University of Southampton

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Modern Languages

An Investigation into the Role of English in Language Policy and Practice in EMI in a University Setting in Saudi Arabia: English as a Lingua Franca Perspective

by

Omar Mansour Alqarni

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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The interpretation of the 'E' in EMI/EME (English as a medium of instruction/education) or the kind of English that should be implemented and used is a debatable subject within the field (e.g., Smit, 2010; Jenkins, 2014; Iino & Murata 2016, 2018; Macaro et al., 2018). Within the field of English as a lingua franca (ELF), it has always been questioned why standard native English is considered the only legitimate and acceptable use of English that students should follow in EMI/EME in the higher education sector. This offered the starting point of this study, which investigates the presentation of English in EMI/EME and students' experiences, attitudes and perceptions of English in a very under-researched context within the field of ELF by conducting two case studies in a selected university in Saudi Arabia. In order to do so, the research adopted Spolsky's (2004, 2009) framework of language policy, which covers three levels, language management, practice and ideology, as well as Shohamy's (2006) interpretation of mechanisms in language policy. The research adopted a qualitative approach and employed three methods in the study: document analysis of national and institutional documents, and semi-structured interviews and focus groups with students on two different EMI/EME programmes. The research findings illustrate a strong attachment to standard native English and raises issues related to the awareness and legitimisation of other English varieties within the levels of national and institutional documents. The findings suggest that the participants of the two case studies had different experiences in terms of English language expectations on their EMI/EME programmes. The findings from the engineering school revealed an orientation towards intelligibility and successful learning and communication, whereas the findings from the medical school suggested an explicit orientation towards standard native English with contextual factors related to miscommunication and medical errors. The findings also demonstrate conflict, doubt, uncertainty and deviations that appeared in the participants' attitudes and perceptions of the use of English, either in EMI/EME or the social use of English, which suggests a struggle between what students think to be 'proper' English and that which they believe to be effective and intelligible. The study therefore contributes to the field of ELF as well as providing a platform for Saudi students' attitudes and perceptions of English to be taken as a reference in language planning.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Omar Mansour Alqarni

Title of thesis: An investigation into the role of English in language policy and practice in EMI in a university setting in Saudi Arabia: English as a lingua franca perspective

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

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2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
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5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission.

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Date:

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I also would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to my beloved parents and family members for their lifelong support and faith on me.

To my wife, Sarah, this thesis would never have been completed and seen the light without your support and encouragement.

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Definitions and Abbreviations

ELF ..... English as a lingua franca

EFL ..... English as a foreign language

WEs ..... World Englishes

ENL ..... English as a native language

ESL ..... English as a second language

ALF ..... Arabic as a lingua franca

EMI ..... English as a medium of instruction

EME ..... English-medium education

CLIL ..... Content and language integrated learning

CBI ..... Content-based instruction

MOI ..... Medium of instruction

ELFA ..... English as a lingua franca in academic settings

MLFA ..... Medical English as a lingua franca

NESs ..... Native English speakers

NNESs ..... Non-native English speakers

L1 ..... First language

L2 ..... Second language

FG ..... Focus group

CEFR ..... Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

IELTS ..... International English Language Testing System

TOEFL ..... Test of English as a Foreign Language

GPA ..... Grade point average

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The purpose of this thesis is to identify how a university in Saudi Arabia approaches English within the higher education context. This thesis consists of the systematic steps and stages through which the aim of the research could be achieved. The significance of the theoretical background, which deals with the academic role of English as a lingua franca (ELF), lies in its examination of the importance of English language variation in the Saudi Arabian academic context, especially in universities. This exploration was carried out through a research methodology that consisted of the collection of data based on primary methods from different groups of respondents. The participants were students at the schools of medicine and engineering at Bisha University in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, data were collected from formal documents that cover the educational policies of the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education as well as the institutional policy regarding the implementation of English in higher education. Through interviews with the students, the researcher was able to identify their opinions, experiences and perceptions of the English language in their English as a medium of instruction (EMI) programmes, as well as in social contexts. The focus groups were of benefit to the researcher in providing dynamic data based on discussions among the participants by observing how their views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise during the focus group discussions. This enabled comparative analysis to identify the English language policies implemented by the Saudi authorities in higher education as well as the students' experiences and perceptions of English, either in respect of EMI or in the social use of English.

1.2 Background to the study

1.2.1 Overview of the English language in the context of Saudi Arabia

This section provides the background to the teaching and learning of English in Saudi Arabia, in order to put the current study into context. English was officially first taught in the country during the late 1920s (Al-Johani, 2009). At that time, the move to include

English in the curriculum met resistance because English was not considered important. In fact, teaching another language was considered a threat to the home language, culture and religion of Saudi Arabia (ibid). This low status meant that English was given low priority and little attention. However, this attitude has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. Over this time, the government in Saudi Arabia has actively promoted the teaching and learning of English, and this has led to a large leap forward in the development of English teaching. Correspondingly, the influence of English in the region has increased, and the language has achieved much higher status. New trends have also emerged in the teaching and learning of the language in the form of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the country.

Faruk (2013) is of the opinion that the main reason for introducing English into the Saudi curriculum was to facilitate Saudi Arabia's integration with the rest of the world. This happened under pressure from two English-speaking countries: the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK). Another major impetus for promoting the teaching and learning of English was the oil discoveries in the 1930s. Zuhur (2011) claims that international interest in Saudi Arabia greatly increased after World War II due to the newly discovered and extensive oil reserves. As US commercial interests in the country were greater than those of the UK, Saudi Arabia formed deeper connections with the USA. This connection and close relationship made the learning of English and English language teaching (ELT) more important in terms of the country's social and economic development (Faruk, 2013). Furthermore, Mahboob and Elyas (2014) highlighted that the English language had become inextricably linked to the discourse on petroleum. This has been true to such an extent and English development has been so reliant on the oil industry that researchers (e.g., Karmani, 2005) coined the term 'petro linguistics' to describe the link between the discovery of oil in the Arabian Gulf and the expansion of English. It was, therefore, both social and economic demand that drove the need to teach and learn English in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Braik (2007) also confirmed that English gained importance in Saudi education because of the economic benefits it brought, not just in terms of the oil industry, but also in the form of international organisations. He stated that already in 1978, international companies were making significant contributions to the economy of Saudi Arabia and, therefore, Saudi nationals with a good command of English were better positioned to secure jobs in these companies. A further motivation for the teaching of English in Saudi

educational institutions was that only 10% of key workers, such as those working in healthcare, hospitality and retail, were Arab nationals who spoke English – a large majority were non-native Arabic speakers from different backgrounds. It therefore became imperative to teach English to Saudis so that they could communicate effectively with these foreign workers. The most important foreign company to have a large impact on the economy of Saudi Arabia and English instruction in the region was the Arabian American Oil Company, known as Aramco, which was established in 1933.

In the initial years of its operation, Aramco was run and operated mostly by US nationals and, until 1988, was owned by US interests. This has since changed, and the company's ownership was completely transferred to the Saudi government but a large number of its employees are still from overseas. Given Aramco's domination of the Saudi economy, it is essential that its employees and workers are able to communicate with the local population. This urgent need led to a prioritisation of the teaching and learning of English in the country. Despite the Saudi ownership of Aramco, its technicians and technical experts are recruited from elsewhere, mainly from the US or from among Saudis trained by US companies. Furthermore, since 1948, there has been a close link between the Saudi military and English, as US military advisors, technicians and trainers have played an important role in the development of the Saudi military force (Cordesman, 2003). Large amounts of military equipment are also regularly purchased from the US currently, so there is still a pressing need for the military as well as civilians to speak English (Cordesman, 2003).

Since the beginning of the 2000s, there has been a renewed focus on teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia. In 2003, the Saudi government made English compulsory in primary schools (Elyas, 2008) and since 2005 there has been a noticeable shift in the attitude towards learning English. This is due to the Saudi government having made a concerted effort to reduce the country's dependence on the oil industry and to develop a knowledge-based economy to rival those of developed countries. This aim has had a marked effect on the education system in Saudi Arabia, exemplified by the increase in the number of universities from eight in 2001 to 36 in 2015 (eight of which were private). This significant increase in higher education capacity and the expansion of educational institutions at other levels has had a significant effect on the teaching of English. According to Faruk (2013), most universities in Saudi Arabia now have dedicated English departments, as well as

English language centres that can provide students in other departments with at least one semester of English skills. Furthermore, EMI is now implemented in engineering, medical and science schools (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Over the last 20 years, the English language has also been introduced gradually into the curriculum of public schools, starting with grade 7 in 2003 and grades 4, 5 and 6 in 2012. It is also the preferred medium of instruction (MOI) for major organisations based in Saudi Arabia, such as Saudi Aramco and Saudi airline companies.

The above changes in the importance attached to the teaching and learning of English in Saudi education have also altered students' perceptions of the language. Rather than simply being a subject that they need to study in order to pass an examination, students now recognise the intrinsic value of English. Students see the benefit that it will bring them in terms of employment and business, both at home and abroad. The claimed high value and prestige of being able to speak English have, in turn, led to a sharp rise in the number of students enrolling in the various language institutes and departments in Saudi institutions. As confirmed by Al-Seghayer (2014), English has acquired an eminent status in the country, and is the only foreign language taught in Saudi Arabian public and private schools and universities, as well as in numerous industries and government institutions.

1.2.2 Implications of introducing English in Saudi Arabia

Despite the increasing popularity of English in Saudi Arabia, it cannot be described as neutral; its use can be a controversial topic, as it has strong social, religious, political and economic associations. Furthermore, it is argued that English is strongly associated with the cultures and ideologies of Western countries (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Its usage can be seen as a way of demoting the mother tongue and its values, and some fear that over time it will come to dominate Arabic and either modify or replace it. This creates some conflict between those who resist its use and those who endorse it as part of the nation's modernisation and globalisation policies. Accordingly, the differences between the local culture and the cultures of countries of native English speakers (NESs) is an issue in education (Al-abed Alhaq & Smadi, 1996; Argungu, 1996; Al-Brashi, 2003; Glasser, 2003; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Consequently, students see a disparity between their local culture and values and the English they are learning (Maherzi, 2011). This led to less of a desire to learn English among Saudi students (Al-Seghayer, 2014).

Despite the resistance to English teaching outlined above and the conservative nature of Saudi society, the resistance has lessened in recent times. This is mostly due to the need and wish of both government and citizens for Saudi Arabia to be seen as a modern country that is up to date and able to engage in international trade (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). The Saudi government, therefore, with this aim in mind, has devoted time and resources to the improvement of English education in the country (ibid). In addition to being able to use English in companies based in Saudi Arabia, Saudis who have been taught English as part of their education are able to communicate internationally with others from different backgrounds (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). They can, therefore, make valuable contributions to the business sector and the economy of Saudi Arabia, which are undergoing rapid expansion. Furthermore, Alrashidi and Phan (2015) state that by learning English, Saudis can communicate with the large number (around 12 million) of foreign nationals who are employed in Saudi Arabia. This is essential if they are going to gain the skills and qualifications they need to be able to replace some of these workers under the government's Saudisation policy (e.g. companies should employ Saudi nationals up to certain level in their workforce in order to decrease unemployment rate) (ibid).

Moreover, the development of the English language plays an important role in encouraging international investments in Saudi Arabia. It also facilitates the globalisation of Saudi society and the spread of technological advances. Social media in particular, together with the ability to communicate in English, has enabled Saudis to communicate effectively with others beyond the geographical boundaries of the kingdom (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). As Osailan (2009) explained, from a religious point of view, this expansion of communication possibilities allows Saudi citizens to learn about other cultures and, in turn, to explain their own culture and the ideology of Islam. They can directly translate sources of Islamic knowledge and thereby spread the tenets of Islam among others who are interested in learning more about the religion. This helps to correct Western misconceptions about Islam and forge new friendships across cultures.

1.2.3 Saudi Vision 2030

In April 2016, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, announced an ambitious transformation plan (Saudi Vision 2030). Vision 2030 is based on three pillars, the second of which is the country's determination to be a driving force of international

investment. More importantly, one of the major themes in the vision is the building of a thriving economy by establishing an education system that is able to cope with market needs (Saudi Vision 2030). Thus, it is crucial to understand the current impact of education in general and the English language in particular on the Saudi economy. Although the English language was not explicitly mentioned in the vision, English is deeply rooted in the economy, international trade, technology and cultural resources. Lee (2012) claimed that being able to speak different languages usually led to more job opportunities. Moreover, languages also play a significant role in the economy during any government-led economic revolutions (Alzahrani, 2017). Despite this major transformation plan, little has been noticed in terms of English language education in Saudi Arabia. However, significant educational changes are expected in the coming years, including English language teaching in the country, as announced by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education website, 2019).

1.2.4 EMI in Saudi higher education

One of the most notable indications of globalisation is the pace at which EMI has spread in different educational settings. The move towards the use of EMI as a methodological approach to teaching has gained speed, not just in Saudi Arabia, but also across many nations in recent decades. The policy to employ English in educational settings to deliver course content, in conjunction with other globalising forces, was driven by high demands to expand the implementation of English in Saudi universities. In fact, the official language strategy of Saudi Arabia states that only Arabic should be used as an MOI, at all levels of education. However, Saudi universities have taken the decision only to use English for most of their programmes (Alamri, 2008). This decision is not without its pedagogical problems, which include a lack of attention to the accurate translation of scientific knowledge from one language to another; a failure to ensure that teachers are competent in the English language, which lowers students' levels of achievement; and confusion between instructors who do and do not speak Arabic (ibid).

This increased implementation of EMI has also led to a high demand for teachers who can speak English. Whether or not the learning of English should be so highly promoted is still a subject of much debate in Saudi Arabia. Some researchers have reported that EMI may threaten local language and values (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2001; Al-Jarf, 2008;

Troudi, 2009) and negatively affect the academic achievements of students (Marsh, 2006; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). This may indeed be a danger if this continues to be implemented without due consideration being given to the impact this will have on students and educators in the future (Alamri, 2008). The continued use of EMI has, therefore, attracted some criticism from scholars in the region (e.g., Abu Zayd, 2000; Brock-Utne, 2007; Al-Bakri, 2013). Troudi (2007) claimed that the adaptation of foreign languages as an MOI was harmful to students, as this would add "additional learning burdens". Furthermore, Brock-Utne (2007) reported that student achievement was lowered by EMI. In addition, by focusing on the Arab world, researchers have also expressed concerns over the effects that this language policy in EMI will have on Arabic language and identity (Al-Jarf, 2008; Troudi, 2009). There are certainly conflicting opinions on the use of EMI and the emphasis being placed on communicating in English, with some focusing on its benefits for globalisation and the economy, and others expressing fears for the preservation of local Arabic and Islamic identity (Habbash & Troudi, 2015).

1.3 Research gap and rationale for the study

The significant expansion of EMI/EME programmes in higher education has been well established (Dearden, 2014), and this has particularly been the case in the context of Europe (see, for example, Wächter and Maiworm, 2014) and several areas of Asia (e.g., Macaro et al., 2018). This motivation for EMI/EME is largely due to the connection between internationalisation and English in HE (Jenkins, 2014), whereby programmes taught in English are viewed as having a "higher" status and are, therefore, more appealing to students' mobility (OECD, 2014). However, despite a significant increase in research over the past 10 years, many important aspects remain unresolved (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018). The current study focuses on some of those issues, which include the roles and conceptualisations of English in two different disciplines (engineering and medicine) in a university setting and the need for comparative studies across disciplines.

Further, the lack of comparative studies in EMI/EME settings, particularly from more in-depth qualitative perspectives, is another significant research gap that this study seeks to address. Indeed, Macaro et al. (2018, p.64) argued that there is an "almost total absence of any comparative studies amongst disciplines, institutions and/or amongst countries". This is starting to change as a result of several recent publications (e.g., Dearden & Macaro,

2016; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019) providing comparison studies between different EMI settings at a variety of levels, including stakeholders' perceptions, management policies, and classroom linguistic practices. However, the similarities and differences between disciplines are generally overlooked. Therefore, further investigation is needed due to the current insufficient level of the data required to form any strong conclusions about general issues or the connections between various local concerns (Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019).

This study aims to explore the linguistic issues at different levels of language management, ideologies and beliefs, and linguistic practices in two different disciplines in a higher education context in Saudi Arabia. Every governmental educational policy will have practical outcomes for the language practice and language ideology within its governed society (Smit, 2010). As such, and with regard to language practice, following a particular English language type within Saudi higher education would mean facilitating various methods that would enable reinforcing and adopting that form of the English language. Examples of these methods include contracting teachers who are familiar with a specific English type as well as preparing students to use that specific form of the language in their daily communication. In other words, determining the way in which English is represented in the Saudi educational system will have economic and social repercussions for different sectors of Saudi society. However, within the context of Saudi Arabia, there is no such highlighting of this in the Saudi Arabia; moreover, at the academic level, no study, to the best of my knowledge, has examined the ways in which English is represented in Saudi Arabia. Hence, there is a gap in the literature with regard to determining the way in which English is represented in Saudi higher education. This study aims to bridge this gap.

The governments delineate a language policy that aims to buttress the governmental view of languages. In other words, the government is the main manufacturer and, by managing language policy, aims to reproduce a language ideology through applying its view of a specific type of language in the social world (Pennycook, 2017). However, as language ideology is a set of beliefs about a specific language in the social world, there might be a difference between Saudi governmental views and beliefs on the one hand and Saudi students' beliefs on the other (Cook, 2016). This suggests that the type of English which is labelled language ideology from the governmental point of view might not be classified as a language ideology from students' viewpoint. Accordingly, exploring students' opinions of this language policy was deemed a suitable means of understanding variation between

their attitudes on the one hand and the governmental position on the other. This is a gap in the Saudi context, as none of the studies previously conducted have examined this delicate point. Thus, from the aforementioned logical and evidenced narrative, there are overtly two research gaps in Saudi context (i.e., studies have neither examined how English is represented within the context of Saudi Arabia nor explored the perceptions of students of the language policy adopted by the Saudi government and as manifested in Saudi higher education).

1.4 Potential research contributions

For the purpose of addressing the research gap related to the practical outcomes of representing a specific type of English in the Saudi higher educational curriculum, this study sought to contribute to the literature by fulfilling various objectives. First, it underlines the type of English language currently used in the Saudi higher educational sector, more specifically, in EMI/EME programmes. Second, the study explores the perceptions and experiences of students (language users) of the type of English used in the Saudi higher educational sector. By investigating their views, experiences and perceptions, the researcher was able to identify their perceptions of the type of English they study at university in areas related to the efficiency of the studied English type as well as in their communication in real life, and the effectiveness of the type of English language studied as a useful tool for empowering students in EMI/EME as well as preparing them for future career. Indeed, this study is unique within Saudi Arabia, as it is the first to seek students' perceptions of the type of English in their EMI/EME programmes and how the English language is presented. This is different from previous studies (e.g., Faruk, 2013) that have traditionally explored students' attitudes and perceptions of the role of the English language itself, instead of investigating the role of a type of the English language implemented in higher Education.

Third, this study takes a further step in exploring Saudi students' views, experiences and perceptions of English in EMI/EME, as well as the social use of English, which might contribute positively to raising their voices and concerns to policy makers. This also enabled the researcher to identify the ideal type of English that students think should be applied in their programmes. Thus, students had an opportunity to provide their views about the ideal type of English language that should be embraced by the government. Moreover,

investigating students' experiences and perceptions of English will help in these being taken as a reference in language planning in EMI/EME programmes. This means that students could have a say and participate in identifying language regulations, which is different from giving the government the privilege of pinpointing what constitutes language management. Moreover, this could give students a platform from which to have a voice regarding their stance on language policy and how this policy could be altered for achieving better outcomes for the students.

Fourth, within the domain of ELF, previous research has been criticised for its limited range of contexts, as the majority of the research has been conducted in European countries and some parts of Asia. The phenomenon has not been sufficiently explored in other contexts, such as Saudi Arabia, where only a few studies have been conducted, such as the work by Alharbi (2016), who explored Business English as a lingua franca in the Saudi context. Thus, the phenomenon should be investigated on a broad scale in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the higher education sector, as it is important to understand the government's orientations towards the English language within the policy implemented in higher education and perceptions and experiences of English among students. Therefore, this study aims to shed light upon and provide insights into the context of Saudi Arabia. As Doiz et al. (2013, p.219) argued, "every context has its own characteristics and, therefore, studies rooted in each specific context will be much welcomed. Results from other contexts may always be helpful and enlightening, but every institution should carry out its own research, which ideally will lay the foundations of the most appropriate language policy for them".

In light of the discussion above, addressing the research questions helped identify the triangular relationships that connect language management, language practice and language ideology within Saudi Arabia. This was based on Spolsky's framework of language policy (2004, 2009) (see 3.2.2.1), as well as Shohamy's (2006) interpretation of the mechanisms in language policy (see 3.2.2.2).

1.5 Research aim and objectives

Achieving the aim of the study will ensure the research gap has been addressed. That is, there will be a clear view of the way in which English in higher education is represented to Saudi students. In order to fulfil the research aim, there were a number of objectives that

should be achieved, such as exploring governmental official policies in an EMI/EME context, as well as obtaining the attitudinal responses of students towards English which determine the type of English implemented in higher education. Therefore, the aim and objectives of this study were as follows:

Aim

- This study aims to explore the linguistic issues at the levels of language management, ideologies and beliefs, and linguistic practices in two different disciplines in an EMI/EME context in Saudi Arabia. This means exploring whether the Saudi government has adopted Standard English or non-Standard English within university courses. Furthermore, the aim is to understand why the Saudi government uses a specific type of English and whether using a certain type of English language is compatible with the language ideology and linguistic practices within the context of higher education in Saudi Arabia.
- The study also aims to understand students' perceptions and experiences of English language in EMI/EME programmes in two different school within a Saudi university.

Objectives

- To explore the policies followed by the Saudi authorities in preparing and introducing English in an EMI/EME context, which would enable understanding of language management within a university in Saudi Arabia.
- To discover the experiences and perceptions of students in a Saudi university of the way in which English is represented in an EMI/EME context, which would help explore language practice/choice and language ideology in higher education.
- To explore whether there is a difference between the perceptions of students of the type of English used in EMI/EME and the type of English used in social contexts as means of intercultural communication.

1.6 Research questions

The study aims to answer three research questions:

RQ1. How is English represented in Saudi Arabia in a higher education context?

RQ2. What are the explicit and implicit English language expectations, and to what extent do students evaluate the English used/accepted on their EMI programmes?

RQ3. How, and to what extent, do students perceive English in terms of:

a. Native/non-native and their own English;

b. Social use of English;

c. L1 and local culture and values.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 review the relevant literature concerning EMI and ELF and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the research. The following chapters discuss the research methodology in chapter 4, the data analysis in chapters 5 to 7, and, finally, a summary of the study, including answers to the research questions, and the research implications, contributions and limitations in chapter 8.

Chapter 2 aims to define the main concepts of the research (EMI and ELF) and critically evaluate the relevant literature. It begins with an overview of EMI and its definitions from different perspectives. The debates around the interpretation of the 'E' in EMI are also discussed. Next, the chapter also includes a discussion of EMI in the setting of this study: Saudi Arabia. The chapter then presents a discussion of English and the similarities and differences between various English paradigms. This is followed by a definition of ELF and a discussion of areas relevant to this study, such as English as a lingua franca in academic settings (ELFA) and medical English as a lingua franca (MELF).

Chapter 3 aims to provide a detailed discussion of the theoretical frameworks of the current study. It begins with a discussion of English language policy in order to familiarise readers with the concept of language policy. This is followed by a discussion of language policy frameworks, including the frameworks adopted for this study: Spolsky's components of English language policy (2004, 2009) and Shohamy's mechanisms in language policy (2006). After that, the concept of language ideology and Standard English ideology are discussed. Some mechanisms and devices in English language policy are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the approach, design, and methods selected for the study. First, the chapter discusses and justifies the qualitative approach of this study. The chapter then discusses the research paradigm and research strategy, which suggested that the study adopt interpretivism as a research paradigm and case studies as a research strategy. This is followed by a discussion of the research setting and the data collection methods. The researcher adopted three data collection tools: document analysis, interviews, and focus groups. Finally, the chapter discusses the data analysis and the analysis method selected for this study.

