that it is unfair to study and then have others get higher marks than they do. In addition, non-cheating students may also start suspecting the honesty of the educational process in general, and their teachers, classmates and school administration in particular, if cheating is not addressed.

I suggest further research be done on this issue, especially in terms of the reasons behind cheating. The best way to solve a problem is to learn more about the reasons behind its occurrence. So investigating additional reasons behind such an issue, beyond the ones my participants revealed, will definitely help researchers come up with very useful solutions to the problem of cheating. This can be done by surveying and interviewing teachers, parents and students and asking them directly about the possible reasons behind pushing students to cheat. I also suggest more investigation be done on the negative effect on the students of teachers who do not teach well, and how this can push students to cheat at school. This can be done by surveying school administrators and subject supervisors about the training courses that they might provide for their teachers to help them improve. Another area of research is if/how effective instruction can lessen the temptation to cheat. In addition, further research should be done on the honor code issue and why it is not used and is

not considered important by some teachers, students and administrators in schools in the UAE. This investigation might be implemented in case studies. Another approach is teachers might observe two different groups of students throughout the year, one group who signed an honor code compared with the other group of students who did not sign such a pledge.

References

- Al Najami, S. (2009, January 5). Cheating in school exams goes hi-tech. *Gulf News*. Retrieved January 25, 2009, from <http://gulfnews.com/nation/Education/10272851.html>
- Anonymous. (1939). The ghost writer explains. *The English Journal*, 28(7), 535-538. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/805449>
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Barnett, D. C., & Dalton, J. C. (1981). Why college students cheat. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 22(6), 545-551. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://edu/bgd/prevent.html>
- Billups, A. (2000). Study links code to cheating decline. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved November 2, 2008, from <http://questia.com>
- Bramucci, R. S. (2003). How to cheat: Techniques used by cheaters. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from http://www.teachopolis.org/justice/cheating/cheating_how_to.htm – Advice for instructors.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Bushway, A., & Nash, W. R. (1977). School cheating behavior. *Review of Educational Research*, 47(4), 628-632. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from JSTOR database.
- Campbell, W. G. (1935) *A Comparative investigation of students under an honor system and a proctor system in the same university*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press.

- Cizek, G. J. (1999). *Cheating on tests: How to do it, detect it, and prevent it*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cizek, G. J. (2001, April). *An overview of issues concerning cheating on large-scale tests*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education. Seattle, WA.
- Crawford, C. C. (1930). Dishonesty in objective tests. *The School Review*. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1080626>
- Davies, A., Brown, A., Elder, C., Hill, K., Lumley, T., & McNamara, T. (1999). *Dictionary of language testing*. Studies in language testing 7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davis, S. F., Grover, C. A., Becker, A. H., & McGregor, N. L. (1992). Academic dishonesty: Prevalence, determinants, techniques, and punishments. *Teaching of Psychology*, 19(1),18. Retrieved October 3, 2008, from <http://questia.com>
- Egypt school exam cheats jailed. (2008, September 9). *BBC News*. Retrieved January 27, 2009, from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east
- Harris, R. (2004). Anti-plagiarism strategies for research papers. *VirtualSalt*. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>
- Hawkins, F. E. (1932). The battle against cheating. *The School Review*, 40(10), 781-786. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1080655>
- Institutional testing program: Examinee handbook and admission form*. (2006). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service
- Kirkvliet, J., & Sigmund, C. L. (1999). Can we control cheating in the classroom? *The Journal of Economic Education*, 30(4), 331-343. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from JSTOR database.

- Klein, H.A., Levenburg, N.M., McKendall, M., & Mothersell, W. (2007). Cheating during the college years: How do business school students compare? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 72(2), 197-206. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from econpapers.repec.org/article/kapjbuset
- Lambert, J. C., Lousteau, C. L., & Mochetta, P. T. (2001). New aspects of test security. *The Journal*, 29(1), 54. Retrieved November 2, 2008, from <http://www.questia.com>
- Magnus, J. R., Polterovich, V. M., Danilov, D. L., & Savvateev, A. V. (2002). Tolerance of cheating: An analysis across countries. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 33(2), 125-135. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from JSTOR database.
- McCabe, D. (2001). Cheating: Why students do it and how we can help them stop. *American Federation of Teachers*. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from http://www.aft.orgpubs-reportsamerican_educatorwinter2001Cheating.html
- McCabe, D., L., & Trevino, L. K. (1993). Academic dishonesty: Honor code and other contextual influences. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 64(5), 522-538. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from JSTOR database.
- McCabe, D. L., Trevino, L. K., & Butterfield, K. D. (2001). Dishonesty in academic environment: The influence of peer reporting requirements. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 72(1), 29-45. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from JSTOR database.
- McNamara, T., & Roever, C. (2006). Validity and the social dimension of language testing. *Language Learning*, 56(2), 9-42.
- Messick, S., Chapelle, C. A., Jamieson, J., & Hegelheimer, V. (2003). Validation of a web-based ESL test. *Language Testing*, 20(4), 409-439.

- Naidoo, A. (2008, August 21). UAE students justify cheating, research reveal. *Gulf News*. Retrieved January 27, 2009, from gulfnews.com/articles/08/08/22/10239183.html
- Nichols, S., & Berliner, D. (2007). High-stakes testing and the corruption of America's schools. *Harvard Education Letter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Pytel, B. (2007). How to cheat in schools: Cell phones and ipods are the newest. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from [http://educationalissues.suite101.com/article.cfm?cheating_in_schools – No.1](http://educationalissues.suite101.com/article.cfm?cheating_in_schools-No.1)
- Taylor, B. (n.d.). Academic integrity: A letter to my students. *Academic integrity.org*. Retrieved October 9, 2008, from <http://www.academicintegrity.org>
- Trabue, A. (1962). Classroom cheating – An isolated phenomenon? *Educational Record*, 43,309-316.
- Whitley, B. E., & Kieth-Spiegel, P. (2002). *Academic dishonesty: An educator's guide*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Weir, C. (2005). *Language testing and validation: An evidence-based approach*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Yousef, W. (2005, October, 3). Ministry allays CEPA fears. *Khaleej Times*. Retrieved January 27, 2009, from <http://www.Khaleejtimes.com/Display Article>
- 3 British Council employees among 16 arrested over IELTS cheating. (2009, November 10). *Sify.com*. Retrieved November 22, 2009, from <http://sify.com/news/3-british-council-employees-among-16-arrested-over-ielts-cheating-news-national-jlkmkhiaihc.html>

Appendix A
Teachers' Questionnaire
Cheating Techniques

Years of experience: _____ **Grade level:** _____

Please respond to the following statements by circling the correct response.

A) Do your students use any of the following techniques in cheating?

1- Copying from a peer without his/her knowledge.

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

2- Copying from a peer with his/her knowledge.

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

3- Using crib notes or any kind of cheat sheets.

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

4- Plagiarizing (taking information from another source and submitting it as their own work).

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

5- Using technology such as cell phones, iPods, etc.

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

B) What are other techniques that your students might use?

C) Do you consider plagiarism to be a serious problem?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

D) How could a teacher tell if a student is cheating?

E) What do you do to prevent cheating from occurring in your classrooms?

F) Tick the appropriate response/responses. How do you deal with students if they are caught cheating?

_____ 1- Ignore it.

_____ 2- Yell at the student and blame him/her verbally.

_____ 3- Reduce the grade of the student caught cheating.

_____ 4- Make the student repeat the exam with clearer observation.

_____ 5- Give the student a zero for the exam.

_____ 6- Report the student to the administration.

G) What are any other procedures taken at your school?

H) Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ Don't know

Why? Why not?

Completion of this form signifies consent for your responses to be used in this research about cheating in the UAE.

Appendix B
Students' Questionnaire
Cheating Techniques

Gender (boy/girl): _____ **Age:** _____ **First Language:** _____

Please respond to the following statements by ticking the correct response.