Chapter 5 presents the qualitative findings of the document analysis, starting with a brief discussion of the documents collected and the coding and preparation for analysis. This is followed by the findings of the document analysis, which are divided into four themes: adopting the English language in higher education, the adaptation of EFL, embedded standard native English ideology, and English language entry requirements in EMI programmes; the four themes were data driven. The chapter answers the first research question of this study, which concerns the presentation of EMI in the context of Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 6 presents the qualitative findings from the interviews, starting with a discussion of the interview participants and the transcription, coding and translation of the data. This is followed by the interview findings, which are divided into three main themes in offering an understanding of the participants' views, experiences and perceptions of EMI as well as the social use of English. The first theme presents participants' views and experiences of others' English; the second theme presents language practices in EMI; and the third concerns the Standard English ideology. The three themes were also both concept- and data-driven findings.

In chapter 7, the qualitative findings from the focus groups are presented, starting with a discussion of the participants, and the transcription, coding and translation of the data. The focus group findings are divided into two main themes: the first presents students' orientations towards the university's policy in terms of EMI and entry requirements; and the second presents students' orientations to Standard English/ELF, students' perceptions of English use in social contexts, and students' views of the 'Englishisation' system in Saudi Arabia.

The last chapter, chapter 8, provides a detailed summary of the study. The research rationale is briefly restated as well as the theoretical framework in order to justify the research questions. The research methodology is also revisited briefly when answering the research questions in turn. The chapter then provides a discussion of the research implications and contributions. This is followed by the research limitations and suggestions for future studies before concluding the thesis.

Chapter 2 Conceptual and empirical roots of the study: English as a medium of instruction and English as a lingua franca

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an extensive picture of the conceptual and empirical foundation of the study and covers the conceptualisation of English as a medium of instruction (EMI), as well as the theorisation of the English language and English as a lingua franca (ELF). The first section of this chapter explores EMI, the worldwide spread of EMI, and its definitions from different perspectives. The section also addresses the differences between EMI and other forms of education, such as content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and content-based instruction (CBI). Moreover, the chapter identifies EMI in the context of Saudi Arabia, its growth and predominance within the context, as well as the necessity of exploring Saudi students' perceptions of English from an ELF perspective. The second section discusses the theorisation of the English language in order to provide readers with important concepts in English language use. The chapter then conducts a critical discussion of English as a lingua franca, covering its definitions, developments, and the relationship between ELF and other English language approaches. Then, the chapter also examines and discusses the key aspects of this research, such as, academic English from ELF lens and the debates around medical English.

2.2 English as a medium of instruction

2.2.1 An overview of English as a medium of instruction

English is undoubtedly one of the most common languages used in the international setting; this is especially true for higher education. English has been employed as an MOI for some time, but has recently spread rapidly across the world as a language used in international educational institutions, particularly those in expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1992). In these countries, there is no history of the use of English in education and HE has largely relied on the language used by the majority of the nation (Smit, 2010). EMI

in HE is rapidly expanding worldwide (Macaro, 2018; Macaro et al., 2018), often due to the desire for internationalisation. Teaching in English is often seen as a 'symbol' of internationalisation and the implementation of EMI in HE is closely correlated to higher numbers of international staff and students and to transnational education programmes. It is widely assumed that students will have better access to intercultural learning opportunities if they are taught in English. Among the several perceived benefits of EMI are improving students' employability, increasing revenue from international students, improving the rankings of institutes, developing the English competencies of students, and facilitating access to teaching materials (Galloway, 2021).

Despite the above perceived benefits, the implementation of EMI still presents some challenges to students and lecturers. Both have reported that the use of EMI has led to an increased workload, with more time required for studying and for preparing classes and teaching materials (Galloway, 2021). There have also been debates over the use of the country's first language in EMI classrooms. Research on the matter tends to support the idea that lecturers and students find their first language useful for understanding the content of the teaching material (Galloway, 2021). Furthermore, research has documented that in many cases, the benchmarks set for the students' proficiency in English are low or there may not even be any. Students also vary enormously in how prepared they are for EMI courses and researchers have called for needs analysis and then context-specific support. Calls have also been made for greater support to be made available for teaching staff and for the collaboration between subject and language specialists to be increased (Galloway, 2021).

2.2.2 Defining English as a medium of instruction

There are numerous definitions of EMI but the one most frequently referred to is that by Macaro (2018, p.19): "the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the populations is not English". The main objective of EMI programmes is frequently content learning and, for most of the students, English is a second, foreign, or additional language (L2). Although Macaro's (2018) definition of EMI describes the phenomenon in different contexts, alternative definitions have been suggested, highlighting the complexities of the term and the range of perspectives on this type of instruction. Coyle et

al. (2010) offer a definition that is more in line with CLIL, seeing it as a dual-focused approach to education in which 'an additional language' is employed for the teaching of both language and content. Further, similar to Coyle et al.'s (2010) definition of EMI, Taguchi (2014, p.89) also suggested a definition of EMI programmes with an explicit language learning objective, whereby EMI can be defined as "curricula using English as a medium of instruction for basic and advanced courses to improve students' academic English proficiency". As can be seen from the above, Macaro's (2018) definition makes no mention of learning English as an objective of EMI, although this is explicit in the definitions by Coyle et al. (2010) and Taguchi (2014).

As can be noted, the definition provided by Macaro (2018) refers only to outer and expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1985, 1992) and excludes inner circle countries occupied by NESs. Jenkins (2018) proposes expanding the definition of EMI to encompass Anglophone contexts, such as the UK, US and Australia, as well as non-Anglophone contexts, due to the increasing number of international students in these countries. Students with English as a second language are increasingly choosing to study in native-English-speaking countries, due to increased mobility and global migration. It has, therefore, been argued by researchers, such as Baker and Huttner (2016) and Jenkins (2018), that these countries now contain multilingual educational contexts that are in many ways similar to those found in traditional EMI settings. Accordingly, Murata and Iino (2018) stated that "EMI can be defined as English-medium instruction conducted in the context where English is used as a lingua franca for content learning/teaching among students and teachers of different linguacultural backgrounds", which includes native-English-speaking countries. Thus, a difference between the two definitions is whether the students (and teachers) in the classroom belong to homogenous or heterogeneous linguacultural backgrounds. As such, when students belong to different backgrounds, even if they study in the UK or US, Murata and Iino's (2018) EMI context will be considered.

Further, Smit (2018, p.387) also claimed that in HE, EMI is "a prototypical ELF scenario". Moreover, Dafouz and Smit (2016) argued that rather than being a medium of instruction, ELF is a medium of education. They further highlighted the multilingualism of ELF in HE by introducing the concept of EMEMUS: "English-Medium Education in Multilingual Settings". It is, however, difficult to provide one single definition of EMI that applies globally because the use of this strategy varies according to the context in which it is employed. For example,

Baird (2013) as cited in Jenkins and Mauranen (2019) commented that EMI was becoming increasingly popular in East Asian universities, despite there being few international students and that the student population lacked linguistic diversity.

The recognition of context-based diversity and significant distinctions between EMI and English as a subject are features shared by most definitions of EMI. In English language classes, the focus is on language itself, rather than content, such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP). However, there has been a greater increase in courses on English as a subject, notably EAP and ESP, due to the expansion of EMI. Generally, language learning is not a defined goal of EMI, but is seen rather as something that happens incidentally or implicitly in the process of being taught in English (Galloway, 2021). According to Dearden (2014, p.4), "Whereas CLIL has a clear objective of furthering both content and language as declared in its title, EMI does not necessarily have that objective". This differentiates EMI from other forms of education, including CLIL and CBI (see Figure 1). In CLIL and CBI courses, it is an explicit goal to improve students' proficiency in English (see Figure 1). Although English learning is not an explicit goal in EMI, many still regard this strategy as one that will offer students opportunities to enhance their English language skills together with their academic knowledge (Rose & Galloway, 2019; Rose et al., 2020; Galloway, 2021). Therefore, many institutions may use proficiency in English, and how this has improved, as a benchmark against which to assess the success of the EMI approach. As previously noted, students may enrol on courses taught with EMI because they also perceive that this will improve their English language skills (Galloway et al., 2017, 2020).

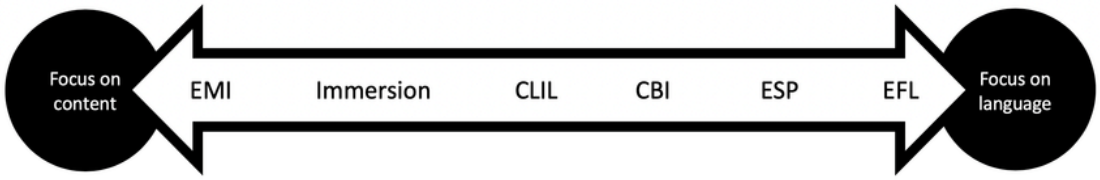

Figure 1: Continuum of EMI in practice (Thompson & McKinley, 2018)

2.2.3 EMI expansion in higher education

Although EMI provision is expanding significantly at all levels of education worldwide (see, for instance, Dearden, 2014), HE is where EMI adoption is most common (Wächter &

Maiworm, 2014). There has been an exponential increase in the number of EMI programmes available in HEIs worldwide over the past 20 years (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018). The last 10 years have also seen a significant global expansion of EMI. Nevertheless, the reasons for adoption vary widely by individual, nation, and institution. The non-Anglophone nations of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East have the fastest-growing regional EMI usage. In Europe, for instance, since the early 2000s, there has been a sharp rise in the number of English-taught programmes, as well as the number of programmes taught in English having rapidly increased (e.g., Brenn-White & van Rest, 2013). Similar growth patterns are evident in Asian nations, as more universities have adopted EMI over the past 20 years (Fenton-Smith et al., 2017). The national HE policies in many Asian nations that prioritise EMI as a primary strategic objective across academic fields are largely responsible for this expansion. Similar efforts have been made since the 1980s across the Middle East to increase the number of university programmes taught in English. A large portion of this increase has been connected to the expansion of global education.

2.2.3.1 EMI in higher education policy

In addition to being used more frequently in higher education, EMI is being mentioned more often in national education strategies across the world. Further, EMI has occasionally been expressly incorporated into HE strategies; in these cases, EMI is frequently related to the development goals of the nation's HE sector, in order to develop or enhance its international reputation (Costa & Coleman, 2013). Internationalisation and pressure to rise in institution rankings are also linked to these efforts to recruit more international students (see Jenkins and Mauranen, 2019). In other instances, EMI might be considered an instrument for knowledge diplomacy, with the assumption that the HE sector is crucial to international relations (Knight, 2015).

Similarly, with many definitions of EMI lacking a specific language purpose (see 2.2.2), greater EMI provision at the HE level has resulted from wider strategies towards developing English proficiency at the school level. This is common in countries such as Saudi Arabia, the context of the current study, in which academic English study is widely used in both primary and secondary education (Ha & Barnawi, 2015). Further, the implementation of EMI in Saudi Arabia is also connected to some policies unrelated to HE; for instance, as a result of governmental reforms that promote the use of English in hospital administration,

most medical education programmes in the country now employ EMI (Suliman & Tadros, 2011).

2.2.4 Internationalisation of EMI in higher education

A significant percentage of the increase in EMI provision can be attributed to the globalisation of higher education (Macaro et al., 2019). Although there are many reasons for adopting EMI, policies and pedagogies that support it have undoubtedly been shaped by the various aspects of internationalisation (Singh, 2011). The relationship between EMI and internationalisation is complex, and there are ongoing discussions about how much this relationship contributes to the "Westernisation" of higher education (Knight, 2008). For instance, there are many arguments that internationalisation prioritises English and Western knowledge at the expense of regional cultures and languages (Doiz et al., 2012).

As previously indicated, there are several reasons to embrace EMI, including student and staff mobility and curriculum internationalisation. With regard to the former, recruitment of international students and staff is deemed to be the most evident example of internationalisation. Academic staff mobility has a complicated and long history in higher education (Taylor et al., 2008), despite globalisation having made academic mobility more widespread in recent decades (Bauder, 2015). With regard to the latter, the internationalisation of higher education goes beyond student and programme mobility, as there has been an impact on the pedagogies and curriculum adopted from the international and intercultural characteristics of HE (De Wit, 2017). Intercultural perspectives are becoming increasingly important in many HE institutions' curricula and pedagogies (Leask, 2015). This emphasis recognises that these perspectives can advance intercultural competence and learning (Dunne, 2011), as well as encouraging engagement with the various perspectives in classrooms (Lomer & Anthony-Okeke, 2019).

2.2.5 Implementation of EMI in higher education

EMI implementation can take many different forms and is affected by a wide range of factors, as well as the process of policy making having an impact on EMI implementation. In some contexts, EMI university programmes are governed by official language standards, which specify linguistic competence and language use in classrooms; in other settings, EMI implementation appears to be unregulated. Top-down EMI regulations could lead to

compulsory EMI obligations, regardless of the motivation of the teachers and students. For instance, Kim et al. (2017) discovered that undergraduate engineering students in three South Korean institutions rejected the EMI-only policy; nevertheless, the majority of the participants chose L1 as the MOI over EMI. These results imply that top-down EMI rules are occasionally implemented without taking teachers' and students' perspectives into account. The way that EMI is implemented in different universities within a nation can also differ. Local university policies and institutional regulations may have an impact on how EMI is implemented (Costa & Coleman, 2013). There are also differences in EMI implementation between the private and public sectors (Macaro & Akincioglu, 2018).

In addition, models of EMI implementation may be influenced by students' linguistic preparedness and English language proficiency. Students may first experience EMI at the university level in some contexts, whereas in other – particularly post-colonial – contexts, they may have done so in elementary and secondary school (e.g., Manan et al., 2017). The entry requirements and English language support for EMI programmes also differ. Before enrolling in EMI programmes, several universities demand that students reach a specific level of English proficiency, whereas English language proficiency is not a requirement for admission to EMI programmes at other universities. In a similar vein, EMI programmes differ in the quantity and kind of language support they provide to students.

Macaro (2018) identified four approaches to language support in EMI programmes. First, the preparatory year approach. This method of EMI implementation, which is the most popular in Turkey and the Arab Gulf, requires students to pass a one-year intensive English course before starting their EMI programmes. Second, the concurrent support approach, which integrates language support programmes into the EMI curriculum, often EAP or ESP. Third, selection models that necessitate that before applicants are accepted to EMI programmes, they must meet certain English proficiency standards. Finally, the Ostrich model; these kinds of EMI programmes do not require language skills for admission and do not provide language support for students (Macaro, 2018, p.233).

2.2.5.1 Challenges of the implementation of EMI in higher education

The implementation of EMI programmes in higher education around the world raises many challenges (Wilkinson, 2011). EMI research has shown that all participants in the entire university system, including students, lecturers, and administrative staff, face challenges.

These challenges are grouped into four categories by Galloway et al. (2017): language-related, institutional, cultural, and materials-related challenges. Numerous studies of EMI have noted linguistic challenges. For instance, Macaro et al. (2016) claimed that lecturers do not provide linguistic feedback to students because they do not consider themselves to be language instructors. There are also numerous challenges associated with implementing EMI, including increased teacher workload (Babicheva & Lee, 2018), difficulties finding instructors to teach on EMI programmes (Hu, 2009), a lack of pedagogical guidelines for instructors on EMI programmes (Dearden, 2014), and communication obstacles between staff, teachers, and students (Cankaya, 2017).

2.2.6 Bilingualism and multilingualism in EMI settings from an ELF perspective

The characteristics of the settings of ELF require differentiation between settings in EMI. This is because the implication of ELF will be different according to the context. In ELF perspective, the EMI context has been traditionally characterised for multilingual settings in which there are users from a variety of cultural and lingual backgrounds (Murata & Iino, 2018). In this case, it would be an ELF setting in itself, because participants in EMI settings are participating in ELF. However, when English is not the only option, this means that in a bilingual context, where there is a possibility of students and teachers interacting in another language besides English, ELF will not typically be described in this setting. Thus, generally speaking, there are no points of contact between bilingual settings and ELF. Therefore, at the level of language practice, Cogo (2012), Kalocsai (2014) and Jenkins (2014) have indicated that ELF should be conceptualised as "English as a multilingual franca" through indicating the connection between English and other languages with regard to the "multilingualism of most ELF users" (Jenkins, 2015, p.15). Nonetheless, Hüttner (2018, p.486) argued that while an ELF that favours multilingualisation is fruitful for gaining comprehensive understanding of ELF, differences should be acknowledged between ELF and bilingual practices. More specifically, in ELF, students know that English is the only shared language from the outset, whereas in bilingual settings, the students know that they share a local educational language plus English.

Within the context of Saudi Arabia, the majority of students have traditionally shared a cultural background, homogeneous norms, as well as having a similar first language (Arabic) (Ebad, 2014). When universities start implementing English in HE and on EMI courses, it

can be argued that the settings should be classified as bilingual contexts in higher education, rather than multilingual from the perspective of ELF. In this case, students are not in an ELF scenario because most of them belong to the same cultural-linguistic background. However, there have recently been two main changes to the HE sector within the context of Saudi Arabia which complicate the boundaries of the settings. First, most universities' teachers are international and from different linguistic backgrounds and teach educational content in the English language. Hence, in the classroom, there are students who mostly belong to one background and teachers who belong to a range of other backgrounds; this would indicate that the characteristics of the settings are more multilingual than bilingual settings. Second, Saudi Arabia is a multi-diversified community with more than 12 million international residents out of a population of 33 million who work in Saudi Arabia. Many of those residents with an international background attend schools and universities. This has led to classrooms with students and teachers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

2.2.7 Interpretation of the 'E' in EMI

The interpretation of the 'E' in EMI, or the kind of English that should be implemented, is a much-debated subject within the field of EMI. Jenkins (2018) states that academics in fields outside ELF research tend to assume that the language used by native speakers is the only acceptable form of the language, and that this assumption is then transferred to EMI. Dearden (2014), for instance, indicated that using native English was the only genuinely acceptable method of adopting the English language in the way in which it is embraced by its native speakers in EMI. However, this opinion that the E in EMI can only mean native English has been criticised by a number of multilingualism supporters (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; May, 2015; Coffey & Wingate, 2018). They established their argument on the basis that monolingual target and native-like assumptions are unsuitable, even in cases in which a second language is taught with the aim of communicating essentially with its native speakers.

By contrast, scholars who study ELF in EMI settings take them as also being ELF settings. Accordingly, Smit (2010) and Jenkins (2018), for example, argued that EMI settings reflect, by definition, ELF settings. Hence, the E in EMI should be understood as ELF and not as native English. According to Mauranen (2003), who created the Corpus of ELFA, ELF has

greater influence on EMI in HE than native English, which has a very limited presence. Furthermore, Mauranen and Ranta (2008, p.199) stressed the need to realise and understand that English was often used in situations where none of the speakers are NESs; therefore, native English may not be the most relevant form of the language to use. Seidlhofer (2011, p.19) even states that "native-speaker language use is just one kind of reality" and that its relevance is decreasing in lingua franca contexts.

Jenkins (2018) argued that "if university managements had greater awareness of ELF, and were less concerned to promote native-like English in their institutions, many of the inequities relating to EMI would be speedily resolved" (p.4). She highlighted a number of points that need to be understood when discussing the role of ELF in EMI in HE education: English is employed by many more NNESs than NESs; the value of any form of English should not be measured by how close it is to native English; the communication that takes place between NNESs differs from that between NESs; and one person's form of English is not intrinsically of a higher value or standard than the type of English used by others. It is not the form of English that matters, but how effectively people are able to communicate with others in their own ELF interaction contexts. This also involves other skills, such as accommodation and the ability to speak languages other than English.

In resonance with this critical argument of the role of ELF in EMI, Murata and Iino (2018) indicated that ELF had rarely been embraced in EMI publications beyond ELF-linked EMI literature. Researchers of EMI only began to think more deeply about the nature of the English used in EMI settings after Smit (2010) published her longitudinal EMI case study from an ELF perspective. Moreover, the subject of the 'E' in EMI was recognised more widely after Jenkins (2014) carried out an extensive study on the nature of the English being used in international universities around the world. She questioned whether the English being used as part of EMI was really promoting 'internationalisation'. Despite the topic being highlighted by several researchers, the 'E' in EMI is still rarely discussed by scholars, particularly in the context of ELF. Furthermore, the small number of research studies that examine EMI from the perspective of ELF tend to focus on how teachers and students view 'English' and their identity formation using English as a medium of communication (see Galloway & Rose, 2013; Iino & Murata, 2016, 2018; Wang, 2017).

However, although the accumulating evidence for the intrinsic existence of the ELF phenomenon in EMI higher education, major studies of EMI discard or at least dismiss the existence of ELF. This is the case in Macaro et al.'s (2018) study, which was on English in EMI. It mentions ELF only once, when examining the requirement for a consensus around the type of English that should be adopted in EMI higher education. In a further criticism of the use of ELF in EMI settings, Macaro et al. (2018) argued that ELF would reduce the level of "richness" of English due to the shallow levels of "proficiency". Jenkins (2018), nonetheless, argued that such a connection between the use of ELF and a lack of richness in the language reflects a deviation from the understanding of the phenomenon of ELF. Further, despite the essential role of adopting the most appropriate kind of English as an MOI in specific HE settings, Jenkins (2014) referred to the slow progress that had been made to increase the attention of decision makers in higher education towards the phenomenon. This means that HE institutions in many countries have been adopting a native type of English for decades without realising the existence of new approaches and new understanding of the role of the English language as a tool that should consider market and communication demands rather than as simply a native language that has idealised illusory standards.

A number of studies have focused on exploring the perceptions of students of the type of English they expect to find in their EMI courses. Jenkins (2014), for instance, who explored the status of 'English' in international universities worldwide, questioned the meaning of 'international' in relation to the understanding of 'English' in the promotion of internationalisation through EMI. The findings were that students were generally in favour of using Standard English (native English) in EMI courses and, interestingly, indicated that, outside the classroom, ELF would be very useful as long as they were able to achieve their goal of effective communication. Moreover, in other studies, students have mentioned that ELF is a source of pride as it preserves their identities (e.g., Cots, 2013; Cots et al., 2014; Guido & Seidlhofer, 2014). Thus, from the above situation, many studies reported inconsistency of students' perceptions with controversial reactions from students towards the role of ELF. As such, on EMI courses, students prefer Standard English, although, when communicating with others, students would genuinely support ELF as a useful tool for communication.

In addition to the aforementioned studies that address the nature of the E in EMI, one of

the extended studies that investigated English in EMI from an ELF perspective is a comparative study edited by Jenkins and Mauranen (2019), which explored linguistic diversity and the English and other language policies and practices on the campuses of nine universities in Asia, Australia and the UK. The aim of the research was to investigate ELF, particularly ELFA. This was conducted by examining tendencies to use languages other than English on the university campuses, overt and covert language policies, and the orientations towards the use of English. However, the phenomenon of ELF in HE still needs more attention, particularly in some immensely under-researched contexts within the field of ELF, such as Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on and provide insight into this particular context. As Doiz et al. (2013, p.219) argued, "every context has its own characteristics and, therefore, studies rooted in each specific context will be much welcomed. Results from other contexts may always be helpful and enlightening, but every institution should carry out its own research, which ideally will lay the foundations of the most appropriate language policy for them".

Finally, as highlighted by Macaro et al. (2018, p.52), there should, ideally, be a debate on how to define proficiency in an EMI context. Jenkins (2018) further points out that the results of such a debate would largely depend on whether it was carried out from an ELF or Standard English ideological perspective. As the latter adopts a deficit approach to non-native English, it is likely to consider how much inaccuracy, i.e., deviation from Standard English, is acceptable. On the other hand, an ELF perspective would not view deviation from Standard English as a problem in EMI, but would consider which forms of English are most effective and base decisions on empirical ELF evidence. One of the positive outcomes of this would be that NNES students would realise that the form of English they use for general communication does not have to be exactly the same as the English used between NESs, and this would greatly boost their confidence in their English skills.

2.2.8 EMI in the context of Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, English is increasingly being learned by young students in primary and secondary education, and it is mandatory in Saudi higher education. Therefore, EMI provision has also increased in multiple disciplines in Saudi universities (McMullen, 2014; Ha & Barnawi, 2015). Several programmes have been introduced into HE to contribute towards the commitment to 'Englishisation'. These programmes utilise EMI to equip

students with the English skills that it is believed they will need to possess in order to make them competitive in the global labour market. In the context of Saudi HE, there is a lack of research into EMI. Al-Jarf (2008), Tadros (2011) and Shamin et al. (2016) are among the few researchers who have investigated EMI in the Saudi Arabian context. Al-Jarf (2008), for example, examined how students viewed the status of Arabic and English, and their use as an MOI in Saudi universities. The study gathered the students' views through interviews using open-ended questions and revealed that a large majority (82%) of the students thought that Arabic was best suited for the teaching of human and social sciences, and that nearly all of them (96%) believed that English was a superior language because of the status afforded to it globally. Al-Jarf also commented that the dominant status given to English in Saudi HE posed a threat to the native language, Arabic.

Research by Al-Kahtany et al. (2016) utilised a questionnaire to explore students' and instructors' views on EMI and Arabic and found that the attitudes of the two groups differed substantially. The students were definite in favouring Arabic as an MOI, whereas lecturers wished only to teach in English, despite acknowledging that this made communication with students more difficult. The researchers attributed the students' attitudes to the fact that they were naturally proficient in Arabic and responded emotionally and religiously to their mother tongue. The researchers also stated that the attitude of the lecturers was greatly influenced by what they termed 'the linguistic hegemony of English'. Although the majority of the few researchers who have investigated students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes did so in relation to the implementation of EMI itself, no study, to the best of the current researcher's knowledge, has examined the E in EMI specifically and the orientations of English within the context of Saudi Arabia, especially from an ELF perspective.

2.2.8.1 The growth and predominance of EMI in Saudi Arabia

According to Zaid (1994), the Saudi government believes that making the English language a compulsory MOI in HE programmes will broaden the knowledge levels of students as well as help them to develop their personalities from a wider aspect. According to Elyas and Picard (2010), EMI was introduced into Saudi universities with the goal of making students develop their skills and, therefore, capable of attaining enough employment opportunities. It is quite likely that the English language will have a major positive impact on the

professionality of the students in real-life situations (Alhawsawi, 2014). It is considered to be a prime concern for enhancing both the personal and professional skills of the students depending upon the international job markets (Al-Hazmi, 2017). As recognised by Elyas and Picard (2010), in both developed and developing countries, including those outside the UK, US and Australia, the English language is regarded as the international language of communication; as such, the Saudi government believes it is necessary for students to learn English along with the Arabic language (Alhawsawi, 2014).

2.2.8.2 The need to examine Saudi students' perceptions of English from an ELF perspective

Various studies have explored the adoption of ELF in EMI in order to identify the most effective kind of English when it comes to issues related to the internationalisation of universities, enriching the capacity of students to communicate, and preparing students with an appropriate version of English to enable them to gain competitive advantage in a globalised world (e.g., Jenkins, 2014; Baker & Huttner, 2019; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019). Moreover, embracing ELF might be seen as a way of asserting a domestic nationality (Grin, 2003). Indeed, in a broader analysis, configuring an acceptable type of English to be adopted within HE requires understanding the factors related to the way in which English is implemented (Grin & Gazzola, 2010). This, in turn, necessitates understanding the idea that ELF evolves on three distinct levels: the macro, meso and micro. Thus, if stakeholders depend on the macro level when implementing a type of English language in EMI in HE, there would be an overt dismissal at the micro level role (e.g., the perceptions of students and teachers) of who actually practises the English language in higher education (Spolsky, 2004).

Accordingly, several reasons can be considered for exploring Saudi students' perceptions of English. First, ELF might be the de facto language policy. That is, ELF might be the orientation that is actually used, despite language policy tending to focus on Standard English, as seen in many ELF studies (e.g., Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019). In order for the phenomenon of ELF to be acknowledged, it is essential to understand Saudi students' perceptions of English from an ELF perspective, in order to determine whether the students prefer using ELF in an EMI context, or if they tend to prefer only using Standard English in an EMI context. The data collected from Saudi students would be beneficial for decision

makers in the Saudi government when planning English policies that can be applied efficiently with students' participation.

Second, ELF research shows that ELF suits NNESs' language needs, wants and interests (Canagarajah, 2007). For instance, using ELF would give NNESs the sense that their national identity is being preserved. In other words, unlike using Standard English, utilising ELF would allow NNESs to unveil their identity and background through the language. Within the context of Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to explore whether use of ELF among students would support their national identity. Third, there is a need to describe language policy in Saudi Arabia in terms of English and discuss whether the language policy (in terms of English) is causing Saudi people to resist English or embrace learning the language (Grin, 2003; Grin & Gazzola, 2010).

2.3 The nature of English as a lingua franca

2.3.1 Starting a discussion of 'English language'

English has spread among states and communities around the globe. Nonetheless, the users of English can broadly be divided into three categories: those who use English as a native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) (Kachru, 1992). The ENL group contains those born in the territory of one of the following states: the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. These Five Sisters, as dubbed by Winston Churchill, are perceived as "the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English" (Kachru, 1992, p.356). ESL indicates the language spoken in the considerable number of states which were colonised by the British, such as Bangladesh, India, Singapore and Nigeria (Jenkins, 2014). EFL is the English of people who belong to countries that were not colonised by the British. In this category, from a historical point of view, the users of EFL learned it for the purpose of using it when communicating with native English speakers.

Kachru (1997) categorises the perspective of English use into three circles: "the inner circle", where English is used as a native language; the "outer circle", which contains the post-colonial countries in which English is used as a second language; and the "expanding circle", where English is used as a foreign language. Jenkins (2015) describes the English used in each circle in terms of its relationship with norms. In the inner circle, English provides the norms; in the outer circle, it develops the norms, meaning that ENL can be

institutionalised with particular local norms; and, in the expanding circle, the English depends on norms, i.e., it cannot change or deviate from other English norms – it can only conform. According to Jenkins (2014), the lines between the aforementioned categories are fuzzy; therefore, from a practical and logical point of view, it would be inappropriate to try to categorise English users as belonging purely to one of the three categories. A considerable number of people who belong to the ENL group live and work in ESL countries, such as Hong Kong and India.

2.3.2 English as a lingua franca: definition and developments

Initially, researchers into ELF were greatly influenced by the concept of World Englishes (WEs), which was a relatively new field at the time. Since then, they have maintained the ideology of WEs, which does not view NESs as the 'owners' of the language or the arbitrators of its development and usage. In accordance with this ideology, WE scholars acknowledge several forms of English as legitimate, even naming them according to where they are used: Nigerian English, Indian English, etc. However, ELF researchers began to realise in the first 10 years of the 21st century that ELF did not lend itself to this geographically bounded approach. Rather, ELF is "variably variable", and the form it takes depends not so much on the first language (L1) of the speakers, but more on the people taking part in an interaction (Jenkins, 2014). Accommodation was seen as a key skill for the success of ELF communication, having already been recognised by Jenkins (2000) as essential for ELF pronunciation. This led to a move away from the varieties approach of WEs, and ELF academics turned their attention towards the effect of ELF crossing language boundaries and how linguistic variability evolved.

In the 2000s, ELF was usually defined as the English being used to make contact and communicate between individuals with a different first language. For example, in Jenkins (2009, p.143), ELF is defined as "English as it is used as a contact language among speakers from different first languages". Two years later, a similar definition was published by Seidlhofer (2011, p.7) and became the definition most-often cited by others: "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice and often the only option". Mauranen (2012) highlights the influence that speakers' first language can have on the form of English they use in ELF communication, introducing the concept of "similects" in "second-order contact". This

view of ELF was particularly influential as it provided an explanation for the variability and complexity found within ELF.

Moreover, according to the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), ELF is defined as "an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages". Interestingly, this definition recognises ELF as an additionally acquired language system. This means that even a native English speaker does need to expend time and effort to acquire ELF skills and this acquiring of ELF will enable native speakers to communicate efficiently in ELF settings (Seidlhofer, 2005). In other words, ELF does deviate from the English of native speakers. This peculiar situation of ELF differs from the EFL situation as native speakers cease to be the providers of English norms (Jenkins, 2007).

2.3.3 English as a lingua franca vs. other English paradigms

In order to gain a better understanding of ELF, it is valuable to examine the relationship between ELF and EFL, and between ELF and WEs. With regard to ELF and EFL, the two differ in several ways in terms of how they conceptually approach English (see Table 1). The first distinction is that ELF follows the WE paradigm, which acknowledges that, globally, the majority of people who speak English are NNESs. This has certain sociolinguistic implications, including NNESs being able to choose which form of English they employ in their communication. On the other hand, the EFL paradigm assumes that people learn English with the primary aim of communicating with NESs (Jenkins, 2014).

The second distinction relates to how deviation from the English spoken by native users is viewed. In EFL, such deviations are seen as errors, but this is not so in ELF. In the ELF paradigm, they are seen as a preference for utilising English differently from how an NES may choose to use the language to communicate with other NESs. Cogo and Dewey (2012) further point out that certain forms of ENL are important for ELF communication, and others are not. Therefore, the authors argue that there is no point asking what constitutes an error in ELF because such a narrow perspective of correctness is irrelevant when discussing ELF communication. Table 1 clarifies the differences between EFL and ELF in terms of three factors: the purpose of using each paradigm, the paradigm source, and the conceptualisation of the two orientations.

Table 1: English as a lingua franca vs. English as a foreign language (e.g., Jenkins, 2006, 2015)

ELF	EFL
Successful communication in intercultural settings	Communication with native English speakers
Part of global Englishes and multilingualism	Part of modern foreign languages
Difference perspective	Deficit perspective
Hybridity, fluidity, variability, and accommodation	Error, fossilisation, error source is L1
Metaphor of Language contact, evolution, and accommodation theories	Metaphor of L1 interference and transfer theories
Code-mixing and switching is seen as bilingual recourses	Code-switching is seen as interference errors

Given the opposing views represented by differences between ELF and EFL, it is not surprising to learn that they have very distinct underpinning metaphors. Metaphors of language contact and change underpin ELF, whereas metaphors of fossilisation and interference underlie EFL. Taking code-switching as an example, this would be viewed within the ELF paradigm as a valuable skill that can be employed by bilingual speakers of English; from the EFL perspective, however, it is seen as a sign of a gap in knowledge, such as a lexical gap (Jenkins, 2014). Furthermore, communication in the two paradigms is seen as having very distinct aims. ELF communication relates to a very broad definition of intercultural communication, often between two or more NNESs, whereas in EFL 'intercultural' is understood in the very narrow sense of interactions with NESs. As perhaps expected, EFL teaching tends to emphasise mimicking native English, but ELF focuses on effective strategies for intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2014).

The other relationship that we need to consider is between ELF and WEs. In contrast with ELF and EFL, ELF and WEs share similar ideological perspective. EFL takes the narrow view that the different varieties of English that have arisen as the use of English has spread around the world are in fact failures to emulate NESs. However, both ELF and WEs regard these different varieties of English as languages in their own right and as expressions of their users' identities. They do not view them as failures to reproduce ENL or to appear as if they are native speakers (Jenkins, 2014). On the other hand, there is a slight difference between the two paradigms, as the study of ELF does not take national boundaries into account, whereas research on WEs focuses on 'bounded' varieties of the language, i.e.,

nativised versions that have emerged in countries that were once British colonies, such as India or Singapore. It is acknowledged within the ELF paradigm that English speakers from all three circles have their own way of using English, but they do not believe that it makes sense to discuss a certain type of English in only a national sense, as the language is so closely associated with globalisation (Jenkins, 2014). There is a clear distinction, then, between the WE perspective, which has nationalism at its core (Pennycook, 2009, p.20), and ELF, which focuses on communication across nations. ELF communication aims "to capture the pluricentricity of ongoing negotiated English in the fluid, flexible, hybrid, intercultural, and contingent uses of English that occur in ELF interactions" (Dewey, 2007).

Thus, determining an identified theoretical perspective would have a substantial impact on the ways in which language policy is planned. That is to say, adopting a viewpoint that believes in the evolutionary nature of language, which is the ELF perspective, would mean that ELF speakers are not perceived as failed, or incompetent language users. Indeed, ELF speakers would be perceived as deeply skilled communicators who create novice linguistic norms and connections, as well as using their multilingual background to establish successful communication to promote solidarity and asserting their cultural identity. ELF speakers would also be seen as speakers who can accommodate efficiently to speakers from a broad spectrum of L1 backgrounds. Moreover, they would be able to prioritise appropriate communication rather than narrowing it to the area of correctness, which is even difficult for first-language speakers to comprehend.

2.3.4 The 'native' and 'non-native' English dichotomy

The practice of English as a lingua franca contains an overt challenge to the use of the term 'native English' speaker. In the past, it was common to hold up the language of NESs as the target language for which students and teachers should aim, and against which a NNES's competence was judged (e.g., Hymes, 1966). There has been a great deal of debate over the term 'native English speaker' because it can be subject to such a wide range of interpretations (e.g., Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2015). Several academics have discussed the blurred distinction between the terms 'native' and 'non-native', and the fact that even NESs do not have a 'standardised' version of English (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2011; Davies, 2013). The term 'native speaker' brings with it further problems from the ELF perspective, as will be discussed below.

Seidlhofer (2011, p.5) points to two of the issues related to the term native speaker: the connotations and the 'ideological baggage' that have become linked to native English speakers over time. Along with the term 'inner circle', these terms suggest that the development of norms in the language flows in only one direction, and all other groups have to follow the norms set by the NES group (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). As previously discussed, by contrast, ELF does not focus on how closely someone is able to mimic NESs' speech, but rather on how skilful they are in communicating in an intercultural environment. Thus, the traditional connotations of native English norms lose their relevance in the ELF perspective (Jenkins, 2014).

The other negative effect of labelling someone a non-native English speaker is that the 'non-' implies that they have a deficit of some sort (Galloway & Rose, 2015). It is also not correct to use the language of one group as the standard against which another group's language is compared when the two groups are different. NNESs have the right to employ their own use of English and they can adapt and change these forms of English to suit their own circumstances and cultures (Jenkins, 2015). The forms of English that they use to communicate are unique to them and irrelevant to the English used by native speakers (Galloway & Rose, 2015). It is, therefore, clearly unfair to expect their Englishes to conform to native English or to be judged against it, as they have their own Englishes.

2.3.5 Communication strategies in ELF

Conformity to native English speaker standards is not as important for successful and effective communication in ELF interactions, in which English is used as a medium of communication among speakers of diverse first languages (Seidlhofer, 2011). Instead, many ELF researchers have emphasised the significance of communication techniques because research has revealed that ELF users employ a variety of strategies to reach mutual understanding and handle uncertainty in ELF dialogues (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2011; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Mauranen, 2012). Many researchers have revealed that the employment of communication techniques seems to improve engagement, aid in meaning negotiation, and overcome communication breakdown among English languages speakers (Mauranen, 2012).

ELF researchers have also focused on communication skills as crucial strategies for achieving effective interactions. Numerous pieces of research on intercultural communication demonstrate that communication strategies help language users with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds communicate effectively with one another. For instance, skilled ELF users can employ a variety of communication strategies to improve clarity and explicitness, anticipate communication issues, and co-create interactions with their interlocutors (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2012). Therefore, communication strategies have been viewed as those that all English speakers use to create mutual understanding, rather than techniques that only low-proficiency English users employ to overcome their language challenges.

Users of ELF can have very different learning and usage experiences from one another. They may frequently interact with other interlocutors who have varying degrees or levels of language proficiency, necessitating the employment of communication strategies to facilitate effective communications. According to Canagarajah (2007), ELF users can be categorised as both speakers and learners, as they are practising ELF communication while also learning what linguistic and strategy tools will enable them to communicate successfully and effectively in various settings. Previous studies have examined how ELF users employ communication strategies to communicate effectively with a variety of interlocutors (e.g., Pitzl, 2005).

Further, many researchers into ELF communication have noted that a speaker's employment of communication strategies may be influenced by a variety of contextual factors, such as the interlocutors, goals, and genres involved in a particular interaction (Seidlhofer, 2011). There are other analytical approaches that have been employed to investigate communication strategies in ELF, such as accommodation theory (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006) and discourse analysis (e.g., Björkman, 2011). These different approaches can take into account the background of the language users, contexts, objectives and other elements of the interactions. Some studies have found variations in communication strategies employed in various circumstances. For instance, Mauranen's (2006) research in an academic setting demonstrates that comprehending challenges are almost never disregarded (i.e., in a 'let it pass' strategy).

A number of studies have also described different communication strategies employed by ELF users, particularly when faced with comprehending challenges (Smit, 2010). For instance, Mauranen (2006) discovered that understanding challenges were clearly signalled by asking for clarification or repetition, but the majority of misunderstanding cases were not flagged in a targeted or focused manner. In addition, ELF users would verify understanding with others or with themselves, and would frequently self-correct in order to avoid potential misunderstandings. Further, Smit (2010) investigated the occurrence of and responses to language repair in classroom interactions and revealed that language repair took place for the purpose of "negotiating or creating understanding" among language users (p.169).

2.4 Academic English from an ELF perspective

This section discusses academic English in higher education from the lens of English as a lingua franca. Academic English, as Mauranen et al (2010) stated, has become an "immense phenomenon" with the increasing numbers of research being published. The use of English as a lingua franca in academic settings (ELFA) has gained much research attention in the last decade (Mauranen, 2012, p.66), with an increasing number of studies being published on the subject (e.g., Smit, 2010; Mauranen, 2012; Björkman, 2013; Hynninen, 2013; Iino & Murata, 2016, 2018; Wang, 2017). There has been a call for a change in higher education (HE) language policies, with Jenkins (2011, 2014) at the forefront of this movement. Until now, the focus of work in this field has been on describing academic ELF, rather than examining various language policies in HE and how they influence ELF users. Studies in this area have also tended to concentrate on the spoken language, as can be seen when considering the ELFA corpus of academic English (Mauranen, 2003, 2012). The language in this corpus is taken from spoken lectures and presentations at seminars and conferences. Later, an additional corpus was compiled using informal written language – the WrELFA (Mauranen, 2015). However, Wingate (2015) posits that because access to and assessment within HE are based on a formal written genre of language, the existing research evidence based on informal written and spoken language cannot solely be used to inform future changes in language policies and practices. Written language forms can be difficult for both NESs and NNESs because they are governed by imposed norms that are both unfamiliar to them and difficult to negotiate (Mauranen, 2012, p.6). On the other hand, spoken language

facilitates shared understanding and is guided more by spontaneous norms (Mauranen et al., 2010, p.185).

Jenkins (2014, p.49) identifies three categories of approaches to academic English: conforming, challenging and paradigm shifting. First, the conforming approaches, such as English for academic purposes (EAP), tend to conform to native academic English and to regard this as the ideal for which to aim. They also do not question the supposed superiority or appropriateness of these norms. Second, challenging approaches, such as critical EAP and academic literacies, challenge the assumptions underpinning EAP and the need for linguistic conformity that is implicit in the conforming approaches. Lastly, an example of the third category, paradigm-shifting approaches, is ELFA. The main area of interest in ELFA lies with the academics, in any country, at any level, who use English as an academic language when they communicate interculturally with others (Jenkins, 2014, p.61). A significant contribution in this area is evidence gathered in corpora regarding how English is employed for communication in academic contexts. However, further research is required into formal written academic genres, as this will be key to any future proposed changes in policy (Wingate, 2015). Corpora of the academic English employed mainly by NNESs would be very valuable for the analysis of their written academic work (e.g., Biber, 2006; Nesi & Gardner, 2012).

Further, Jenkins (2014) surveyed 166 lecturers from different international universities that employed EMI and interviewed 34 international postgraduate students at a UK university. Her findings confirmed the need for clear institutional policies and education for teachers on English language requirements. Most lecturers approved of the language policies used in their university because they showed students that 'good' English was expected (Jenkins, 2014, p.130). Around 50% of them thought that it was important for students to conform to the norms of native English, which they considered to be the 'standard' academic English used in the UK and North America (p.158). The other 50%, who mentioned that they tolerated deviation from Standard English, still had in their minds the concept of 'good' or 'correct' English as the target. They did not recognise that it could be acceptable to deviate from NES norms. Similarly, many students also viewed native English as the 'best' (p.201). They noted that different supervisors had different expectations and requirements with regard to language and that these affected their self-esteem. Jenkins based her recommendations for systematic reform in HE policies and practices on these findings. She

advocates changes that “go far beyond the surface level tinkering that has largely taken place so far” (p.202).

One of the recommendations put forward by Jenkins (2014) is based on a core principle of ELF – that conforming to a perceived ‘standard’ English is not important, but rather the aim should be to achieve mutual intelligibility in written and spoken form between members of academic communities within and outside their institutions. Deviations from a standard form of English do not matter as long as the message conveyed is clear. She further recommends that the sheer difficulty of studying in a second language should be recognised and that more support should be given to students, including giving them more time to complete assignments and greater access to advice from teachers. Moreover, she recommended providing training and education for native students and staff to improve their intercultural awareness and understanding of the notion that accommodation should flow in both directions. Put another way, staff and students from the country of the institution should not simply expect international students to conform and adapt to their norms and expectations, but should be more tolerant of differences. Moreover, they should understand that communication in an academic setting is specific to that setting and its community, which may consist of many people who have different first languages, rather than being specific to one particular nation (Jenkins, 2014).

2.5 English language in medical settings

As the research project involves medical students, this section provide a brief discussion of the debates around the applications and implications of English language in medical setting. it has become more common for medical staff to migrate to other countries, ELF interactions have increased in healthcare settings (Tweedie and Johnson, 2018). Despite this, research into the nature of MELF interactions has remained scarce. To the best of the current researcher’s knowledge, there is only one study in this area, and that is by Tweedie and Johnson (2018). This study utilised analysis of a role-play exchange between nurses who did not share the same L1 by adopting the intelligibility framework introduced by Smith and Nelson (1985). The situation was a patient handover in a hospital and nursing instructors’ analysis of the nurses’ exchanges showed that there were issues of second language (L2) intelligibility that would pose a threat to patient safety in a real situation. For example, as well as inaccuracies in syntactic and lexical elements, nurses misunderstood

medical terms, and both frequency and dosage. Following this exchange, nursing students with different L1s participated in a listening comprehension exercise, and the results were similarly disquieting. Despite the majority of the students later asserting that they had felt confident or very confident about their level of understanding of the exchange, key points of the exchange were misunderstood. Not only is it disturbing to see that patient safety can be negatively affected by miscommunication, it is also unsettling to realise that nurses may not even be aware that they have misunderstood a key point in an exchange (Tweedie and Johnson, 2018).

Although it has been claimed that the overlap between healthcare communication and applied linguistics has potential for application in practice, this has not been widely explored by scholars (Candlin & Candlin, 2003). Some researchers have reported a number of difficulties in health care caused by language barriers, such as problems with the physician-patient interface; creating a barrier to access to care; lowering compliance with treatment; and reducing the satisfaction of patients (e.g., Carrasquillo et al., 1999; Wilson et al., 2005; Schenker et al., 2008). However, the focus has tended to be on interactions between NES health practitioners and NNES patients in ENL settings (Cameron & Williams, 1997; Shi et al., 2009; Ian et al., 2016). For example, a study by Staples (2015) compared the features of the speech used by NNES nurses who had been educated internationally and those of NES nurses educated in the US when they were talking to native English-speaking patients. Although there were similarities in their language, the lexico-grammatical features of the NNES nurses' discourses differed from those of the NES nurses. The communication of US-educated nurses centred more on the patient as they were more likely to express empathy, "developing rapport, reassuring patients, and more generally therapeutic communication" (Staples, 2015, p.134); the discourse of nurses educated abroad, on the other hand, was more focused on the provider (p.216).