A) Have you noticed someone using any of the following techniques?

1- Copying from another student without his/her knowledge.

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

2- Copying from a peer with his/her knowledge.

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

3- Using crib notes or any kind of cheat sheets.

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

4- Plagiarizing (taking information from another source and submitting it as your own work).

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

5- Using technology such as cell phones IPods, etc.

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

B) What are other techniques that your classmates might use?

C) Which of these techniques do you think are OK, and which are wrong?

D) If you notice a classmate cheating during an exam, would you report that?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

1- If no, why? (tick all that apply)

____ Everyone does it.

____ He/she is my friend.

____ Other reasons:

2- If yes, why? (choose all that apply)

____ Cheating is not acceptable.

____ He/she will get higher grades than me.

____ Other reasons:

E) Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating?

____ Yes

____ No

____ Don't know

Why? Why not?

Completion of this form signifies consent for your responses to be used in this research about cheating in the UAE.

Appendix C
Administrators' Questionnaire
Cheating Techniques

Please respond to the following statements by ticking the correct response/responses.

A) What procedures do you take before exams to prevent cheating from occurring?

_____ 1- Explain how cheating might be useless and harmful.

_____ 2- Ask the students to sign an honor code.

_____ 3- Ask teachers to provide different exam versions.

_____ 4- Explain the punishments that students might be exposed to if caught cheating.

_____ 5- Other _____

B) What procedure/procedures do you take with students who are caught cheating in exams?

_____ 1- Ignore it

_____ 2- Tolerate it

_____ 3- Call on parents

_____ 4- Ask teachers to give zero

_____ 5- Fail the student in the subject

_____ 6- Suspend the students temporarily from the school

_____ 7- Suspend the students permanently from the school

_____ 8- Other _____

I) Do you think requiring students to sign a pledge not to cheat would reduce cheating?

___ Yes

___ No

___ Don't know

Why?

Why

not?

Completion of this form signifies consent for your responses to be used in this research about cheating in the UAE.

Appendix D
Students' Interview Guidelines
Cheating Techniques

1- Have you ever seen other students cheat during exams? What did they do?

2- How did your classmates cheat so that teachers could not catch them?

3- Why do you think students cheat?

4- Is cheating ever justified? (When?)

5- Do you think that teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat? If yes, how?

6- What do some teachers do that make it hard for students to cheat?

7- Do you have any other points related to cheating you would like to talk about?

8- Can you talk about your own experience of cheating?

Appendix E
Teachers' Interview Guidelines
Cheating Techniques Used by Students

1- Have you ever seen any of your students cheat during exams? What did they do?

2- Have you been told about cheating techniques taking place in any of your colleagues' classrooms? What did they do?

3- Why do you think students cheat?

4- Is cheating ever justified? (When?)

5- Do you think that teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat? If yes, how?

6- What do some teachers do that make it hard for students to cheat?

7- Do you have any other points related to cheating you would like to talk about?

8- What are the procedures taken against cheating students if they were caught cheating?

Appendix F
Observation Checklist

Actions done during final exams	Yes	Somewhat	No	Remarks
Invigilators search students for cribs				
Invigilators search students' desks for cribs				
Invigilators allow books or bags				
Invigilators allow mobile phones or any electronic devices				
Desk separation				
Students speaking				
Invigilators response to speaking				
Cheating taking place				
If yes, what is invigilator's response?				
Invigilators noticing cheating				
Instructions about cheating posted				
Students reading instructions				
Invigilators giving clues to students				
Invigilators watching students carefully				
Students asking for permission to go out				
Students allowed to pass objects				
Number of invigilators	One	Two	More than two	

Appendix G

Teachers' Questionnaire (Close-ended Questions)

Teachers' responses (16 teachers)	Yes	No	Don't know
Students copying without knowledge	12/16	3/16	1/16
Students copying with knowledge	11/16	4/16	1/16
Students used crib notes	7/16	6/16	3/16
Students plagiarized	10/16	4/16	2/16
Students used technology	1/16	12/16	3/16
Do you consider plagiarism a serious problem	7/16	6/16	3/16
Procedures taken "ignore cheating"	0	16/16	0
Procedures taken "yell at cheaters"	0	16/16	0
Procedures taken "reduce grades"	10/16		
Procedures taken "report to admin"	10/16		
Do you make students repeat the exam	8/16		
Procedures taken "give zero"	7/16		
Do you think signing a pledge will reduce cheating	5/16	9/16	2/16

The comments in quotations in the tables are the teachers' actual words

Appendix H

Teachers' Questionnaire (Open-ended Questions)

Cheating techniques	Number of teachers
Bodily signals (eye, hand)	6
Verbal (whispering, talking)	2
Writing on/in objects (erasers, chairs, desks, tissues, books, cribs)	5
Writing on body parts (hands, legs, shoes)	2
Books (opening books, hiding books in the bathroom)	1
How would you tell a student is cheating	Number of teachers
Students' manner (nervous, looking around)	8
After correction (higher level, identical wrong answers)	7
n.a.*	4
What do you do to prevent cheating	Number of teachers
Verbal procedures before cheating (verbal warning)	1
Actual procedures before cheating (separating desks, search students and desks, change seating)	9
During exam (watch carefully)	8
After cheating (punish cheaters)	2
What are other procedures taken at your school	Number of teachers
Call parents	6
Punish students	2
Call parent	6
Reduce grades	5
Report to administration	4
Talking to students personally	2
Give a warning	1
Honor code	Number of students
No, students. won't keep their word	9
Yes, students will be committed	5
Don't know	2

Appendix I

Students' Questionnaire (Close-ended Questions)

Students' responses (51 students)	Yes	No	Don't know
Students copying without knowledge	37/51	10/51	4/51
Students copying with knowledge	47/51	1/51	3/16
Students used crib notes	36/51	12/51	3/51
Students plagiarized	34/51	9/51	8/51
Students used technology	24/51	21/51	6/51
Would you report cheating	4/51	42/51	5/51
Do you think signing a pledge will reduce cheating	13/51	37/51	1/51

Appendix J

Students' Questionnaire (Open-ended Questions)

Cheating techniques	Number of students
Bodily signals (eye, hand)	12
Verbal (whispering, talking)	12
Writing on/in objects (erasers, chairs, desks, tissues, books, rulers, cribs)	6
Writing on body parts (hands, legs , clothes, shoes)	2
Books (opening books, hiding books in the bathroom	9
Using technology "iPods, mobiles"	5
Other	8
Cheating techniques	Number of students
All are wrong	32
Copying from a peer is acceptable	7
Plagiarizing is acceptable	3
Using technology is acceptable	1
Hiding cribs is acceptable	1
No answer	7
Reasons why they will not report it	Number of students
Everyone does it	9
He/she is my friend	24
It is not my business	20
Will get into trouble	12
He will continue cheating	1
Reasons why they will report it	Number of students
Cheating is not acceptable	3
He/she will get higher grades than me	2
I don't like this person	1
Signing an honor code	Number of students
No, nothing will stop cheaters from cheating	37
Yes, they will be afraid to cheat	11
Gave no reason	3

The comments in quotations in the tables are the students' actual words

Appendix K

Administrators' Questionnaire

Procedures taken before exams	Number of administrators
Explain how cheating might be useless	11
Ask students to sign an honor code	0
Ask teachers to provide different exam versions	5
Explain the punishments	15
Other: Separating students	1
Other: Mix different grade levels	7
Other: Searching students and their desks	6
Procedures taken after cheating occurs	Number of administrators
Ignore it	0
Tolerate it	0
Call on parents	12
Ask teachers to give zero	10
Fail the students in the subject	5
Suspend the students temporarily	5
Suspend students permanently	0
Deducting grades	9
Warn students	4
Signing an honor code	Number of students
No, nothing will stop cheaters from cheating	8
Yes, they will be afraid to cheat	7
Don't know and gave no reason	2