It has been reported that patient safety can be compromised by language barriers, but this topic has also been studied principally in ENL contexts. For example, Wilson et al. (2005, p.803) found that when there was language concordance between patients and their physicians, there were fewer incidences of misunderstandings over medication and adverse medication effects. Another study in an ENL context examined cross-cultural communication between patients and nurses in a surgical ward and the barriers caused by differences in culture and language that could hinder "safe and effective care" (Boi, 2000,

p.387). In a similar study by Graham et al. (2011, p.117), nurses were asked about interactions between NES nurses and NNES patients, and they described the language barriers between them as “challenging, frustrating and even dangerous”. Research on teaching English for nursing purposes (ENP) has also tended to focus on ENL settings. In nations where English is one of several first languages used officially or where it is taught as a foreign language, scholars have not paid a great deal of attention to ENP communication (Bosher & Stocker, 2015), and even less to MELF in lingua franca contexts.

In MELF contexts, Tweedie and Johnson (2018) offer suggestions for how to integrate language development into the curriculum. One of their suggestions was to make listening a basic element of the curriculum by placing a focus on transformative listening tasks that are interactional in nature. Strategies should be introduced that help student nurses to improve the effectiveness of their communication, such as requesting that something be repeated and asking questions, rather than focusing on a strict adherence to form, and teaching a lexis that is specific to nursing. This echoes the view of Jenkins (2007, p.238), who argued that in international communication, “the ability to accommodate to interlocutors with other first languages than one's own ... is a far more important skill than the ability to imitate the English of a native speaker”.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined the conceptual and empirical origins of the study. First, the chapter explored the concept of EMI which is clearly a fast-growing global phenomenon, as well as a complex one. In Macaro’s (2018, p.19) definition, EMI is defined as “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the populations is not English”. However, this definition of EMI has been widely criticised, especially from an ELF perspective. Accordingly, Murata and Iino (2018) stated that “EMI can be defined as English-medium instruction conducted in the context where English is used as a lingua franca for content learning/teaching among students and teachers of different linguacultural backgrounds”. Different approaches to and definitions of EMI abound, leading to continuous debate over what constitutes EMI and the degree to which language and content are currently or ideally should be integrated into EMI programmes. There are many EMI models and approaches and each is defined by its context and the institution where it is used. Different education

programmes have varying language learning objectives and content, and content and learning are integrated to different degrees (Galloway, 2021). After I discussed the worldwide spread of EMI and its definition from different perspectives, I addressed its differences with other forms of education, such as CLIL and CBI. I also examined the debate over the interpretation of the E in EMI, or the kind of English that should be implemented in EMI. Last but not least, I examined EMI in the context of this particular study (Saudi Arabia), its growth and predominance within the context of Saudi Arabia, and the necessity of exploring Saudi students' perceptions of English from an ELF perspective.

Second, I addressed the different paradigms and approaches to the English language and Kachru's three categorisations, or the well-known 'circles' of English use: "the inner circle", where English is used as a native language; the "outer circle", which contains the post-colonial countries in which English is used as a second language; and last, the "expanding circle", where English is used as a foreign language. Second, I examined the phenomenon of ELF, which can be defined using one of the most frequently used definitions as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice and often the only option" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p.7). The second section of this chapter also identified the relationships and differences between ELF and EFL on the one hand, and ELF and World Englishes on the other, as well as ELF developments over the last two decades. I also examines and discusses the key aspects of this research, such as, academic English from ELF lens and the debates around medical English

This chapter focused on the conceptual and empirical origins of the study, theorisations of the English language, ELF, and the concept of EMI. In the following chapter, I discuss different language policy frameworks and examine the adopted frameworks in this research as well as how the study approaches language policy, language practice, and language ideology

Chapter 3 Theoretical framework: language policy, language practice, and language ideology

3.1 Introduction

The theoretical background to this thesis is provided in this chapter and explains the key terms relating to language in the thesis: language policy, language practice, and language ideology. The chapter starts with defining language policy and the chapter then discusses theories relating to language policy, such as Spolsky's (2004, 2009) and Shohamy's (2006) frameworks of language policy. This is followed by a discussion of language ideology and Standard English ideology in ELF practice and the relationship between a Standard English ideology and language policy. Finally, the chapter examines some of the mechanisms and devices employed in education institutions for the implementation of English education policy with an embedded Standard English ideology, such as the curriculum, textbooks, and examinations.

3.2 English language policy

3.2.1 Language policy: definition and meaning

Language policy, as a statement of intent and implementation (planning), can be defined as a set of processes and actions, generally on a national scale, adopted by governments with the aim of influencing, changing, and/or modifying the ways that literacy or speech are addressed within a given society (Ricento, 2000). According to Shohamy (2006), the study of language policy explores the covert agendas behind decisions on language policy and the decisions related to language adoption and asserts the impacts of these decisions and their possible parameters on various groups within society. As such, there are distinctive mechanisms for creating language policy (e.g., language tests, educational policies, and governmental language-related laws). Moreover, language policy is an area of interest for students in a range of disciplines, as it shapes their education and hence their future after graduation.

3.2.2 English language policy frameworks

The research field of language policy has been more prominent since the middle of the 20th century, and researchers in this area have been mainly divided between two approaches. The first trend in language policy research focused on language policy and planning, with the aim of addressing language issues in order to improve national development (e.g., Cooper, 1989; Hornberger, 1990). This involved both corpus and status planning, which are "beneficial to nation-building and national unification and which can decide which language would best … provide access to advanced, that is Western, technological and economic assistance" (Ricento, 2006, p.13). The other group of researchers focused more on linguistic human rights, and economic and social inequality. They advocated policies that would benefit international groups (e.g., May, 2006; Pennycook, 2006; Tollefson, 2006). A number of assumptions were made in this early work on language policy, and terms such as 'linguistic competence', 'power', and 'native English' are now being questioned by current researchers who regard language policy through the lenses of post-modern and critical theories.

This outline of how language policy has evolved over the last 70 years highlights that the most effective way to approach this field is not through purely descriptive or subjective statements, but by critical or practical measures that are able to address issues that involve language and society (e.g., Spolsky, 2004; Ricento, 2006; Shohamy, 2006). For this research study, the aim was to utilise theories that fit the context, aims and research questions. The EMI areas investigated in this research study are English presentation in EMI, English practices, and the participants' beliefs or ideology. Therefore, the language policy theories employed in this study should apply to these three areas and serve as a guide for the collection and analysis of the data. This enabled the research to address the practical issues which are at the centre of this work. Furthermore, the language policy theories used need to be able to examine critically the discrepancies between policy and practice, and the issues of power that might underlie these discrepancies.

3.2.2.1 Components of English language policy

Despite the ongoing research efforts into language policy, Spolsky (2004, 2009) highlighted that there was still no single, complete theory that encompasses and addresses the complex issues involved in language policies at all levels. During the first phase of research

into language policy in the last century, when language planning was the focus of attention, status and corpus planning were very restrictive and standardised. Individuals had very little choice in which languages they could learn, and policies failed to take into account how language is used in practice (Spolsky, 2004). Furthermore, language policy tended to judge language behaviour and punish a failure to comply with the language standards established by language planning. In other words, the research into language policy at that time focused on language use at the macro level, for example, the nation's official language, at the expense of the micro level (individuals' use of language). Advocating the collection of "usable data on language policies at all levels systematically" (Spolsky, 2004, p.5), Spolsky (2004, 2009) suggested that research on language policy should encompass the three elements of language management, language practice, and language beliefs or ideologies (see Figure 2). This section discusses each of these three elements in turn below.

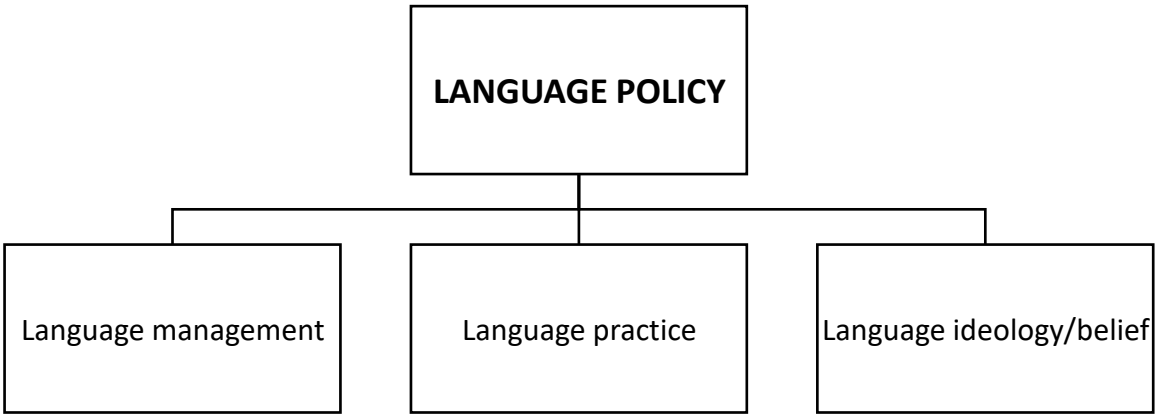

Figure 2: Components of language policy (Spolsky, 2004, 2009)

Language management concerns "the explicit and observable effort by someone or some group that has or claims authority over the participants in the domain to modify their practices or beliefs" (Spolsky, 2009, p.4). In other words, language management is about the process of regulating the use of language among grassroots users, and this process goes from top to bottom. It can be expressed implicitly through conventions or norms, or explicitly through regulations or formal documents. In either form, it tends to be under the control of a group with power. Language management can be summarised as how and who regulates language and for whom (Cooper, 1989). Language status and standards are decided by language management, and these also influence the way that language is

employed and perceived in practice. However, this influence may not always be as strong as anticipated, as the mere existence of a policy does not mean that it will necessarily be implemented, or that its implementation will be successful (Spolsky, 2004).

When using the term 'language practices', Spolsky (2004, p.9) refers to "the sum of the sound, word and grammatical choices that an individual speaker makes, sometimes consciously and sometimes less consciously, that makes up the conventional unmarked pattern of a variety of a language". In other words, language practices can be defined as studying the behaviour of grassroots users of language and their choices. Alternatively, Liu (2016) deconstruct language practices into four key terms: individual, agreed rules, situation, and language intervention. It is first important to realise that individuals ultimately have the choice of which language form they use, not the authorities. Therefore, in practice, language is used in many different ways by millions of individuals, and a good number of these will contract the standardised language policy. Second, in addition to linguistic choices, people's language behaviours are influenced by external factors, such as convention or informally agreed rules. Third, individuals' choice of language and behaviour can vary in different contexts and circumstances. Finally, but equally importantly, people's language choices are not always made consciously, so some language behaviours cannot be controlled by policies or interventions. To summarise, language is modified in numerous different ways to suit dynamic and complex situations, and not all of these modifications are the result of language interventions (Liu, 2016).

Language ideologies can be described as "beliefs on language or language use" (Spolsky, 2004, p.5) and tend to value certain varieties of a language more highly than others and concentrate on the values attributed to language choices. They are significant for research on language policy as there is a strong likelihood that they will have an influence on individuals' choice of language and their language behaviour in practice. Language ideologies can also influence language management (see 3.3). Language beliefs are not exclusive; several can exist concurrently. They may operate in a bottom-up direction, deriving from practice, or from the top down, deriving from language management. There may also be a contradiction between the two, in which case language management may agree with grassroots practice or try to modify it. Consequently, in practice, one common main belief tends to be shared by the community at one time (Liu, 2016).

There are strong inter-relationships between language management, language practice, and language beliefs or ideology. Language practice leads to language beliefs, and the language ideology can affect language behaviour in practice. Language management aims to devise standards for the use of language and thus tries to modify beliefs about language. However, if language practice and beliefs differ from language management, this can force language management to be changed. As a result of this inter-relatedness, a minor change in one element may result in changes in the other two, although language management is considered the strongest influencer of the three (Spolsky, 2004).

As previously mentioned, Spolsky (2004, 2009) highlighted the lack of a complete theory that was capable of addressing the complex issues involved in language policies at all levels. Spolsky therefore introduced a framework for language policy theory that would encompass data from all levels of language policy research. Rather than focusing on language management, Spolsky's framework is more rounded and takes into account how language is actually employed and perceived in practice. In relation to this thesis, this framework has considerably influenced the interpretation and investigation of language policy, as it has led to the thesis being structured on three macro and micro levels: policy regulations (language management), linguistic practices, and participants' beliefs and ideology.

3.2.2.2 Mechanisms of language policy

Spolsky's framework (2004, 2009) contributes significantly to the research on language policy by portraying a full picture of it. However, there are still questions surrounding the data that are obtained from the three levels – i.e., what lies inside or behind the picture, and how these levels influence each other and who is behind this interaction (Liu, 2016). In order to gain a more in-depth understanding of language policy and find answers to the above questions, this section also examines the interpretation of language policy by Shohamy (2006), which was built upon Spolsky's framework of language policy (2004, 2009). In this way, this section addresses some of the statements behind the three levels of language policy.

Shohamy (2006, p.52) claims that policies are often "only lip service, declarations and intentions" and are not actually implemented, meaning that their impact on practice is limited. Furthermore, policies may be implemented but their implementation may not be

successful. One of the reasons for this is that language policy may contradict rather than reflect how language is actually used. This can, in turn, lead to clashes between those who try to impose policy from the top and those who use the language in practice and are resistant to change. When these clashes occur, attempts to create new language practices or maintain existing ones often employ both covert and overt devices. These are referred to as "mechanisms" by Shohamy (2006, p.57), who maintains that mechanisms are actually used (rather than official documents) to generate 'de facto' language policies (see Figure 3).

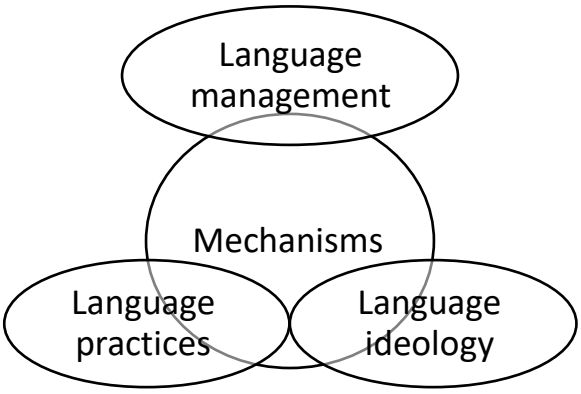

Figure 3: Mechanisms of language policy (Shohamy, 2006)

According to Shohamy (2006), such mechanisms have three dominant characteristics. The first of these is that while they can be exploited by grassroots and dominant groups, such mechanisms tend to be much more effective when using them to fulfil their aims. For example, a whole nation can have its language behaviours and choices dictated to it by a government through the policies, laws and rules it implements. If people uphold different language standards or behaviours, they are likely to be punished to some degree, such as by failing examinations. The second point to bear in mind is that language cannot be separated from political, social, economic and ideological agendas. This lack of neutrality is reflected in the mechanisms employed to control language practices and, therefore, we must remember that they too will be utilised to try to accomplish and promote certain agendas (Shohamy, 2006).

It is also important to realise that these mechanisms can be used implicitly in such a way that they influence language practice without people being aware of it. For instance, they can be employed in education curricula, textbooks, and examinations. These mechanisms can also be vehicles for language ideologies, but both students and teachers tend to follow

them without even considering that they reflect certain language ideologies or agendas (Shohamy, 2006). Therefore, dominant groups are able to impose their language beliefs on students from the point at which they start to learn a language, using implicit mechanisms. Shohamy (2006) demonstrates, through the interpretation of mechanisms, that the intentions of language policy are best observed in the covert devices employed to influence language beliefs and behaviour. With this in mind, this thesis examines documents related to curricula, textbooks, and examinations as mechanisms of language policy in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of English implementation within the context of higher education in Saudi Arabia.

3.3 Language ideology

Language ideology is a concept that connects forms of language with power structures, and is of particular interest to scholars who study language in its cultural, social and political contexts (e.g., Lippi-Green, 1994; Pennycook, 2013). The idea of language ideology has, over time, been a targeted subject for various scholars from a range of inter-disciplinary fields. These scholars have created different descriptions of the subject, as there has been no consensus in the literature. One of the common definitions of language ideology is that it is the "shared bodies of common sense notions about the nature of language" (Rumsey, 1990). This definition by Rumsey is, however, culturally orientated and lacks variation, as it only gives priority to the cultural aspects of language ideologies. Kroskrity (2004) states that the above definition ignores the social and linguistic differences that provide some of the dynamic pressures capable of influencing language modifications. Kroskrity (2004) also states that this definition emphasises stagnant, homogenous, and shared culture. In addition, he notes that the concept of language ideology is to examine the differences in the ideas, ideals, and practices of communication.

Irvine (1989) describes language ideologies as the cultural programming of ideas exhibiting social and linguistic relationships, culminating with the inclusion of moral and political preferences. This definition is an indication that language ideologies are highly varied and that they are created with individual viewpoints of ethics and politics, and that they have an impact on the cultural concept of language. Bourdieu (1991), on the other hand, focuses on the social conditioning inherent in ideologies and views them as being shared by everyone who belongs to the same society; implicit modelling means that they become

'naturalised'. In other words, members of a society are implicitly told what is correct and incorrect through the prescription of a model to follow. Through naturalisation, ideas about language are transformed into a type of common sense to which everyone subscribes. This can be described as a semiotic process.

Earlier, Silverstein (1979) had defined language ideology as "any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use". This definition emphasises linguistic awareness as playing a principal part in permitting language users to rationalise and influence the structure of language (Silverstein, 1979). It emphasises that this awareness among language users and the idea of rationalising language use and structure play essential roles in the determination of the framework of language evolution. Thus, language ideologies are assets for users, who acknowledge them in order to create an understanding of linguistic structures. These understandings are hence used in lucrative activities. In other words, language ideologies are people's perceptions of language that influence how they use that language in practice. They pursue their ideologies in their practices of language and position themselves in relation to languages or varieties. Although former definitions examined language ideologies in terms of multidisciplinary concepts and perceptions, the general agreement is that they are part of the deep-rooted social and cultural nature of language (Irvine & Gal, 2000).

There is awareness among sociologists and linguists of the role of language in socialisation and its influence on how surrounding social actions are perceived (Edelman, 1977; Berger & Luckmann, 1991). The language used for day-to-day purposes has always fed the user with vital perceptions and holds logical meaning for the everyday activities of the user. Language performs a crucial role by pointing out and recognising language users in a society. Hence, language is capable of enhancing the life of the user with meaningful practices (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). The function of the language that is spoken in society is not only to give meaning to previous activities, but also to identify potential and social perceptions. Assumptions are embodied in language and in education through language, and they are reinforced in language use; they also expand the social role of language to surpass means of exchanging perceptions and opinions to take a significant role in language use. Shohamy (2006) describes two distinct ways in which language can be conceptualised. One focuses on the nature of language and views it as the way individuals use language as

a personal means of expression. From this viewpoint, “language is open, dynamic, energetic, constantly evolving and personal” (Shohamy, 2006, p.5). The other way emphasises the ideological power of language and in this view, “language is a symbolic tool for the manipulation of political, social, educational and economic agendas” (Shohamy, 2006, p.1). Hence, languages are regarded as ideological resources for manipulation and asymmetric interests.

From the above discussion, it is clear that language ideologies are components of culture, society, linguistic beliefs, attributes, opinions and concepts; there are many of them and they are conceived by both individuals and groups (Kroskrity, 2004). Kroskrity (2004) has described these beliefs and concepts in that they might appear explicit as omnipresent sets of various beliefs. These are used by speakers of every segment as machines for manufacturing the linguistic evaluation and engagement associated with activities of communication. Kroskrity (2004) has outlined the features of these perceptions as the superiority or inferiority of particular languages, the acquirement of languages, and language contact and multilingualism.

Kroskrity (2004) expands these perceptions to include all beliefs and feelings about languages. He concludes that language ideologies are the perceptions of, or emotions about, languages in respect of their utility in the social world. Woolard (1998) suggests that the perceptions and concepts that create language ideology are able to exhibit themselves as socially created. This suggests that language ideologies could affect language users’ actions towards language use in specific ways. They also develop judgements about frameworks and usage of the language (Woolard, 1998). Ricento (2000) emphasised the role of the socio-historic backdrop of a particular context in order to discover language ideology as the determination, through the functioning of a language within the periphery of social activities and events, of interaction. Ricento (2000) suggests that the socio-historic lens is capable of accelerating community understanding of reactions towards languages by the enforcement of power authorities. Communities resist these authorities and rectify them by creating discourses of opposition and self-perceived ideologies (Ricento, 2000).

Furthermore, according to Wang (2020), language ideology and language are related in three ways. First, language ideology describes the ideological dimension of language, referring to the way in which although a variation of a language or a language itself might be viable in terms of its linguistic form, it is not widely accepted as a legitimate language.

Second, language choices and discursive practices serve to promote, promulgate or even resist certain language ideologies. For example, public discourse, language policies and institutional regulations can all promote a language ideology and establish certain forms of language as correct or incorrect (Spolsky, 2004; Shohamy, 2006). Language norms are followed by language users whom they tend to try to use higher-scale forms in order to conform to the mainstream ideology. However, there are differences between language use in practice and language policy, and these differences can delineate the boundary between one group of people and another (e.g., Kroskrity, 2009). Third, language ideologies influence how language use is viewed, shaped and decided, particularly when Standard English is held up as an example that should be followed, motivating complaints about deviation from it and thus devaluing other forms of English. This occurs in both English-speaking countries and contexts in which ELF is relevant (e.g., Jenkins, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2018).

3.3.1 Indexicality

The term indexicality in language ideology focuses on users' interpretations of the link between power structures and language forms. Blommaert (2007, p.117) argues that the "indexical order" is generally considered to be "the metapragmatic organising principle behind what is widely understood as the 'pragmatics' of language". Language users' reactions to pre-defined indexical orders maintain existing power relations, and determine how forms that deviate from these predominant orders are viewed in terms of their legitimacy. Taking the example of ELF, English and ELF speakers' ideologies and the relationship between them is closely linked to the subject of the ownership of English. The legitimacy of the creativity of ELF users is also intricately linked to the degree of ownership they feel over English. The power relations that already exist sustain the roles of NESs and non-native English speakers (NNESs); the former are seen as the owners of English and the latter are viewed as followers of norms. Investigating the language ideologies that are embedded among ELF users allows us to understand their agency in negotiations of the power relations that preside over English language norms (Wang, 2020).

3.3.2 Language ideologies and ELF

The recent increased focus on and attention to language ideologies has motivated ELF research, but there are still gaps in knowledge regarding differences between languages in linguistic terms and in ideological terms (Wang, 2020). As the use of English has spread around the world, Englishes that are distinct from Standard English have inevitably arisen and these have been studied in the context of different purposes, such as identity and communication (Jenkins et al., 2011). However, the form of English spoken by NESs is still held up as the model that NNESs should follow, despite the latter's need for creativity in language use; this inevitably causes tension between the needs of ELF users and the ideologies that dictate the use of Standard English.

Research on ELF has led to a collection of corpus studies that highlight the norms and patterns of ELF (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2004; Cogo & Dewey, 2012). Jenkins (2000) asserts that ELF as a phenomenon should be respected as a language in its own right, and not compared with the English of native speakers. On the other hand, second-language acquisition researchers focus on the language users' competence based on native speakers, whereas the interest of World English (WE) researchers lies in localised varieties of English that are employed within bounded societies (see 2.3.3 for more details). ELF research raises questions regarding how relevant the English of native speakers really is in terms of its global usage, which has led to wide opposition from linguistic researchers who adhere to other paradigms.

A growing number of studies are examining ELF and its linguistic context, and it is increasingly acknowledged as a natural language phenomenon. These studies naturally focus on different aspects of ELF. Jenkins (2007), for instance, has studied the identities and attitudes of the users of ELF, with the rationale that the attitudes of the users of any language play a crucial role in the legitimisation and acceptance of that language. She found it difficult to determine whether the users of ELF had a negative or positive view of it, as they tended to be inconsistent in their views on language preferences. Based on the premise that all the people who use English own it in some way, the question of whether the users of EFL consider themselves to be biased learners of English or legitimate users of it has also been explored by researchers (e.g., Murata & Iino, 2018). Furthermore, studies have explored how the awareness of ELF can be improved in English education, and there

is a belief that if research findings on ELF could be disseminated to its users, it would help them solve the dilemma they inevitably face about their competence compared with that of native speakers. Galloway and Rose (2014) call for the awareness of global Englishes to be improved in English education, as this would be a better indication of how the language is actually used in real life and be a departure from a focus on the norms of NESs towards more global orientations of Englishes.

One of the fundamental issues discussed in ELF research is how the different forms of English are arranged in a hierarchy. There is a general drive towards the encouragement of linguistic variation and a discouragement of linguist unjustness or bias. Studies that examine the awareness of ELF, along with its ideology, attitudes and practices, are often conducted against a background of power relations. They have also helped us to understand these power relations in current English practices (Wang, 2020). The globalisation of the English language and its reconstruction by scholars have provided evidence-based and theoretical support to the emergence of creative and new forms of the language in real life. This in turn has challenged the power differences between NESs and NNESs (Wang, 2020). Wang (2020) states that studies on language ideology, attitudes, practices and awareness have widely contributed to the understanding of power relations in English. First, researchers reveal that ELF users' inconsistent attitudes towards ELF are linked to a preference for Standard English as spoken by native speakers on the one hand and a more resistance attitude towards established norms on the other (e.g., Jenkins, 2007). Although users of ELF appear hesitant over being associated with NESs, they still seek to possess a sense of belonging to international groups where there is a heterogeneous culture and language groups (e.g., Kalocsai, 2011). Finally, researchers of language policy highlight that national languages and ELF share complicated relationships that vary according to the policy context (e.g., Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019).

3.3.3 Standard English ideology

The role of English as a national language is related to the standardisation of language, and particularly an idealised variety of English known as Standard English. In the context of English as a national language, i.e., in Anglophone countries, many studies have been conducted on the myths around Standard English, its ideological foundations and the negative impact of a Standard English ideology. However, it is also important to consider

that the use of Standard English and its ideology apply to other contexts beyond those countries where it is the national language (Wang, 2020). They are particularly relevant to ELF (see Jenkins, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2018) and this section examines the operation of Standard English in the contexts in which it originated as a result of language policies.

The Standard English ideology is viewed as being more prescriptive than ELF, which is flexible and can be adapted to different situations. Seargeant (2009) provides a general definition of language ideology as "the structured and consequential ways we think about language" (p.26). A standard language ideology encompasses a set of beliefs about acceptable standards of language. Processes of standardisation have been taking place over a long time "to produce an abstract set of norms—lexical, grammatical and ... phonological—popularly described as constituting a standard language" (Milroy, 1999). The level of control by dominant nations over language is so persistent that people socialised in conventional settings internalise language ideologies to such an extent that they follow them unconsciously (Seidlhofer, 2011, p.43). The Standard language ideology often centres on beliefs and ideas about what is authentic and correct, and on native and non-native speakers, in a way that socially benefits the former but disadvantages the latter. Furthermore, Standard English ideology can be regarded as a particular kind of standard language ideology that has influenced many nations and has thus had a wide global impact.

There are several characteristics of the Standard English ideology, one of which is the belief that standardised, uniform language is the best and only legitimate form of English (Seidlhofer, 2011). Standard language is defined as the form of a language that is regarded by its users as the norm (Jenkins, 2015, p.21), and any deviation from it is regarded as incorrect. With regard to Standard English, this is defined as the form of English that the more educated or middle- and upper-class native speakers use (Jenkins, 2015, p.24). Therefore, even though the English user may be a native speaker, if the speaker does not use this particular form of English, the language being used is still regarded as non-standard (Jenkins, 2015). Moreover, despite the acceptance of new Englishes, Standard English categorises Outer Circle varieties of English as deficient or fossilised and in Expanding Circle countries, the education system is influenced by a Standard English ideology (see 2.3.1 for an explanation of Outer and Expanding Circle countries). Curricula are based on Standard English because it offers a limited range of English models, all of which tend to comply with British Received Pronunciation or American norms, viewed as the most acceptable forms

of the language (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p.46). To summarise, Standard English ideology confers a privileged status upon Standard English and views all other varieties of English as inferior or deficient (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Another fundamental characteristic of Standard English ideology is that it views NESs as being the actual 'owners' of English (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The majority of people accept that NESs have the right to design the standards for English simply because the language was created by their ancestors. This is known as the 'English first' argument, which has been criticised by Jenkins (2007, p.31) because it includes the assumption that native English is most suitable for use as an international lingua franca in current times simply because it emerged first. As pointed out by Widdowson (1994), it is unreasonable to use a historic fact (i.e., NESs' ancestors created the language) to attribute custody of the language to NESs. This is especially because there are now more non-native than native English speakers around the world and, when speaking English, NNESs are not necessarily targeting NESs. Furthermore, international languages are independent and NESs do not have the privilege over other speakers of the language of deciding which language standards should be applied (Widdowson, 1994). Rather, anyone who uses English has the right to adapt it so that it fits the purpose of their particular communication.

One of the many ways in which Standard English ideology can be promoted is by placing a high value on NESs' form of English and by utilising the English spoken by NESs as the standard against which other varieties are measured. The culture of NESs is also overwhelmingly portrayed in different forms of media, such as television and films, as well as through scientific journals (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This means that the Standard English ideology can be very subtly conveyed to teachers and learners, and that it would have quite a significant influence on their use of the language and what they consider to be 'correct' and 'good' English (Jenkins, 2007, p.58). Significantly, Standard English or native speaker ideology is being reinforced without teachers being aware of it. Although, as mentioned above, media and journals are influential through their reproduction and promotion of a Standard English ideology, language education policy is still considered to be the most powerful mechanism for influencing language practice and implementing language ideology (Shohamy, 2006; Jenkins, 2007). This section has discussed the definitions of Standard English ideology and its characteristics and examined how it is promulgated. The following section discusses particular mechanisms that are employed in educational

settings to implement English education policies that might follow a Standard English ideology.

3.4 Mechanisms and devices in English language policy

There are several mechanisms and devices that can be found in language policy (Shohamy, 2006) (see 3.2.2.2 for more details of mechanisms in language policy). This section summarises some of the mechanisms that can be found in educational settings with potential Standard English ideology.

3.4.1 Curriculum

Kelly (1989) terms the curriculum as "the overall rationale for the educational program of an institution" (p.14). A curriculum with a Standard English ideology integrated into it is the key mechanism for implementing language policy. Richards et al. (1992) describe the curriculum in its basic sense as a prescription of the content that is to be taught and the sequence of teaching it. Taking a broader view, a curriculum encompasses the purpose of the teaching and the learning experiences and teaching procedures that will be required for this purpose to be achieved. It also includes some of the measures that will be used for determining whether the educational purposes have been fulfilled (Shohamy, 2006). The following paragraphs examine curriculum content and evaluation and consider the educational purpose in order to provide a broad view of a curriculum.

Looking first at educational purpose, schools in many countries have English as part of their curriculum as a second language to supplement their native language. Shohamy (2006) notes that English constitutes the main foreign language in secondary schools in most non-English-speaking countries, even to the extent of being a compulsory subject in primary schools. This is further endorsed in certain countries where it is the language for teaching other subjects – English as a means of instruction (EMI). Brown (2012) states that a strong emphasis is placed on its usefulness in global communication, particularly in technology, commerce and academia. It is widely recognised as an international or global language, and as a lingua franca. Nonetheless, a number of studies have established that this representation of English as a global language does not always manifest itself in curricula in the way that might be expected (McKay, 2002; Jenkins, 2014). This is encapsulated by Brown (2012), who observes that traditional developers of curricula take as given that

students will learn the English of native speakers (NSs) and adopt their use of the language as the paradigm for English usage. They also assume that the language of educated NSs should be taught and that British or US culture should be taught as the standard to be followed.

Non-English-speaking countries tend to focus on the mode of English that is most suitable for learning technical vocabularies for specific subjects, such as advanced technology, science and information. The belief is that mastering this form of up-to-date English will better enable students to be successful in international competition. Brown (2012) notes that there is a belief that the importance of English as a global language is driven by the economic and political intentions of certain non-English-speaking countries. The US and Britain are viewed as the two most economically successful countries and, therefore, their form of the language is the model to be followed. This is a very restricted view of the purpose and learning needs of students, who, in the majority of countries, seek to learn English as a means of securing a place at a better university or of being better educated or qualified to be selected for advancement in the workplace. McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) state that this is particularly relevant in countries in the Expanding Circle. Students have a pragmatic approach to learning the language for the purpose of academic or work advancement, not for the purpose of communicating with NESs.

A considerable amount of criticism has been levelled at curriculum content. Canagarajah (1999), Shohamy (2006), Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) and Galloway and Rose (2015) are all agreed that students are insufficiently familiarised with global English. Furthermore, Cogo and Dewey (2006) and Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) consider there is a lack of practical problem-solving English pedagogy. Baker (2011, 2015) and Galloway and Rose (2015) add that there is little emphasis on the cultural diversity of English-speaking peoples. There are a number of expressions that add confusion in that they are not fully understood. ‘Standard English’, ‘a native English speaker’, ‘global Englishes’ and ‘ELF’ are all terms that can often be heard but whose concepts are not necessarily fully understood. Jung and Norton (2002) and McKay (2002) exemplify this further by noting that British or American English can often be employed by policy makers, particularly those in Expanding Circle countries, in the belief that they are using global Englishes. This is most prevalent in education, where a Standard English ideology is unknowingly employed (Canagarajah, 1999; Shohamy, 2006).

It is likely that there is no such thing as a World Englishes paradigm or an ELF paradigm that contains all the varieties of the language. Selecting teaching material written in Englishes that are appropriate for the students' learning, such as in textbooks and listening journals, is suggested by Galloway and Rose (2015). In parallel, researchers consider that global Englishes and awareness of ELF can be heightened through teacher training programmes. This is endorsed by Jenkins (2007), Dewey (2009) and Matsuda and Friedrich (2011), as they consider teachers to be paramount to the success of a curriculum. There is also a feeling that the standard curriculum does not fully meet requirements as it does not focus on cultural diversity. Galloway and Rose (2015, p.206) state that culture is taught in traditional English pedagogy because it is viewed as a way of accessing "the native English-speaking language culture".

3.4.2 Tests

A Standard English ideology can also be embedded in tests as a further key mechanism of language policy. The predominant belief is that tests are a necessary part of reviewing students' work and progress. According to Brown (2012), tests also allow educators to determine whether the objectives were correctly defined. Shohamy (2006) has elaborated on tests as "A set of mechanisms which are used in subtle ways to manipulate language and create de facto language policies" (p.93). Thus, tests are actually the de facto policy that influences people's beliefs and behaviour with regard to language use. Consequently, a language test that adheres to a language education policy is a policy mechanism for reproducing language ideology. Conversely, if a language test does not conform to the language education policy, it is not the official stated language educational policy, but rather the test itself that affects people's language beliefs and behaviour. Language tests are powerful in several ways: they manipulate language and establish which varieties are valued over others; they regulate and perpetuate the correctness of certain forms of English, and thus suppress diversity; and they establish which languages should be studied, along with the most appropriate content and teaching methods (Shohamy, 2006, pp.95-105).

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, two distinct language policy theories were adopted in this research study. Spolsky (2004, 2009) used a framework that incorporates many perspectives and levels, allowing language policy to be considered from various aspects of language practice, beliefs and management. In addition, Spolsky (2004, 2009) delineates a clear distinction between the side that manages language policy (i.e., the government) and the side that practices language policy (i.e., students and teachers). Moreover, Shohamy's (2006) interpretation of language policy makes clear statements about language policy and provides an in-depth study of the overt and covert devices used to implement ideologies into policies. Therefore, both frameworks provide the study with tools to use for investigating language policy by observing the use of language in practice and the power issues involved in language management. Moreover, they also provide an insight into the perceived effects of current English language policies and practices on Saudi students.

In addition to the discussions of language policy based on Spolsky's language policy framework (2004, 2009) and Shohamy's (2006) mechanisms and devices of language policy, I have specified that language policy was used in this thesis as an integration of language beliefs, management and practice with mechanisms or devices that are used overtly or covertly to influence each of these components. The Standard English ideology was then discussed in relation to standards and beliefs about language. Galloway and Rose (2015) consider this ideology to be a particular case of standard language ideology, as it is implemented globally and considers NESs to be the owners of Standard English. This ideology also advocates the uniformity of language and values highly the standard version of a language, viewing it as the only legitimate form (Seidlhofer, 2011). This chapter also outlined certain mechanisms that are implemented in education with the aim of embedding a Standard English ideology into education policies.

This chapter also discussed different language policy frameworks and explained how the study approaches language policy, language practice, and language ideology. The next chapter explores the research approach, design, and methods.

Chapter 4 Research methodology

4.1 Overview

In order to explore the way in which the English language is used within EMI on programmes in the Saudi Arabian HE sector, the researcher adopted a qualitative research approach (Creswell, 2013). With the help of this method, it was possible to understand the presentation of English within higher education as well as to explore students' views, perceptions, and experiences with regard to the English language policy implemented by the HE authorities in Saudi Arabia, as well as language ideologies, in an in-depth manner. This chapter highlights the specific research design, sample size, and techniques employed and the steps taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The current study aims to explore linguistic issues at the levels of language management, ideologies and beliefs, and linguistic practices in two different disciplines in an EMI context in Saudi Arabia, as well as to understand students' perceptions and experiences of the English language in EMI programmes within a Saudi university. In order to provide a theoretical foundation to the investigation of EMI policies, ideologies and linguistic practices at different levels and in various EMI settings, the study adopted Spolsky's (2004, 2009) extended language policy framework and Shohamy's (2006) mechanisms of language policy (see 3.2.2). By adopting Spolsky's framework and Shohamy's mechanisms of language policy, this study intends to provide insights into the expanded language policy used in HE programmes, linguistic practices, and language ideologies and beliefs in two different EMI programmes in Saudi Arabia.

The aims of the research project described above were divided among the following research questions to guide the structure of the thesis and the analysis and presentation of the data in this study:

RQ1. How is English represented in Saudi Arabia in a higher education context?

The first question is designed so as to tackle the first objective in this study (i.e. exploring the way in which English is implemented in EMI within a university setting in Saudi Arabia). By doing so, the researcher will be able to have a holistic view about language management in Saudi Arabia.

RQ2. What are the explicit and implicit English language expectations, and to what extent do students evaluate the English used/accepted in their EMI programmes?

RQ3. How, and to what extent, do students perceive English in terms of:

a. Native/non-native and their own English;

b. Social use of English;

c. L1 and local culture and values.

The second and third research questions focus on the other fundamental components of Spolsky's framework of language policy and Shohamy's mechanisms in language policy. Therefore, the questions are designed to explore the linguistic practices as well as unfolding the perceptions of students on the current situation regarding English language and their expectations regarding the way in which the language should be presented and used in EMI programmes. The two questions also aim to provide an understanding of the language ideology and values associated with English and other varieties of English usage in the given context.

4.2 Research design

A critical aspect within research methodology is acknowledged to be the research design. The researcher adopted a research 'onion' design to conduct this study with the use of appropriate research tools. There are usually five layers in the process of a methodology to cover the sequence of a research study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first layer of the research onion is the research philosophy, which is classified according to three categories: positivist, realist and interpretivist paradigms. The second layer comprises the research approach. There are essentially two forms in which a research approach is categorised: inductive and deductive. The third layer of the research methodology is a suitable research strategy, which needs to be identified and stated (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, research is conducted following either experiment, survey, case study, ethnography, grounded theory or action research. The fourth layer of the research onion is identified as a definite timeframe, which involves a longitudinal or cross-sectional timeline. The fifth layer represents the data collection instruments, which can be categorised as gathering primary or secondary data. Primary data can be collected through various data collection

tools, such as interviews, focus groups and observation, and secondary data can be extracted from previous studies. This study followed an interpretivist paradigm, took an inductive approach, employed a case study strategy, and used semi-structured interviews, focus groups and formal document analysis as qualitative research instruments. The next sections discuss these aspects in turn.

4.2.1 The research paradigm: interpretivism

Research conducted on any scale in the social sciences is supposed to be positioned in relation to the philosophical views of research, which are known as research paradigms or research philosophies (Creswell, 1994). As this research was aimed at understanding the presentation of English in the language policy implemented by the Saudi government in EMI courses, as well as students' perceptions and experiences of English, the interpretivist paradigm was adopted with the intention of gaining the perspectives of the group of people, or sample, who were chosen for the study in order to develop their opinions as outcomes. Human interpretations were given increased relevance, rather than following the conventional norm of the knowledge existing in the literature.

Interpretivism is often equated with social constructivism due to their similarities. Interpretivists believe that people are in search of an understanding of the world around them and, therefore, they develop subjective meanings for their experiences. These meanings can be complex and varied and more than one meaning can be attributed to an experience (Creswell, 2013). This is how reality is viewed in this paradigm, and it means that the researcher depends on the study participants being able to inform reliably on the actions they take and what they say in their lives and experiences. The questions posed to participants when applying an interpretivist approach tend, therefore, to be broad, so that the participants are free to interpret them and construct their own meanings. One of the main differences between interpretivism and constructivism is that in the latter the researcher considers all the descriptions of social reality as equally valid. However, an interpretivist views the interpretation of these descriptions as providing reality, and thus tries to reconstruct them through interpretation to convert all the different accounts of reality into a social scientific explanation of a phenomenon (Scott & Morrison, 2007, p.131).

A researcher employing an interpretivist approach therefore involves individuals in a study with the aim of comprehending how they interpret their lives and experiences and the

world in which they live (Cohen et al., 2007, p.22). In this kind of research, it is acknowledged that the interpretation of the participants' accounts could also be influenced by the background of the researchers and their cultural, personal and past experiences. The goal nonetheless is to interpret the meanings that other people have assigned to a phenomenon or situation. Interpretivism also contrasts with positivism in that the process does not start with building on a theory. Instead, a theory or a pattern of meaning may develop inductively. In other words, a theory may emerge from the data that are gathered during the research, rather than gathering data to try and prove or disprove a given theory.

There are different benefits that a researcher may gain through an appropriate application of an interpretive philosophy. A clear picture pertaining to a social scenario across diverse events, objects and human beings can be projected from this philosophical point of view. Grounded theory, case studies and ethnography typically allow the researcher to draw insight regarding the interpretation of a particular event. In this study, the researcher interviewed various students in order to collect data based on different views. This means that the researcher must deal with different subjective viewpoints and this, in turn, necessitates interpreting the views of each participant (Crossan, 2003).

Another benefit of this research philosophy is its usefulness in understanding events that cannot be observed clearly. Accordingly, by holding interviews and focus groups, feelings, thought processes and behavioural attitudes are reflected by the perspectives people showcase in the form of an interpretive research philosophy. There are certain limitations to an interpretive philosophy, as the opinions expressed as interpretive outcomes of a specific sample cannot be held as the collective generalised voice of an entire population. This is due to the inevitability of researcher bias in collecting and analysing textual data, as the researcher cannot be separated from the researched phenomenon. This creates an automatic gap in research outcomes when compared with scientific procedural results. Moreover, the political and actual social findings sometimes deviate in this form of interpretive research study (Matua, 2015). The theoretical perspectives often show empowerment towards individual subjective differences, rather than putting forth a picture of reality as the characteristics of the society.

4.2.2 Inductive approach

The inductive approach, or inductive reasoning, starts with the recording of observations along with theories. This might be suggested as a result of observations, usually at the end of a particular study. This approach to research comprises the search for patterns. These usually come from observations, along with the introduction of various explanations and theories. The patterns could also arise from a chain of hypotheses (Yin, 2013). It should be noted that at the initiation of the research, no hypothesis or theory will be applicable, especially concerning inductive studies. In addition, the researcher is free to modify the direction of the study following the commencement of the research process.

It is important to note that in the inductive approach, theories cannot be disregarded at the time of composing or determining the questions and the aim of the research. The objective of the inductive approach is to develop useful meanings from the data set collected. This further assists in identifying the different patterns and relationships required for the formation of a particular theory (Williams & Katz, 2001). However, this approach does not, in any way, hamper the researcher in using any of the existing theories, particularly in composing the questions of the research that must be explored. This form of reasoning is based on learning from experience. The different regularities and resemblances and various types of pattern are closely observed in order to develop a conclusion or generate a theory (Burgess, 1984).

As for the application of the inductive approach in the study of linguistics, this starts with an in-depth study of the literature, gradually moving in the direction of more abstract theoretical thoughts or generalised concepts (Kitzinger, 1995). Moreover, initial relationships can be identified while the research progresses. It is possible that, initially, no hypotheses are available during the early stages of the research. It is also possible that the researcher might not have a clear idea of the type and nature of the research findings. This might become clear later, once the research is over (Zainal, 2007).

This form of reasoning is often considered to be a bottom-up approach. In this approach, the researcher depends on observations to develop an abstraction or a description of the phenomenon being studied. In other words, the researcher gathers data and establishes a pattern. This pattern is later expanded into a theory. However, this approach can be criticised due to its limited scope and low level of accuracy. Inductive reasoning is incapable

of leading to unbiased views in a diverse environment. The small sample size may also be regarded as a source of bias, with the sample not reflecting the whole population, and this might result in distorted views about a particular phenomenon. Therefore, in this study, the researcher only examined the perceptions of engineering and medical students at Bisha University regarding the way the English language is represented in a particular Saudi university. Thus, the views of other students from other Saudi universities were not considered and this, in turn, creates a vacuum in understanding the views of the whole population. Indeed, inductive reasoning starts with something specific and then becomes general.

4.2.3 The research strategy: case study

A case study can be defined as a naturalistic type of enquiry; it involves "an investigation into a specific instance or phenomenon in its real-life context" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.170). The focus of a case study is on individuals or groups, and the researcher aims to understand how they experience events. Particularly relevant events are highlighted and the researcher becomes involved in the case study. This involvement and focus result in rich and in-depth descriptions. Events are examined and analysed chronologically (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989, p.322). These typical characteristics of a case study are facilitated by the focus being placed on a single, relevant case, the rich details that this enables, and the attention paid to individuals and groups and how they interact.

The case is usually chosen and defined by set boundaries, which can be temporal, geographical or institutional. The boundaries can also be set by the roles of the groups or individuals involved in the case study (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989, p.319). Duff (2008, p.22) described a case study as "an exploration of a bounded system". The case can also be considered as a single case or multiple systems in which a variety of relevant sources provide the information. Another definition of case studies, Yin (2003) states that they employ empirical enquiry to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in real life. The findings from a case study are, therefore, highly relevant to other similar cases in similar situations in which the same phenomenon occurs.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.359) stated that the case study method is well suited to an emic enquiry, which centres on internal (as opposed to external) structural elements. An emic enquiry also allows the tacit knowledge of the researcher to be employed. When

researchers are focusing on one case, they are also able to see more clearly all the principles and ideas that combine to make the whole, as well as being able to explore the interconnecting, dynamic human interactions and relationships within that one unique case (Cohen et al., 2007, p.253). This method was, therefore, very appropriate for this study as it aimed to gather in-depth, rich descriptions of experiences within cases that are bound by institutional contexts.

Having reviewed the key benefits and characteristics of case studies, five of these are particularly relevant to this study: (1) a bounded system; (2) using a wide data source to collect detailed data; (3) a natural approach by being emic and holistic; (4) the aim of comprehending the perspectives and meanings that people assign to an experience or phenomenon; and (5) a real-life context (Qi, 2009, p.23). In this study, the aim was to gather empirical data on the presentation of English in EMI and students' experiences and perceptions of the English in EMI as well as in a social context. The case study approach enabled the researcher to investigate a social context in a real-life institutional setting and to gather rich details that could consolidate the findings. Data were collected from a number of sources, focusing on the people within the bounded context of the study.