Appendix L

Teachers' Interviews (Open-ended Questions)

Cheating techniques in your classroom	Number of teachers
Copying from a peer	4
Whispering/ talking	1
Writing on/in objects	3
Opening books	1
Other: Changing answers after the teachers' corrections	1
Cheating techniques in others' classroom	Number of teachers reporting
Copying from a peer	1
Bodily signals	1
Writing on/in objects	1
Opening books	1
Other: wireless devices	1
Reasons behind cheating	Number of teachers reporting
Getting better grades	4
Carelessness	3
Dishonesty and lack of confidence	1
Pressure from parents	1
Teachers make it easy for students to cheat	Number of teachers
Busy	3
Ignoring cheating	1
Giving clues	1
Not teaching well	1
Teachers make it hard for students to cheat	Number of teachers
Different exam versions	4
Watching carefully	6
Teaching well	1
More related points	Number of teachers
Severe punishments	2
Sometimes teachers help students cheat directly	1
Procedures taken	Number of teachers
Call parent	3
Deduct marks	4
Suspend temporarily	1
Warn the students	2
Report to administration	4

Appendix M

Teachers' Interviews (Close-ended Questions)

	Yes	No	Don't know
Can cheating ever be justified	0/8	7/8	1/8
Do you think that teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat	5/8	3/8	0

Appendix N
Students' Interviews (Open-ended Questions)

Cheating techniques	Number of students
Bodily signals (hand)	3
Verbal (whispering)	1
Writing on/in objects (erasers, chairs, desks, wall, tissues, books, cribs)	10
Writing on body parts (hands, legs ,shoes)	1
Technology (mobile phones, magic pens)	2
Copying from a peer	9
Other: looking at papers while teachers are passing out papers or collecting them	2
Cheating techniques	Number of students
Hiding crib notes	2
Distracting teachers' attention	3
Writing on/in objects (erasers, tissue, cribs, bandage)	3
Copying from a peer	1
Reasons behind cheating: Getting better grades	11
Habit	2
Easier than studying	4
Pressure from teachers	1
Teachers make it easy for students to cheat	Number of students
Teachers busy	4
Teachers ignoring cheating	3
Teachers giving clues	9
Teachers make it hard for students to cheat	Number of students
Different exam versions	3
Watching carefully	11
Teaching well	1
More than one invigilator	3
Punish cheaters	2
Take preventive measures	4
More related points	Number of students
Cheating is not fair	1
Teachers should teach well	1
Sometimes teachers help students cheat directly	2
Teachers should watch carefully	1
Threatening from other students	1
Cheating techniques used	Number of students
Copying from a peer	9
Asking teachers for clues	1
Write on objects (tissue papers, calculators, desks)	3
Cribs	2
Whispering answers	2
Body signals	1
Exchanging papers	1

Appendix O

Students Interviews (Close-ended Questions)

	Yes	No	Sometimes
Can cheating ever be justified	0	10/15	5
Do you think teachers might indirectly make it easy for students to cheat	15/15	0	

Appendix P

Classroom Observation (Grade 9 Boys)

Invigilator actions	Yes/no
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Response to students speaking	Yes
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	No
Giving clues to students	No
Students' Actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	Yes
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Yes
Reading instructions	Yes

Appendix Q

Classroom Observation (Grade 10 Girls)

Invigilator actions (one invigilator)	Yes/no/somewhat
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Responding to students speaking	Yes
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	Somewhat
Giving clues to students	No
Students' actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	No
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Not observed
Reading instructions	Yes

Appendix R

Classroom Observation (Grade 10 Boys)

Invigilators' actions (two invigilators)	Yes/no
Searching students	Yes
Searching desks	Yes
Allowing books	No
Allowing electric devices	No
Responding to students speaking	Yes,
Noticing cheating	No
Watching students carefully	Yes
Giving clues to students	No
Students' actions	Yes/no
Passing objects	No
Going out	No
Speaking	Yes
Cheating taking place	Not observed
Reading instructions	Yes