According to Yin (2003, p.5), case studies can be one of three types: explanatory, descriptive or exploratory. An explanatory case study is used when an explanation of certain events is sought and the data are often gathered to consider cause-and-effect relationships. A descriptive case study, on the other hand, seeks to make a description rather than give an explanation; it focuses on gathering details that will enable a full description of the phenomenon being studied, in a context that has been previously defined. An exploratory case study seeks to gather data that can be used to determine which questions should be asked in a subsequent study, or it may evaluate certain research procedures to see how feasible they are in a particular context. Stake (2005) offers an alternative categorisation of case studies as either instrumental or intrinsic. In the former, the researcher is aiming to examine a particular case in order to gather data that will support or reject a theory, whereas an intrinsic case study is more interested in the particular case that forms the case study, in order to better understand it. Stake (2005) points out that while some case studies are clearly one or the other type, some may contain characteristics of both categories.

Furthermore, an instrumental case study is more likely to involve several cases, whereas an intrinsic case study focuses on one particular case because it is inherently interesting in its own right (Stake, 2005). There is a third category of case study, collective, and this is one in which a group of case studies is conducted with the aim of building a complete picture of a phenomenon. The current case study, which examines the nature of the English in EMI, encompasses multiple case studies and is both explanatory and instrumental. Two case studies were considered: the School of Engineering and the School of Medicine, which are the only schools using English as an MOI within the University of Bisha.

In this research, which aimed to explore the presentation of English and students' experiences and perceptions of the type of English language used in their EMI programmes, as well as English language use in social contexts, a case study was deemed suitable for a number of reasons. Notably, it allowed events to be studied in their contemporary context. Moreover, it is used when it is impossible to separate the studied phenomenon from its context. In addition, a case study is useful for addressing research questions of how and why (Gray, 2013). Furthermore, the researcher had little control over the participants' answers, and the focus of the study is on contemporary information (Saudi policies and students' experiences and perceptions of English).

4.2.3.1 Limitations and strengths of case studies

4.2.3.1.1 Generalisability

It is recommended that researchers understand the strengths and weaknesses of their chosen research design so that they can take steps to overcome the weaknesses and make the most of the strengths, thus strengthening their investigation. Many researchers have pointed out that qualitative research has the main weakness of a lack of generalisability (Cohen et al., 2007; Flick & Creswell, 2009; Heigham & Croker, 2009; Creswell, 2012). This also applies to case study research, as highlighted by Merriam (2009, p.51): "the issue of generalizability looms larger here [in case study] than with other types of qualitative research". Duff (2008) posits that generalisability is a term that many scholars regard as belonging to a previous period of time, when research discourse, orientation and philosophy were viewed differently from the way in which they are regarded today. She elaborates on the historical conflict of research philosophies: "in one camp are the proponents of nomothetic or logico-positivist research, who seek to make broad

generalizations from which to formulate general laws or principles; in the other are the proponents of interpretive research, whose focus may be the individual—that which is unique, rather than that which is common" (Duff, 2008, p.50).

It is true that qualitative and quantitative research use the concept of generalisability differently; the former strives for 'analytic generalisations', whereas the numerical approach of the latter seeks 'statistical generalisations'. Generally, analytic or theoretical generalisation occurs quite naturally because the readers "draw inferences from studies and consider their wider relevance" (Duff, 2014, p.242). Stake (1995) named this 'naturalistic generalisation' and described it as the reader feeling that the experiences described in the research have happened to them, as the conclusions and engagement with the participants are so well constructed. In this type of generalisation, it is the reader and not the researcher who decides to which other contexts the research findings can be applied (Merriam, 2009). Yin (2014) asserts that generalisation in case study research is "the opportunity to shed empirical light about some theoretical concepts or principles… that go beyond the setting for the specific case". Duff (2014) also confirms that it may be desirable to have some degree of generalisation, if the conditions allow.

Although there is potential for case study findings to be generalised, that was not the goal of this study, as the researcher's aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of how the participants perceived English in their individual contexts. It is not necessary for all pieces of research to be generalisable, and this can even be damaging if it means that the researcher focuses on making the findings generalisable to the extent that the researcher neglects the features of the case study that are important for understanding the case (Stake, 2005).

4.2.3.1.2 Validity and reliability

Another criticism that has been levelled at qualitative case studies is their lack of validity and reliability, sometimes referred to as dependability, credibility and consistency (Duff, 2014). There are two types of validity: internal and external. Internal validity reflects how well the research findings correspond to reality (Merriam, 2009), whereas external validity refers to whether the findings can be transferred to another context, i.e., their generalisability. In the case of quantitative research, reliability refers to whether or not the findings could be replicated. This is not possible in qualitative research, since this is founded

on the assumption that there are multiple realities and the same data can be interpreted in a myriad ways (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, qualitative research findings are judged on their consistency, which focuses on how each study finding has been produced. Merriam (2009) states that qualitative researchers should heed these concerns as doing so will enhance the research outcomes.

All researchers, regardless of their chosen research design, should pay attention to the constructs of validity and consistency in their studies, as this will provide the best opportunity "to interpret the results in as natural a context as possible" (Duff, 2008, p.125). On the other hand, Merriam (2009) claims that viewing consistency and validity through a worldview such as positivism can actually damage qualitative research, neglecting its very essence. She further states that qualitative research enquiries "must be rigorously conducted; they need to present insights and conclusions that ring true to readers, practitioners, and other researchers" (Merriam, 2009, p.209). Conclusions can be made to "ring true" by making sure that the research is conducted in line with ethical considerations (Merriam, 2009), as this will reduce to a minimum bias and misinterpretations by the researcher. It is not possible to eradicate threats to validity and reliability completely (Cohen et al., 2007), but these constructs must be given due attention by researchers in order to ensure that these threats are minimised in their studies.

4.2.3.1.2.1 Triangulation

Based on the notion that there are challenges to ensuring validity and consistency in qualitative research, qualitative researchers can employ certain strategies to help them surmount these challenges. Triangulation is one such strategy that is commonly employed in qualitative case study research, as it increases validity by drawing on data from multiple sources. Triangulation is defined by Stake (2005) as "using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation". Validity and reliability can be enhanced by triangulation, provided it is done well and there is a clear and warranted relationship between the data and the interpretations of these data (Duff, 2014). In qualitative research, triangulation does not need simply to refer to multiple instruments of data collection; it can also involve different methods, more than one data source, more than one researcher, or various theories, combined to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 2009, p.215). Using multiple sources of data is important, as the data

gathered from these various sources can be compared and cross-checked to confirm their validity. For example, data gathered in interviews can be compared against what the researcher actually observes on site (Merriam, 2009, p.216), or with other sources such as documents. As I am the only researcher working on this study, it was appropriate for me to use triangulation in the data collection as it will enhance the study's internal validity and reliability. This approach is confirmed by Stake (1995): "we use triangulation, to minimize misperception and the invalidity of our conclusions".

4.2.4 Research setting

The research was conducted in Bisha University in Saudi Arabia. The University of Bisha is a public higher education institution located in Bisha, Asir, and gained independence from another university in 2014. The university is officially accredited and recognised by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education. The University of Bisha is a coeducational higher education institution and offers courses and programmes leading to officially recognised HE degrees, such as bachelor degrees, in several areas of study. The university includes 15 schools and is expanding. The number of students has been increasing every year to more than 10,000 (Bisha University website, 2019). This study was conducted in two of the university's schools, the School of Medicine and the School of Engineering, which are the only schools using English as an MOI within the university.

The School of Medicine offers number of different programmes, starting with a foundation year (1st year) and an intensive English course, on which students are required to pass successfully a total number of credit hours of 32, with a minimum GPA of 4 out of 5, and achieve the required qualification in English in order to start the EMI course within the chosen programme, which lasts six years including an internship (final year). The School of Engineering offers four different programmes, which also start with a foundation year and an intensive English course, on which students are required to pass a total number of credit hours of 30, with a minimum GPA of 3.5 out of 5, and achieve the required qualification in English. The majority of the teachers and course organisers in both schools are from other countries and different backgrounds; the students, however, are mostly Saudis, with a small number of international students. The study was arranged to be conducted within these two schools and approval to do so was received from the university of Bisha before conducting the research.

4.3 Data collection methods

This study adopted three types of primary data collection tools for its qualitative research (document analysis, interviews and focus groups). The adoption of these data collection tools addressed each objective in the study. The document analysis instrument was used to explore the policies implemented by the Saudi authorities in the process of preparing and introducing English within the EMI context. Focus groups and interviews were employed to investigate students' experiences and the perceptions of Saudi students in HE of the ways in which English is embraced in the EMI setting. Moreover, through these two data collection tools, the researcher was able to underline the differences between the students' perceptions and experiences of English in two different schools as well as social use of English.

4.3.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is a qualitative method used for the evaluation of documents. It assists in interpreting documents in order to provide meaning regarding a research topic (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis includes coding content to themes, which is similar to the analysis of interview or focus group transcripts (Bowen, 2009). According to O'Leary (2014), the documents that are analysed using this tool can include physical evidence which refers to the data collected from the physical objects that are analysed through the study. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a tool through which the relevant information in research can be identified by analysing various documents. In order to seek confirmation and a combination of documents, researchers use at least two resources (Cath et al., 2017). By employing triangulation, researchers are able to determine the credibility of the documents identified through the use of different sources (Bowen, 2009).

In order to analyse documents, the researcher is required to devise a planning process (Hair et al., 2015). According to O'Leary (2014), there are some steps to be considered in the planning process in order to gain reliable and accurate findings from document analysis. The steps are as follows: first, a list of text to search is described, such as samples, respondents, population, etc.; the second step is to reflect on the text that will be accessed in the context of linguistic or cultural barriers; third, the planning process requires conceding and addressing bias in relation to the information; fourth, it is also necessary to enhance skills that will assist with conducting the research in an effective and efficient

manner; fifth, it is important for the researcher to determine strategies in order to ensure the credibility of the information; sixth, for the researcher to conduct a study in an appropriate manner, it is important to know the data that are sought; seventh, the researcher must follow ethical standards and norms while conducting research in order to reduce the impact of ethical issues such as confidentiality of information.

In conducting a study, the researcher can use a plethora of text, but it is advisable to use written documents as these are more likely to provide accurate and reliable information (O'Leary, 2014). It is important to know how many documents are required to identify the result. Bowen (2009) suggests using a wide array of documents, but it is also important for the focus to be on the quality of the documents, rather than the quantity. The researcher needs to determine the issues that have an impact when analysing the documents. For the researcher to have reliable information or documents for study, it is important to consider the prejudice of the author and any personal bias which may have an impact on the research.

According to Bowen (2009), the researcher must gather various documents that can support the research in its findings. Therefore, in order to collect documents, it is important that the researcher identifies the purpose of the material, including the target audience. This assists in determining if the author holds first-hand information in the documents, or the data are being gathered through secondary sources. A second issue that must be considered is unwitting evidence or latent content in relation to the documents. Latent issues are related to the style, tone, agenda or facts that exist in that document. It is also important for the researcher to assess documents to identify whether they are complete, or there is any information that is not presented (Bowen, 2009). By examining the documents, the researcher is able to evaluate the comprehensiveness of the data that are presented. It is vitally important when examining documents to ensure that information is specific and accurate and comprises complete data regarding the events that have occurred (Bowen, 2009).

Document analysis was essential for collecting primary data in this study in order to investigate the language policy followed within the context of HE in Saudi Arabia. As the research project aimed to explore the presentation of English in higher education within the Saudi context, the documents served the objectives of the research by providing data on a particular context, background information, and historical insights. Documents could

also suggest questions that need to be asked and issues that need to be investigated in the research (Bowen, 2009). Obtaining such data by document analysis was essential for this research in embracing Spolsky's (2004, 2009) framework of English policy and in highlighting the role of the language planning introduced by the government in understanding issues related to the representation of English at the language management level. Furthermore, the interpretation of language policy which was also referred to by Shohamy (2009), as shown previously in the third chapter (see 3.2.2.2). Accordingly, document analysis was an essential data instrument tool in this research.

4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing is a qualitative research method that assists in gathering information regarding a particular area of study. Interviews allow the exploration of the perspectives of a small number of respondents regarding a particular situation (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). One of the most common ways of categorising interviews is as structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Duff, 2008, p.132). The basis of this classification is the amount of control the interviewer has over the questions asked and the actual structure of the interview. An alternative way of classifying interviews is as: (1) informal conversational interviews; (2) guided approach interviews; (3) standardised open-ended interviews; and (4) closed quantitative interviews (Patton, 1987, pp.116-117). As with many methods, there are strengths and weaknesses to each one (Johnson & Christensen, 2010, p.200). This study employed semi-structured interviews, which means that the questions were open ended but were mostly pre-defined, each aimed at extracting particular data relevant to the research questions, and "where a schedule is prepared that is sufficiently open-ended to enable the contents to be reordered, digressions and expansions made, new avenues to be included, and further probing to be undertaken" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.182).

A semi-structured interview is similar to Patton's (1987) guided interview. It can be seen as halfway between an unstructured and a structured interview. An unstructured interview has no pre-determined list of questions but is more like a natural discussion where every interview will be different. There is the risk with this format that the conversation might stray from the research objectives. By contrast, in a structured interview, the questions are exactly the same and asked in the same order in every interview. This has the risk of not allowing the interviewees to reveal valuable additional information (Cohen et al., 2007,

p.354). If there is a high degree of predictability, a structured interview may be suitable, whereas an unstructured format is better suited to a new topic that needs wide exploration. One of the circumstances in which semi-structured interviews are useful is when studying intangible aspects (Cohen et al., 2007, p.97), as is the case in this research, where the area of interest is students' experiences and perceptions of the English language, either in EMI or in the social use of English.

As the focus in this study is the perspectives of the participants, it was also important to use open-ended questions, as this allows interviewees to discuss freely how they view the world, rather than being prompted by the question to adopt a certain view (Duff, 2008). For this reason, interviews with open-ended questions were ideal, as stated by Silverman (1993), as each student's opinions and experiences will be individual to him/her, and it would have been inappropriate to use closed questions or to treat them all the same; they need to be given the flexibility to express their own experiences, while being guided towards information that will help to answer the research questions. Moreover, closed-ended questions would not have been suitable for examining students' experiences and perceptions of English because different students have their own unique experiences of dealing with English in EMI and their daily social use of English. Open-ended questions also give scope to the interviewees to mention unanticipated points or issues.

The advantage of interviews is the ability to collect in-depth information regarding the research focus. In this method of data collection, the researcher has control over the process of the interviews. However, in contrast, interviewing requires a longer period of time, and the arrangement of a suitable sample from whom to gather the appropriate information for the study (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). When conducting interviews, the researcher is required to listen and think open-mindedly, as there may be points expressed by the interviewee that might require more clarification and details from the interviewee. According to Harrell and Bradley (2009), when conducting an interview, the interviewer is required to create a friendly and non-pressurised environment which will assist in understanding the viewpoint of the interviewee. Furthermore, the interviewer is required to provide a brief understanding and introduction regarding the study. When conducting the interview, the interviewer is also required to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided by the interviewee.

Face-to-face interviews were selected as the interview modality because this would facilitate the interaction between the interviewer and interviewees (Fontana & Prokos, 2007) and build a stronger rapport between them. As this involved travelling, it was a more expensive method than interviewing over the phone or using online platforms, but its advantages outweighed this disadvantage. It was easier to confirm that the respondent was the correct person, to ask the participants to elaborate on points of interest and to read their body language, and for the interviewee it was easier to ask for clarification if a question was not clear (Green et al., 2012, p.629).

Therefore, the adoption of interviews as a data collection tool was essential, as it enabled the researcher to collect sufficient data about the perceptions, knowledge and experiences of students regarding English language within Saudi higher education. As a result, the researcher gained a holistic view of the current situation of English among Saudi students. This was particularly significant in this research in underlining the choices and behaviour in practice followed by Saudi students. The language practice also constitutes a main component of Spolsky's (2004, 2009) framework. Moreover, the researcher was able to investigate students' views, experiences and expectations and what they would like to see in the language policy as well as in the classroom. This means that the researcher was able to collect data not only regarding the perceptions of students on the current situation regarding English, but also about their expectations regarding the way in which the language should be presented. It also was essential for understanding the language ideology and values associated with English in the given context. Therefore, interviews were perceived of as a useful instrument for gathering relevant data.

4.3.2.1 Considerations when planning the interviews

It was necessary to make preparations before travelling to the interview sites. I had first to establish the minimum number of interviewees required. There are differing opinions on how to do this (Duff, 2008). Kvale (1996) states that interview studies tend to involve between five and 25 participants. I therefore aimed to recruit between 20 and 30 people for the interviews because this was deemed both a sufficient number and a realistic one given the time and financial constraints. With the consent of teachers and administrators, I visited classrooms at both schools to introduce myself and the proposed research. I told them how much their participation would be appreciated, and in order to start building my relationship with potential participants. I hoped that this personal introduction would make

them feel more confident about taking part and pique their interest. I invited them to volunteer to participate if they were interested. Twenty-nine students from both the engineering and medical schools agreed to be interviewed; however, six of these did not attend for interview. Furthermore, it is important to note that the selection of the participants was only based on longer experiences at the university, I focused on students at their late stages of their studies in order to get profound data based on longer experiences.

Before the interviews, I made a list of prompts and used these to keep the interview on track (see Appendix A), while at the same time trying to make the conversation as natural as possible. The aim of the interviews was to explore students' perceptions and experiences of English in their EMI programmes during their study as well as in social contexts. Cohen et al. (2007) points out that although the theme of an interview is set by the interviewer, it is ultimately the interviewee who decides which information is relevant. I therefore started with an open question to introduce a theme and then allowed the flow of the conversation to be dictated by the interviewee. I listened carefully to identify interesting and relevant ideas and information, always keeping in mind what might be relevant to the research question. I took notes of anything that came to mind while listening that was worth probing further when the student had finished talking.

The locations of the interviews were carefully considered so that they would take place in a quiet space that was convenient for each student and somewhere they would feel relaxed (Duff, 2008). A time was chosen for the interviews that was mutually convenient to us both. As most interviewees requested that the interviews be held in the evening due to the busy schedule in the morning and afternoon, I was open and happy to meet each interviewee at his preferred time. Moreover, I also did my best to let the interviewees decide the interview site where possible; this included cafes, hotel lobbies, and the university campus.

4.3.3 Focus groups

A focus group is a data collection method that can be used by a researcher to gather information regarding a particular study. In this method, the researcher can ask questions of participants, seeking open-ended responses that express the participants' thoughts, knowledge, experience, etc. (Kitzinger, 1995). The researcher can, with the assistance of the focus group, seek a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Williams

& Katz, 2001). A focus group provides insights regarding the way people think and a better understanding of the subject matter (Williams & Katz, 2001). Focus groups are related to the group interview, which provides the researcher with the ability to capture deeper information more effectively than is possible with individual interviews. Group interaction helps in building connections, as it encourages participants to build these connections through discussion (Adams et al., 2014). The interaction also assists in articulating information in order to gain a deep understanding of the subject of study. The participants of the focus group have the ability to discuss the topic in a different manner. A focus group is incorporated into an overall study design or may even occur individually when a specific topic is being explored (Hair et al., 2015).

A focus group assists in expressing specific and clear ideas and in the sharing of feelings, which is not possible in other research methods (Gray, 2013). With the use of a focus group, the researcher is able to have an open conversation with group members; a discussion of the subject matter can take place; and the group members can use comments from other group members to prompt recall (Bhattacherjee, 2012). There is also a tendency for opinions and thoughts to be influenced within a group, which has a substantial impact when group members talk about a specific phenomenon together (Daniel & Sam, 2011). If the researcher is not able to be an effective moderator, then it can be difficult to obtain the full variety of thoughts, opinions and needs of the group. There may be participants who do not feel comfortable disclosing their opinions and feelings with regard to the subject matter, which may affect the research outcome.

An optimal focus group involves questions, which are devised in the development stage, in which the researcher is required to brainstorm in order to expand the list of questions and then prioritise those that are important for the study. The questions should be open-ended because the aim of a focus group is to encourage discussion. Questions that have options such as yes/no can limit the discussion and the value of the focus group may subsequently be decreased (Creswell, 2002). The next step after development is to order the questions into a logical flow and develop prompts for each question. A prompt is a question that assists in facilitating the discussion when the initial question does not have a useful response. After the questions are finalised, it is important to identify whether the questions formed are aligned with the purpose of the study. The last stage in the development of

questions concerns a pilot test of the questions; this aids in identifying whether any changes are required in the questions.

4.3.3.1 Justifying the adoption of the focus group instrument

Using focus groups as a data collection tool in this research was important in capturing the way in which participants explicitly think with regard to language policy, practice and choice, and to discover any implicit language ideology. A focus group also helped in understanding the divergence between the levels of language policy and practice in terms of language choice. In addition to individual interviews, I also decided to use focus groups (FGs) for several reasons. First, they enabled me to explore students' interactions about their attitude, experiences and perceptions of English as part of their learning in EMI programmes as well as social use of English. The focus of the FG discussions was on the interactions between the students and how these shaped their perceptions of English in a socially co-constructed context. A focus group can be generally described as a discussion overseen by a moderator and they are used by researchers to investigate dynamic interactions between the group members (Bryman, 2001; Hennink, 2007).

More specifically, the focus in FGs is on people as members of a group, rather than as individuals and, therefore, the interactions between them are the focus rather than the utterances of each individual. The moderator's role is to facilitate this interaction but to focus on a particular individual. One of the main characteristics of FGs is that the participants are placed in a context of being social. Researchers aim to understand the group dynamics and, as a result, the context and dynamics of the discussion are partly determined by what a particular participant says. Researchers who conduct interviews are interested in the interviewees' inner world, whereas those who use FGs are focusing on how the participants interact with each other, so they are looking more at external signs.

In this research, the FGs were conducted after the individual interviews. In the latter, my aim was to understand the interviewees' perceptions and experiences of English in EMI as well as in a social context. The interviewees gave accounts of their experiences, beliefs and views and any concerns about social factors. In the FGs, I was able to observe the dynamic interactions between the members of the group and how they supported or challenged one other in respect of their views on English. One important difference between the two techniques was that in the individual interviews, the researcher detected interesting points

that were worth expanding, whereas in the FGs it was the group members who took up or expanded on interesting ideas raised by other members. However, as a moderator in each focus group, I tried to provoke discussion by using questions during the interactions among the participants to elicit further explanations.

The FG data were very important for this research into the influences, either conceptual beliefs or contextual factors, on students' perceptions and experiences of English in EMI on the one hand, and in social contexts on the other. Moreover, a focus group could explore expectations about language policy and the way in which the English language should be presented in HE settings. The researcher was also able to build a comprehensive view regarding the situation of the English language within the Saudi HE context. This was primarily because these data reflect a more real-life situation in which the students form opinions and perceptions through discussions with and influences from their peers. A further valuable purpose of the FGs was that the data generated could be compared with data generated at an earlier stage of the study for the purposes of triangulation and to expand the interview findings.

4.3.3.2 Considerations when planning the focus groups

My main concerns when planning for FG research were the structure of the design of the discussion, the number of people to be involved and my part in the process of group discussions. The first issue was to decide group size. Bloor et al. (2001) suggested that before a working group begins its research, there is a need to establish the most suitable number of members for the FG. Typically, according to Wilson (1997), FGs have between four and twelve members, and Morgan (1998) proposes that six to ten members make a workable FG for the effective conduct of studies. There are many options, but, for example, Bryman (2001) notes that there can be as few as three or more than fourteen participants. However, Hennink (2007) observes that groups consisting of a large number of members are unlikely to be conducive to in-depth discussions and can be difficult to control.

Small groups, on the other hand, are less likely to encounter problems with recruitment or with the handling of data. Furthermore, having fewer participants allows a greater involvement by members and a greater likelihood of their being able to make a detailed contribution to the group. Of prime relevance, according to Bloor et al. (2001) and Hennink (2007), is to make the decision bearing in mind the topic for discussion, the aim of the

research, and the characteristics of the participants. By considering the opinions of these well-versed researchers, I chose to use medium-sized FGs and I intended to gather between five and eight participants for each discussion. This assists in having a discussion in an optimal way, helping to promote discussion and assisting the moderator in keeping the group on task (Bryman & Bell, 2010). I believed that this would allow every participant to play a full part in the discussion, giving them plenty of opportunities to voice their opinion. I considered that discussions using larger groups could be difficult to direct and may prove hard for members to follow.

This decision led to considering the need to decide the right number of groups for the study. Again, guidance from Bloor et al. (2001) and examples by Hennink (2007) were followed. Their opinion was that the decision should be determined mainly by considering the divisions of the study population, as well as entailing factors such as skills, time and money. Bloor et al. (2007, p.28) further emphasised that minimum numbers should be employed, thereby simplifying the recruitment and reducing the amount of labour needed for transcription and analysis. Again, after due consideration of their learned opinion, I decided that four FGs were suitable for the current study. Therefore, I considered different groups which would involve participants of a range of views and opinions identified during the interview stage. During the interviews, I presented the project and stressed that group discussion would be the next stage of the procedure. Interviewees were given the option to leave their contact details if they were willing to proceed further with the FGs. Thereafter, it was only possible to choose from those who had voluntarily agreed to continue with the study by leaving their contact details.

Hennink (2007) stated that it is necessary to develop a discussion with a particular aim, yet for it to be widespread in its overview, concentrating on the substance of the topic while encompassing its associated material. The framework of the discussion should be such that it focuses the group's attention and assists the researcher in guiding the subject matter. The essential aim is for the group to be given virtually free rein to discuss the subject while the researcher manages the research focus. I took all these concerns into account when I developed my discussion guide. Therefore, I designed a brief introduction to each focus group with a short video presented by Dr David Crystal about the spread of English in the world and the ELF concept to initiate FG discussions. This decision was made with reference to my research purpose, the literature on ELF research, and my pilot study findings.

4.3.4 Summary of the research instruments and descriptive details

Table 2 summarises the research tools, participants, and how the research questions were to be approached.

Table 2: Summary of research instruments and participants

School of Medicine	School of Engineering	Data collection tool	Participants	Research question(s)
		Unobtrusive measures (formal document analysis)		1. How is English represented in Saudi Arabia in an EMI context?
Yes		Semi-structured interviews	11 participants (5 participants in 5th year + 6 participants in 6th year)	2. What are the explicit and implicit English language expectations, and to what extent do students evaluate the English used/accepted in their EMI programmes? 3. How, and to what extent, do students perceive English in terms of: - Native/non-native and their own English; - Social use of English; - L1 and local culture and values.
Yes		Focus group	2 focus groups (5 participants in each group)	
	Yes	Semi-structured interviews	12 participants (6 participants in mechanical engineering + 6 participants in civil engineering)	
	Yes	Focus group	2 focus groups (5 participants in each group)	

In synopsis: data were collected from 23 participants during semi-structured interviews (12 engineering students and 11 medical students). Focus groups were conducted with four groups with a total of 20 participants.

4.3.5 The pilot study

The pilot study was conducted at the University of Bisha, as was the main study with its undergraduate students studying on EMI programmes. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted, as well as a focus group of six participants. The aim of conducting a pilot study was to examine the validity of the interview questions and the design of the FG discussion. The pilot study also helped to practise the skills and procedures required to conduct successful interviews and focus groups. Therefore, the pilot study findings provided assistance in developing and improving the different elements of the research design and offered new understanding of the research questions. The main changes made

following the pilot study included some of the interview questions. The pilot study also helped me to rethink the introduction to the FGs, as I had been planning to play the whole YouTube video (approx. 10 minutes) presented by Dr David Crystal on the development of English over the years and the increased numbers of English speakers around the world (see Appendix B). I then decided only to play selected parts of the video (approx. 4 minutes) in order to avoid possible boredom and inconvenience. Further, the pilot study in particular provided a good opportunity to practise, monitor, and become familiar with the procedure of the interviews and more specifically the FGs, as this was my first experience of using this as a methodological instrument.

4.4 Ethical considerations

As this research deals with human participants, it was necessary to consider ethical principles. Before conducting the study, I obtained ethical approval from the University of Southampton Ethics and Research Governance (ERGO no.: 48709). Before the study took place, the participants were given a participant information sheet (see Appendix E) and a consent form (see Appendix F). They could therefore familiarise themselves with the project and give their free consent to participate. Participation in the study was entirely voluntarily and the participants had the choice of withdrawing at any time during the data collection. In terms of confidentiality and anonymity, I made sure that the participants' information was confidential, anonymised, and not accessible to anyone but the researcher and the supervisory team. It was possible that the participants might have been hesitant about taking part and expressing their views and experiences. However, I discussed the study purpose and procedure with every participant privately and assured them no one would have access to the data or to the participants' identities. Furthermore, the interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded and the content erased immediately after transcription.

4.4.1 Role of the researcher

One of the main issues with using the interview technique in research is the likelihood of the researcher having some impact on participants while interviewing them because of how this could influence the data acquired (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). This emphasises the concerns over the researcher's position in qualitative research. The researcher's

background would have to be disclosed and assurances given that the data would not be harmed as a result, particularly when neutrality and impartiality are claimed. Researchers' lives, cultures, and positionality, as Green et al. (2012) point out, can have an impact on their research. In order to conduct ethical research, it is "essential to pay attention to positionality, [as well as] reflexivity, knowledge production, and power relations that are inherent in research processes" (Sultana, 2007, p.380). The process of researchers identifying their positionality is referred to as reflexivity. Positionality is a fundamental concept that describes the researcher's worldview and adopted position in respect to the study (Foote & Bartell, 2011). This worldview is influenced by a variety of factors, including values and beliefs, political attitudes, and cultural and educational backgrounds.

The researcher in this research is a Saudi who worked at the same university in which the study was conducted, which means that the participants and the researcher share a certain cultural, linguistic, and religious background. However, during the data collection, I did not inform the participants that I worked at the same university, in order to avoid inconvenience or limit the participants' willingness to express their experiences and views freely. In addition, I worked as an English language teacher in various Saudi Arabian institutions. I also earned a master's degree in applied linguistics for language teaching in the United Kingdom, and I am currently working on my PhD and have adopted an interpretivist paradigm. According to the interpretivist paradigm, the goal is to make sense of and interpret the experiences of the participants being studied. As a result, my experience extends outside Saudi Arabia, and I have been exposed to the frameworks and impacts of teaching practices in a different educational system. To ensure that my own viewpoints had no influence on the participants and the data analysis, I had to keep these considerations in mind when collecting data and conducting the study.

4.5 Data analysis

As part of the qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis was undertaken of the text and audio recordings that constituted the majority of the data gathered in this qualitative study. This method allows the identification of common themes in the various extractions of qualitative data. Creswell (2013, p.80) describes the process as preparing and organising the data so that they can be analysed, then, through the use of coding, developing themes, ultimately delivering the data in figures or tables or as a discussion. During this process,

links were established in this study between the responses of the participants, focusing on connecting ideas or identifying similarities. This study employed an inductive approach to determine the varying aspects of the research focus. From this, the initial data sets were drawn and thereafter refined to achieve the final categorisation.

The different methods available all depend on organising, coding and identifying the themes and presenting the data so that comparisons can be made before their interpretation. This can be conducted based on one of three approaches: a traditional or systemic approach or by using an interpretive framework for case study analysis (Creswell, 2013). In each case, the process entails data organisation, coding, linking codes to generate themes, and then displaying them in a way that makes it easier to analyse them. Jorgensen (1989, p.107) states that this requires searching for patterns, types, processes and classes, seeking sequences that will assist in the data being rebuilt in a meaningful manner.

Creswell (2013, p.186) explains that codes are used to represent different levels of information from that which researcher would expect to find, information which is unexpectedly disclosed, and information that is conceptually useful or unusual. The next step is to allocate these segments to themes, which are, essentially, wider categories or areas of information. These are created by combining codes of a similar nature or those which can be combined to represent a common idea. The findings are usually represented as data in the form of graphs, tables, charts or tree diagrams, as appropriate to the study, and are often presented in a manner that allows the comparison of results.

Data are the foundation of qualitative thematic analysis. In the case of this particular study, the data were predominantly textual but also in the form of audio recordings, and these together provided an in-depth description of the collected data. The next stage, which is data interpretation, involves making sense of the categorised data for “abstracting out beyond the codes and themes to the larger meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2013, p.187). This reflects the process of an inductive approach which begins with collecting raw data from different sources and analysing and interpreting these data to generate a theory that explains the research phenomenon of the study. The data collected in this study were essentially gathered based on the experiences and perceptions of several students. This meant that multiple information sources were used and the data gathered were informative, detailed, and in depth from these sources and were then subjected to

qualitative thematic analysis.

There are various approaches to thematic analysis. This also implies that there are several gaps, especially concerning its nature, and this extends to how it is different from the analysis of qualitative content. This study was conducted according to the six-step framework suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), considered to be among the most influential approaches in the context of social science. The reason for this is that it facilitates a framework that is easy to use and clear for conducting thematic analysis. The stages are:

- Increasing familiarity with data that have been collected.
- Generating initial codes from the transcripts.
- Seeking out potential patterns.
- Highlighting various themes.
- Defining and naming themes.
- Writing the final report.

The researcher transcribed the data after finishing the process of collecting material from the participants in interviews and focus groups. The transcripts were then examined scrupulously to underline codes in order to generate themes. After that, the themes were critically analysed by comparing and contrasting them with existing studies.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter presented the way in which the researcher adopted a qualitative research approach in order to understand the presentation of English in the context of Saudi Arabia and to explore students' attitudes, perceptions and experiences of English in EMI as well as their social usage of English (Creswell, 2013). The interpretivist paradigm was adopted in this research with the aim of comprehending how the participants interpreted their lives and experiences and the world in which they live (Cohen et al., 2007, p.22). Furthermore, the research adopted case study as a research strategy. Two case studies were considered: the School of Engineering and the School of Medicine, which are the only schools adopting

English as an MOI within the context of this current study. This study adopted three types of primary data collection instrument for this qualitative research: document analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In terms of data analysis, thematic analysis, as a part of qualitative content analysis, was undertaken of the data gathered in this qualitative study.

This chapter discussed the research methodology of the study. The next three chapters present the data analysis and research findings: chapter 5 discusses the findings of the document analysis; chapter 6 discusses the interview findings; and chapter 7 discusses the focus group findings.

Chapter 5 The finding of documents analysis on the presentation of English language in national and institutional levels in Saudi Arabia

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to investigate the presentation and orientation of English language in higher education through analysing documents related to English language in national and institutional levels as well as examining explicit and implicit policies. The research was conducted in Bisha University, in Saudi Arabia, which is officially accredited and recognised by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education. Bisha University offers several EMI courses in its schools of medicine and engineering, which require the passing of intensive English courses in the foundation year of study. This study aimed to identify the language policy applied and perceived in higher education in a university setting in Saudi Arabia. By doing so, document analysis provided an intelligible view of English language policy and the implementation and representation of English in Saudi Arabia in language management level. Thus, documents analysis enabled the first research question to be addressed (i.e., How is English represented in Saudi Arabia in a higher education context?). The subsections on document analysis in this chapter cover two levels of English language policy (i.e., national documents and institutional documents), in order to provide clear understanding of the type of English adopted in Saudi higher education.

5.1.1 Collecting data, coding, and preparing for analysis

In order to obtain deeper and more insightful understanding of the presentation of the English language in Saudi Arabia, this study investigated national and institutional policy documents on English language teaching in Saudi Arabia, entry requirements, programme booklets, evaluation documents, university materials for students, module descriptions. Although, I obtained an approval to conduct the study from the university's administration, it is important to note that I couldn't access some teachers-related documents in the institutional level. I collected every available document related to English in EMI programmes, as well as documents related to English language teaching as students are required to pass an English course in the foundation year in order to start EMI programmes.

Although, it is important to note that the research aims to investigate the implementation and representation of English in EMI, however, documents related to English language teaching were also analysed with the aim of providing a profound understanding of English presentation and English orientations within a Saudi university as the intensive English language course is considered a form of language support in EMI (Macaro, 2018) (see 2.2.5)

As the data from the documents were manageable, I used Microsoft Word to code the data. I gathered the documents in a Microsoft Word file and gave them a code (NP, etc.). I read the documents many times and took notes while reading in order to familiarise and prepare myself to engage with the data and start the coding process without jumping to conclusions. I used the wide range of tools in Microsoft Word for coding (highlight, comment, tables, copy, paste, colour, etc.), which helped to compare and contrast similar and different statements. After I finished the coding process, I categorised the relevant codes into separate files in Microsoft Word in order to identify the most significant categories and group them into themes (i.e., English grammar, English evaluation, etc.). Thus, codes were used in reporting the findings: I refer to national policy documents using 'NP' and institution policy documents using 'IP'. Finally, some documents included both English and Arabic, in which case the English text was used as it was and the Arabic text was translated. A translator was consulted to verify that the translated data correctly reflected the meaning of the Arabic text.

5.1.2 Coding frame

1. Adopting the English language in higher education
2. Adaptation of English as a foreign language (EFL)
3. Embedded Standard English ideology
   - 3.1 English grammar and pronunciation
   - 3.2 English evaluation
4. English language entry requirements

5.2 Findings from national and institutional policies

The findings include documents relevant to both national and institutional policy, which aims to highlight the ways in which the English language is represented within the context of Saudi Arabia, for the purposes of underlining the theorisation of English in EMI settings,

identifying the aims and principles of using English in the curriculum, and discussing the norms of the English language implemented in order to achieve the stated aims and principles. Therefore, the document analysis presented in this chapter is divided into four themes: Adopting the English language in higher education, Adaptation of English as a foreign language (EFL), Embedded Standard English ideology, and English language entry requirements.

5.2.1 Adopting the English language in higher education

The Ministry of Education has emphasised that adopting English in HE will develop students' awareness of English as a tool for international communication. In addition, one of the goals of adopting EMI in Saudi universities as stated in the national policy is to "enhance their [students] cognitive and problem-solving skills, thus leading to academic and professional advancement". It can be deduced from the goals that the adoption of English in higher education is done with the aim of empowering students in their chosen profession. This is done through developing their skills, which will maximise their employability skills (see extract 1 and 2).

However, there was no indication of the type of skills that should be developed in order to gain a competitive advantage in a multicultural Saudi society, which contains people from various linguistic backgrounds working in its markets. Moreover, the documents suggest that English would enable students to have a language that is useful for a global market in which there is a broad range of situations and domains which require a high level of tolerance and understanding of cultures and others from different backgrounds (extract 3).

> *1. NP "Implementing EMI courses would develop an awareness of the significance of English as a means of international communication" (Ministry of education, 2013).*
>
> *2. NP "EMI courses would help to enhance their [students] cognitive and problem-solving skills, thus leading to academic and professional advancement" (Ministry of education, 2013).*
>
> *3. NP "Contemporary societies are rapidly transforming and are characterised by dynamic development in all sectors. Simultaneously, societies are becoming increasingly competitive. Within this global context, knowledge of the English*

> *language not only promotes the higher values of international understanding and tolerance, but is also a key to success in the academic sector as well as in the global market" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

The national policy also states some goals of adopting English in higher education:

> *4. NP "enable learners to use the language in meaningful contexts" (Ministry of education, 2013).*
>
> *5. NP "build students' ability to communicate their ideas fluently, accurately and confidently" (Ministry of education, 2013).*
>
> *6. NP "develop a positive attitude towards learning the English language" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

From the above, it can be seen that the documents of the Ministry of Education reveal the goals relating to adopting the English language in higher education, as well as the importance of the English language in international communication with others from different backgrounds. The documents state the benefits of the adoption of the English language in HE within the goals, such as fostering a positive attitude towards the English language, developing students' English language proficiency, enhancing students' employability skills, and the importance of English as a tool for communication and access to academic research and teaching materials around the world.

Indeed, there are many reasons for adopting EMI in courses or programmes and these are, in turn, motivated by a variety of factors that vary depending on whether it is a decision taken at the individual, institutional or national level (Hultgren et al., 2015). English is viewed by many as a language that it is essential to learn due to its global use as a means of communication between nations (Spolsky, 2004). As such, the documents suggest that EMI would help students in their English language proficiency, as stated in extracts 4, 5 and 6, which is in line with other studies that found that a large number of universities across the globe assume that using EMI will increase students' English language proficiencies (Dearden, 2018; Rose et al., 2019). This is in spite of EMI having no explicit language learning goals. This assumption appears to be based on the ideology that maximum exposure to the target second language is the best way to learn it (Mauranen, 2018; Rose

& Galloway, 2019). In addition, many national policies that support the use of EMI are based on a perceived link between the economic development of a country and the proficiency of its citizens in the English language (Ali, 2013).

However, these perceptions of the link between language learning and EMI do not take into account that learning English is not an explicit objective of EMI. Past studies show that learning English in an EMI environment is most likely to occur implicitly or incidentally (Pecorari & Malmström, 2018). In a similar vein, Macaro et al. (2018) draw attention to the lack of research on empirical measurements of any improvement in English language learning that occurs when EMI is being used. It is, therefore, difficult to confirm with any conviction that EMI is effective in improving students' mastery of English. In the few studies that have been carried out, the variety of instruments and differences in focus make it difficult to draw firm conclusions. The research carried out most recently seems to indicate that a simple policy of using EMI will not result in a great improvement in students' English proficiency. Rather, institutions need to implement support systems that are specifically designed to help students gain the most benefit from EMI in teaching (Galloway et al., 2017; Galloway & Ruegg, 2020).

Moreover, the documents state that a key motivation for the use of EMI is that when graduates have a good knowledge of English, they have a better chance of developing employability skills. It was stated in extract 2 that EMI courses would contribute to students' skills, "leading to academic and professional advancement", and in extract 3 that English "is also a key to success … in the global market". Other researchers have also reported that being proficient in the English language is essential for students wishing to find employment in today's market, given its globalised nature (Hu et al., 2014). Students in higher education also believe that learning in an EMI environment will help them in their future careers (Dearden & Akincioglu, 2016; Galloway et al., 2017, 2020). Several studies have reported that students may search for programmes that include EMI because they believe that this will enhance their competence in English, giving them a good foundation for seeking jobs abroad or finding good careers in their own countries (Galloway et al., 2017, 2020; Rose et al., 2019).

However, despite these perceptions of the advantages of EMI for English language development, others have been more critical of its benefits (Macaro et al., 2018). Lecturers

have been doubtful in respect of whether students taught in an EMI environment gain the skills employers are seeking. Students have also expressed reservations over EMI; students in Turkey, for example, stated that they thought they would learn the educational content more effectively if it were delivered in their L1 (Kırkgöz, 2014).

Furthermore, the documents also recognise the importance of the English language in the academic sector, as it is stated that English "is also a key to success in the academic sector" (extract 3). It is true that English is viewed as the standard language of academic research and teaching, as there are more academic journals published in English than in any other language (Montgomery, 2013; Liu, 2017). One of the reasons for this may be that English is very widely spoken and, therefore, publications in English are more accessible to audiences globally than any other language would be (Di Bitetti & Ferreras, 2017). This may also be a reason for universities opting for EMI, because this offers them a wide choice of teaching resources – for some local languages, this is certainly the case (Basibek et al., 2014; Galloway et al., 2017). In the case of certain countries, the historic influence of EMI during colonial times is the reason for there being few teaching resources in their local language (Hamid et al., 2013) or few academic publications (Galloway, 2021).

5.2.2 Adaptation of English as a foreign language (EFL)

Throughout all the formal documents collected, whether in national or institutional policies, the content repeatedly indicates the importance of English as a global language of working, learning, and engaging in wider communications (extracts 1 and 2).

> *1. NP "English becomes a global language … English serves as a language of wider communication and is used as such by a growing number of people who are native speakers of other languages" (Tatweer, Vision, 2010).*
>
> *2. IP "As English becomes a global language, the university offers some EMI courses to prepare students to engage globally in wider communications" (Bisha university, programmes booklet, 2016).*

Thus, in extracts 1 and 2 above, the policy makers describe English as a global language, stating that English will prepare students to "engage globally in wider communications" with others from different backgrounds. However, in practice, the documents reveal some

contradictions in terms of the importance of English in global communications and English in teaching, including the adaptation of English as a foreign language in curriculum (extract 3).

> *3. NP "elaborates these principles and guidelines and presents a functional curriculum based on current developments in EFL (English as a foreign language) theory and practice in the fields of curriculum design and teaching methodology" (Tatweer: general objectives of the curriculum, 2010).*

Although, the documents did not provide more elaborations on EFL (English as a foreign language) in curriculum, however, there are debates and criticism on the approach of EFL in language teaching especially from global Englishes and English as a lingua franca perspectives. Jenkins, (2015), for example, argue that EFL aims to that NNESs learn English solely for the purpose of communicating with NESs. The language competency of NNESs is, therefore, assessed against NESs' usage of the language; if a person learning English as his/her L2 deviates from NES usage, this is seen as an error or deficiency, caused by interference or fossilisation from their L1. Indeed, being global means that the English language is privileged by multifarious norms that go beyond a mere form or a certain variety of English.

Thus, it can be seen that there is a logic gap in the curriculum of the Saudi Ministry of Education between the aim and the means. On the one hand, it is indicated that the curriculum is about facilitating communication in a global context (extracts 1 and 2) with various cultures and domains. On the other, English as a foreign language is adopted as a means to fulfil this approach to language, as indicated in the aforementioned statement which clarified that language policy is based on "*developments in EFL (English as a foreign language) theory and practice*". In fact, Shohamy (2006) described curriculum as a key mechanism for implementing language policy with Standard English ideology which encompasses the purpose of the teaching and the learning experiences and teaching procedures that will be required for this purpose to be achieved. She also argued that it includes some of the measures that will be used for determining whether the educational purposes have been fulfilled (see 3.4.1).

Therefore, the documents revealed an unawareness of terms such as 'global Englishes',

'English native speakers', 'English as a lingua franca' and 'Standard English'. Consequently, policy makers, particularly in Expanding Circle countries, mistakenly interpret the term 'global Englishes' as referring only to American or British English (e.g., Jung & Norton, 2002; McKay, 2002). Indeed, several scholars have criticised the content of the curriculum because it does not introduce students to other English approaches, such as ELF and Global Englishes (Canagarajah, 1999; Shohamy, 2006; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011; Galloway & Rose, 2015). The curriculum has also been criticised because it suppresses cultural diversity (Baker, 2011, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2015) and does not adequately represent the pragmatic strategies employed in English pedagogy (Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011). The consequence of this is that teachers and learners accept the Standard English ideology without resistance, as they are simply not aware of its existence (Canagarajah, 1999; Shohamy, 2006).

Hence, lack of awareness of other approaches to the English language lead to discarding the reality of English as a lingua franca, as can be noted across the Saudi labour market and within Saudi society, where more than 12 million residents from different backgrounds work, live, and communicate in English within the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, whereas in EFL communication the assumption is that English is being learned for use with NESs, ELF communication makes the assumption that it is being learned for use as a means of intercultural communication (see 2.3.3 for more details). The important consequence of this difference is that any deviations from native English are not seen as errors, but more positively as proof that the speaker is being creative and is capable of linguistic adaptability. Being able to accommodate the other party in a conversation and other similar skills are far more important in ELF conversation than being able to replicate the English of NESs (Jenkins, 2015). Hence, it can be noted that the documents manifest unawareness of the broader debate on the paradigms of English, such as the concepts of ELF and global Englishes.

Notably, however, the Ministry of Education (2013) has underlined some statements that can be interpreted as sign of ELF. For instance, the Ministry of Education (2013) states in the national policy that the curriculum can be fulfilled through some factors, such as, learners' needs and shifting the focus from form to meaning (see extract 4 below).

4. NP "The Foundations of curriculum requires achieving the following (i) Learners'

needs are taken into account, (ii) There is a shift from a focus on form to a focus on meaning" (Tatweer: general objectives of the curriculum, 2010).

Based on the "*Foundations of curriculum*" mentioned in extract 4, with regard to taking learners' needs into account, there is no indication of the type of needs and whether such needs are mainly related to students' skills. Interestingly, the national policy explicitly states that the curriculum requires achieving a "*shift from a focus on form to a focus on meaning*", which can be interpreted as indicating that the form of language should not be given priority when learners can use the English language in a meaningful way for the purpose of communication. However, no further details were mentioned in respect of what specifically is a shift from a focus on form to a focus on meaning or how this is to be achieved. Therefore, there is an obvious gap in fully understanding the nature of such a shift.

5.2.3 Embedded Standard English ideology

5.2.3.1 English grammar and pronunciation

One of the orientations to standard native English norms in the national and institutional policies is that the documents reveal an explicit focus on keeping a consistent and substantial level of grammatical accuracy. The documents state that students should "*maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy"* (extract 1 & 2), as well as a degree of spelling accuracy (extract 3):

1. NP "Consistently maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur" (Ministry of education, 2013).

2. IP "Students should demonstrate appropriate usage of grammatical structures" (Bisha university, students' handbook, 2017).

The national policy reveals a focus on keeping a consistent and substantial level of grammatical accuracy (extract 1), suggesting that "*errors are rare*" and "*corrected when they do occur*", which can be interpreted as confirming with standard native English norms are the target goal for students to achieve. Furthermore, in extract 2, the institutional documents also assert that students should "*demonstrate appropriate usage of*

grammatical structures", without any more details of what the appropriate usage of grammar is. Furthermore, with regard to writing (extract 3), the documents also state that students should maintain a degree of accuracy in spelling in English writing.

> *3. NP "Spelling is accurate, apart from occasional slips of the pen" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

Therefore, when students believe that abiding by rigorous norms of standard native English language is vital for their education and employability in the market following graduation, they will tend to manifest an attachment to native English norms without a resistance and would limit their creativity in English language use as legitimate users. Moreover, based on the general principles that outline the curriculum, it can be deduced that grammatical accuracy is based on grammar norms embraced by native English language speakers. However, the policy documents refer to errors that are "*generally corrected when they do occur*". It can be deduced from the word "*generally*" that some errors might go uncorrected, which suggests that there is a level of tolerance in respect of mistakes when writing and speaking in English; nevertheless, the policy documents do not provide a conclusive explanation of the types of mistakes that can go without correction.

Another norm of a standard native English language in the policy documents asserts that students' pronunciation "*can be understood with some effort by native speakers*", and that students should be able to "*Differentiate between the pronunciation of similar sounds in English*" (see extract 4 and 5 below). Surprisingly, the policy documents explicitly state that the target of students' use of English is be understood by "*native speakers*", which reveals an attachment to standard English as well as issues related to the legitimisation of English and lack of awareness of other varieties of English.

> *4. NP "Pronunciation of words and phrases can be understood with some effort by native speakers used to dealing with speakers of his/her language group" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

> *5. NP "Differentiate between the pronunciation of similar sounds in English, especially those that may cause difficulties for Arabic speakers" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

However, the policy documents also reveal some tolerance towards students'

pronunciation, as it is mentioned in extract 6 below that pronunciation should be intelligible even if "*occasional mispronunciations*" take place. Therefore, despite the aforementioned attachment to standard native English (extracts 4 and 5), the documents also reveal some tolerance towards students' pronunciation by focusing on intelligibility over conforming to certain English varieties. Thus, the documents suggest that pronunciation is accepted as long as speakers can express themselves "*effectively without help*" and with "*relative ease*", as stated in extract 7 below. However, although the documents show some tolerance towards students' pronunciation by focusing on intelligibility, it can also be interpreted as indicating that issues exist that are related to the legitimisation of students' own use of English. For example, the documents refer to a situation in which "*even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur",* which exposes an attachment to standard native English as the only legitimate and acceptable use of English (extract 6).

> *6. NP "Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

> *7. NP "Can express oneself with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and 'cul-de-sacs', one is able to keep going effectively without help" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

Moreover, the documents state that students can use English "comprehensibly", which also indicates a focus on intelligibility and mobility in the students' use of English, as mentioned in extract 8. However, interestingly, the statement mentions afterwards "even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident"; the use of terms such as "planning" and "repair" can also be interpreted as an implicit attachment to standard native English norms which indicate a focus on the function of the language rather than communicative skills (extract 8):

> *8. NP "Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production" (Ministry of education, 2013).*

Thus, despite the policy documents revealing an attachment to standard native English norms in its curriculum, the documents show a level of tolerance and a degree of freedom

in determining whether a sentence is grammatically correct and whether a certain pronunciation is accepted. This is evident through the existence of statements such as "*generally corrected*", "*Despite some problems*", and "*Can keep going comprehensibly*", as mentioned in detail in the previous extracts.

Interestingly, the criteria set for determining acceptance of a particular grammar and pronunciation are not highlighted by the national or institutional policies, which do not provide much information. Rather, such criteria seemed to be left to the teachers to determine whether students express themselves effectively and with relative ease or not. This subjectivity in determining the quality of pronunciation leads to different forms of treatment towards students based on the experience of the teachers and their views on what constitutes an acceptable use of English. As such, with regard to the performance of one student, a teacher might find his/her pronunciation acceptable, whereas another teacher might criticise his/her level of English. As a result, the role of determining the performance of students will depend on subjective factors.

An acknowledgement of varieties of English that are different from standard native speaker norms might pave the way for accepting English as a lingua franca in the Saudi higher education context. In other words, despite the obvious attachment to standard native English in some statements throughout the documents, English language policy makers acknowledge the existence of some other varieties of English use of grammar and spoken language which differ from native English speakers' norms. Although, the Ministry of Education shows some tolerance towards students' use with a focus on intelligibility over form. That is to say, abiding by the norms of native English language is not required when students can communicate effectively and use English intelligibly. However, interestingly, the documents also reveal an issue related to the legitimisation of students' own use of English, with implicit indications that standard native English is the only legitimate and acceptable use of English.

5.2.3.2 English evaluation

In the foundation year, the institution documents of English policy distinctly states that students should be evaluated based on the standard rules of English language evaluation in the four English language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking), as the documents state that "*standard criteria should be used in assessing students' English*

language proficiency" (extract 1):

> *1. IP "In the intensive English languages courses, standard criteria should be used in assessing students' English language proficiency" (Bisha university, preparatory year, 2017).*

When considering the previous statements from the institution documents, it clearly indicate that students' evaluations should be based on the standard rules of English language proficiency assessments. However, surprisingly, no further details were given of what the standard criteria are or how they should be followed by teachers in English language evaluations. Furthermore, the documents also state some of the expected outcomes of the first and second intensive English language courses (see extracts 2 and 3):

> *2. IP "By the end of intensive English course 1, students should be able to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party" (Bisha university, preparatory year, 2017).*

> *3. IP "By the end of intensive English course 2, students should be able to use English language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes" (Bisha university, preparatory year, 2017).*

Interestingly, based on the statements from the institution documents above, extract 2 explicitly states that one of the expected outcome to be achieved in the first intensive English language course is students' ability to interact fluently and spontaneously in English, as this makes "*interaction with native speakers quite possible*". The documents specify that students are expected to be able to interact with "*native speakers*", which explicitly reveals an attachment to native English and can also be interpreted as a sign of a standard English orientation within the university.

Surprisingly, unlike intensive English language courses which have some extended details and regulations in respect of the English language, neither the national EMI policy nor the institutional policy provides much detailed information or regulation of English evaluation in EMI courses, whereas the main focus is generally on the intensive English courses provided for the students to prepare them for the EMI courses, as mentioned earlier. However, it has been noted that in some of the teaching materials for activities in EMI, such

as assignments, presentations and group discussions, English is weighted up to 10% on engineering EMI programmes, and up to 15% on medicine EMI programmes of the overall evaluation, with not many details of how teachers should evaluate and assess students' use of English. However, though, some documents were not able to be accessed, which might otherwise have provided specific information of the regulations of English in EMI.

5.2.4 English language entry requirements

As mentioned above, EMI courses in universities within the context of Saudi Arabia start with a foundation year, which is a compulsory course that aims to prepare students for their EMI courses. In the foundation year, there are a number of modules in mathematics and physics and the most dominant modules are in English language skills, which are divided into two intensive English language programmes. The intensive English language course is considered to be a heavy part of the weighting in students' grade point average (GPA), and is around one third of the overall grade in the foundation year. The documents reveal that the main objective of the course is to prepare students to be successful in entering EMI programmes (extract 1). Furthermore, the documents also give the expected programme outcomes in the first and second intensive English courses (extract 2):

> *1. IP "The purpose of this course is to bring students to a solid proficiency in English, preparing them to successfully enter into their selected English-medium majors" (Bisha university, preparatory year, 2017).*
>
> *2. IP ''Intensive English language 1: Students will have the opportunity to develop the four English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) based on the input of level B2 of the CEFR (Common European Framework Reference) … Intensive English language 2: Demonstrate English Language skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing at the level of C1 of the CEFR (Common European Framework Reference)" (Bisha university, preparatory year, 2017).*

The university implements intensive English language courses with the aim of preparing students for EMI programmes. The institution documents clearly state that students' preparation is based on the input of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), therefore, students are expected to achieve the input of level B2 in

intensive English language course 1 and the input of level C1 in intensive English language course 2, in order to be accepted to EMI courses.

5.3 Conclusion

English language documents at both the national and institutional levels was found to reveal some explicit and implicit attachment to standard English language, which reflects native English language norms. However, this kind of adoption might not be compatible with the aims of the English language policy, which asserts that it is helping students to recognise the importance of English as a global language of working, learning, and engaging in wider intercultural communications. Moreover, the documents unfold unawareness of different English language approaches or paradigms within the levels of the national and institutional policies. The documents also revealed a recognition of the importance of English as a global language and the increasing number of non-native English language speakers. Furthermore, the study found an obvious absence of the norms of ELF despite including aims that can be perceived as compatible with ELF, such as multiculturalism and diversity. Although the documents yielded relatively few statements that could be interpreted as a sign of an ELF perspective. Furthermore, the findings revealed issues related to the awareness and legitimisation of other English varieties that differ from standard native English varietal norms. The findings from the documents also revealed the entry requirements for EMI programmes as well as a form of English evaluation which is based on the input of the CEFR. Surprisingly, there is an absence of details, information, and guidelines with regard to the English in EMI in the documents, whereas the primary focus of the documents was on English language teaching.

This chapter examined relevant national and institutional documents in order to understand the presentation of English in higher education in Saudi Arabia. The next chapter discusses students' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of the English in EMI as well as their social use of English.

Chapter 6 Interview findings regarding students' experiences, attitudes and perceptions of the English in EMI

6.1 Introduction

Interviews and focus groups were carried out in order to answer my second and third research questions on a broad scale. According to Spolsky's framework (2004, 2009), language policy has three components: language management, language practice, and language ideology. Analysing documents helped to shed light on the macro level (language management) and ideological outlooks, and interviews and focus groups focused on the micro level (participants' behaviour and choices) and helped to identify students' perceptions and experiences as well as language ideologies. This approach provided an insight into the perceptions, knowledge and experiences of students regarding English language policies implemented within Saudi HE, as well as their social use of English. Unlike previous research carried out in the Saudi context on linguistic features and implications of EMI in Saudi Arabia, this research was undertaken to understand students' perceptions, experiences and ideological outlooks, both in an academic setting and in social contexts. The interviews helped to provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon, and focus groups were also of benefit by providing dynamic data gathered from discussions among the students (see chapter 7).

6.1.1 Collecting interview data, transcription and preparing for analysis

6.1.1.1 Interview participants

The research involved lengthy interviews (about 1-1:15 hours) with 23 students studying at Bisha University (12 engineering students and 11 students of medicine). However, I excluded three participants from the data analysis as they did not provide rich data or in-depth information. The participants were either close to graduating or were in the final year of university. The reason behind this is in order to acquire in-depth data for the study that would be based on longer experience. In order to maintain participants' anonymity, codes were used in reporting the findings. I refer to engineering students using 'ES' and medicine students using 'MS'. As there were 10 participants from each school (see Table 3), the code was followed by a number: ES-1 refers to the first participant from the engineering school, MS-10 refers to the 10th participant from the school of medicine, etc.

Table 3: Participants' backgrounds

Participant	Discipline	Year
ES-1	Mechanical engineering	5
ES-2	Mechanical engineering	5
ES-3	Mechanical engineering	5
ES-4	Mechanical engineering	5
ES-5	Mechanical engineering	5
ES-6	Civil engineering	5
ES-7	Civil engineering	5
ES-8	Civil engineering	5
ES-9	Civil engineering	5
ES-10	Civil engineering	5
MS-1	Medicine and surgery	5
MS-2	Medicine and surgery	5
MS-3	Medicine and surgery	5
MS-4	Medicine and surgery	5
MS-5	Medicine and surgery	5
MS-6	Medicine and surgery	6
MS-7	Medicine and surgery	6
MS-8	Medicine and surgery	6
MS-9	Medicine and surgery	6
MS-10	Medicine and surgery	6

6.1.1.2 Interview data transcription and translation

Each interview was transcribed and saved as a Microsoft Word file with a code name (ES-1, MS-1, etc.). Only the words were transcribed; features of speech were not included (such as pauses, overlapping, laughing, etc.) as they did not form the focus of this research project. Some participants used phrases that contained both English and Arabic words, in which case, the English words were transcribed as they were, and the Arabic words were translated. A translator was consulted to verify that the translated text correctly reflected the meaning of the Arabic text.

6.1.1.3 Interview data analysis procedure and coding frame

This section provides an explanation and justification of the methods used to code the transcribed data in order to produce themes, conduct the thematic analysis and arrive at the qualitative findings. Once I had finished transcribing the interviews, I submerged myself in the data, reading and re-reading the text until I was thoroughly familiar with it. I also listened to the audio recordings of the interviews again and consulted the notes that I had taken during and immediately after the interviews. I was careful to maintain neutrality in order to avoid jumping to conclusions. Qualitative data analysis was employed, in which several reflexive processes were carried out: highlighting, coding, categorisation and theme development (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This allowed the development of codes and themes in a way that was both organised and flexible. It was important not to stray from the collected data and to consider them within their contexts. MAXQDA software was used to code and categorise the data. The reason for using this particular software is that it supports Arabic data, unlike most other coding software. Its wide range of tools allowed me to compare and contrast the different utterances in the data. I also made use of Microsoft Word and its wide features and tools (e.g., tables, mind maps, comments, etc) in order to organise and better understand the complexity of the data.

There was a great deal of data to assess, due to the number of interviews that I had conducted. The coding followed a two-step procedure. First, descriptive coding: the coding was temporary and this was applied to help identify the important data. I used descriptive codes that captured the main topic or essence of the utterances. The initial focus was on utterances that were related to the study's research questions. Afterwards, emergent coding was employed by focusing on utterances that were driven by the data. This was done with care in order to make sure that the relevant meanings were considered in full, and that selection was done without bias. The main difference between the initial and emergent descriptive coding was that the main coding needed to reflect what had been said in connection with the study's research questions, and the emergent coding was open to possibilities in order to represent what had been said in connection with the research phenomena.

Second, after completing the descriptive coding, the data were re-arranged and re-categorised under themes according to the literature and how different codes interacted with each other. This involved interpretative coding, which focuses on relationships and

complexities within the data (see examples of descriptive and interpretive coding in Appendix D). During the coding procedures, I utilised the comment function in MAXQDA to add notes. These notes sometimes referred to the literature, or to notes made during and after the interviews. I also kept an open mind and maintained flexibility, allowing codes to change and themes to emerge. This was repeated until I felt that the data were fully organised and that they were aligned and correctly represented by the themes to which they had been allocated. At the end of this process, a total of three themes had been identified, with a number of sub-themes in each (see the coding frame below). As the study involves two case studies, the findings contain a presentation of what emerged according to themes (Duff, 2008, pp.187-188). Therefore, each theme and sub-theme starts with the finding of the first case study (School of Engineering), then moves to the second case study (School of Medicine). The reason for choosing this mode of organisation rather than devoting the presentation of the findings by case was that it allows each theme to present the findings of both cases respectively and coherently.

6.1.1.3.1 Interview coding frame

1. Understanding others' English in classrooms and social contexts
   - 1.1 Intelligibility
   - 1.2 Effectiveness
   - 1.3 Challenges
2. English language practices in EMI
   - 2.1 Classroom interactions
   - 2.2 Academic writing
   - 2.3 English evaluation
3. Language ideology
   - 3.1 Conformity to standard native English
     - 3.1.1 Language barrier and conformity to standard native English in the medical field
   - 3.2 Tensions between Arabic and English languages
   - 3.3 The use of Arabic as a lingua franca: ALF vs. ELF
   - 3.4 Lack of self-esteem

6.2 Results and findings – interviews

6.2.1 Understanding others' English in classrooms and social contexts

The Saudi participants held various opinions and perceptions in terms of using the English language with teachers and among themselves in the classroom, as well as using English in social contexts. Moreover, they held distinctive opinions of the use of the English language with other Saudis on the one hand and with others from different backgrounds on the other. Such opinions underpin a broad range in respect of the intelligibility, usefulness and challenges of using English in various situations. The findings show that the use of English varied in difficulty, clarity and intelligibility depending on the linguistic background of the other users, as well as to other factors such as the user's experience. In this research, participants distinguished between using English with others from an Arabic background, non-native and native English speakers. Accordingly, such differences are divided based on the aforementioned classification and the theme of understanding others' English in classrooms and social contexts is divided below into three sub-categories: intelligibility, effectiveness and challenges.

6.2.1.1 Intelligibility

Using English as a tool for communication among Saudi students or among Saudi students and their Saudi or Arab teachers and students was widely mentioned by most of the participants as being much more intelligible than communicating with non-Saudi or non-Arabic speakers. Some participants provided diversified reasons, such as ES-7, who stated that familiarity with others' L1-related methods of speaking leads to better understanding of each other. Moreover, some participants emphasised that students are able to understand their curriculum in a "better way" when they have Saudi or Arab teachers, as ES-3 explained the intelligibility of understanding content in English with teachers who have the same background. ES-1 also clarified that Saudis' or Arabs' "*pronunciations*" and "*English grammar use*" make English more understandable, as he refers below to the impact of L1 on English language use:

> *ES-7 "Saudis have same style in using English and much easier to understand".*
>
> *ES-3 "communication between students and their Arabic teachers are easier to understand the whole topic under discussion".*

> *ES-1 "familiarity with the use of English in terms of pronunciations and grammar would make understanding English language with other Saudis or Arabs easier than using it with others from different backgrounds".*

Similarly, ES-9 and ES-4 also indicated that using English with others from the same background is "*easy and clear*", which leads to better understanding of content. Other participants, such as ES-5, claimed that most Saudis learned English in the same education sector and this, in turn, is reflected in their English use and understanding of each other. Therefore, the existence of different experiences in communicating in English has resulted in a situation in which Saudi speakers will react differently to each other when communicating in English.

> *ES-9 "Using English in the classroom between Saudis and other teachers who are from Arabic countries is easy and clear and I can understand completely most of the content in classrooms".*

> *ES-4 "using English language is easier when communicating with Saudis because each one of us can understand the way in which the language is used".*

> *ES-5 "speaking English with Saudis is clear as all students do understand each other due to the fact that they have the same experience in dealing with English language, I mean we studied English and learned how to use it in the same Saudi educational sector".*

Interestingly, the views of some students from the School of Medicine did not broadly divert from those of the engineering students in their opinions of using English in classrooms with Saudi or Arabic teachers or in a social context. MS-1, for instance, also stated that understanding content with teachers from an Arabic background is better than with teachers from different backgrounds due to the "*familiar*" use of English:

> *MS-1 "I can understand my Saudi or Arab teachers who teach modules in English as I am quite familiar with the way in which English language is used".*

However, some other participants from medical school showed some concerns over English intelligibility among Arab students. MS-3, for example, mentioned that the "*low level of proficiency*" in English among some students creates challenges in interactions conducted in English. Interestingly, some other participants, such as MS-4, argued that code-switching,

or 'translanguaging' between Arabic and English, caused some difficulties and confusion in understanding others from an Arabic background. Indeed, it has previously been reported (e.g., Klimpfinger, 2009; Mauranen, 2013) that code-switching is a common feature in ELF interactions. However, surprisingly, some participants from the School of Medicine showed negative views towards code-switching or mixing Arabic with English and argued against the idea that code-switching is a helpful tool in practical interaction with others as MS-4 put it:

> *MS-3 "despite that communicating in English with some Saudis is easy and clear, however, some Saudi students have low level of proficiency in English, this sometimes will make interactions in English more difficult".*
>
> *MS-4 "using English with Arab students and teachers is not always easy and clear because some of them mix English with Arabic language too much, and this sometimes leads to some confusion".*

Furthermore, some participants also referred to the intelligibility of understanding English with reference to the L1 in comparison with the use of English with others from different linguistic backgrounds due to repeated exposure of their own productions, as can be seen in participant MS-5's statement below. Therefore, the participant showed an awareness of other varieties in English, however, he also revealed intolerance towards those varieties as different than standard native English norms and considered it "mistakes".

> MS-5 *"it is common among Arab speakers to make some mistakes in English speaking such as the occasional absence of "s" in verbs used after he, she, and it, but we still understand each other".*

Further, unsurprisingly, some participants from both schools expressed relatively positive views and attitudes of using and understanding English with NNESs in terms of "*easiness*", "*self-confidence*" and being "*more convenient*". For instance, ES-4 and MS-7 expressed feelings of confidence and comfort with using English and understanding NNESs in the classroom and in their social use of English. Therefore, they revealed their awareness of how precarious intercultural communication could be in ELF. This, in turn, suggests that they made a conscious effort to make their speech as intelligible as possible in order to facilitate shared understanding. Thus, some participants revealed positive views and

acceptance of others' varieties of English.

ES-4 "I have an experience of studying abroad, using English with non-natives is easier than using it with native speakers of English, I feel more confident and comfortable".

MS-7 "despite some difficulties in some situations, I always feel confident using English with non-natives weather in classrooms with my teachers, other students, or in daily use of English".

6.2.1.2 Effectiveness

Some participants from both schools expressed their views about the effectiveness of standard native English and the impact of native English speakers on students' learning and use of the language. Despite fluctuations in responses among the participants in terms of using English with NNESs, there were some responses that expressed positive views of communicating with native speakers within the classroom, describing their use of English as "*correct*", "*model*", "*accurate*" and "*fascinating*". Participants from the School of Engineering revealed negative views towards understanding native English; however, at the same time, the participants referred to native English speakers as the best source for improving English skills and learning the "accurate" use of English, as mentioned by ES-5 and ES-9 below. Interestingly, ES-10 indicated a conflict in views in respect of native and non-native English. He first revealed a positive attitude of understanding NNESs and confidence in using English. Afterwards, however, he revealed a negative view towards the impact of their varieties of English on students' usage of English. This contradictory view of English seemed to be a result of unawareness of English varieties and an attachment to native English as the only acceptable use of English.

ES-5 "it's actually a challenge sometimes to understand native English speakers, however, it would benefit us to improve our English skills"

ES-9 "in my experience, understanding native English teachers is difficult but it is also a chance to learn the accurate use of English"

ES-10 "unlike native English speakers, it is easy to understand non-native English speakers and I feel confident to use my English with them, however, their use of English sometimes impact in our English especially teachers"

Similar to the engineering student participants' views of understanding others' English, medical school participants also revealed their views and experiences of understanding native and non-native English. MS-2, for example, claimed that learning content with native English-speaking teachers would be helpful to" learn how they use the language" which revealed an attachment to native English as the only right use of the language. Interestingly, MS-9 and MS-5 highlighted one point, as they differentiated between effectiveness and intelligibility in using the English language in EMI. They argued that learning content from non-native teachers was easier; however, native English speakers would be more useful to "use English in a correct way" as the participants put it.

MS-2 "learning content with a native English teacher is useful as it would enable us to improve our English and learn how they use the language".

MS-9 "learning content in English with non-native English teachers is easier to understand in comparison with native English teachers, but native English teachers would help students to use English in a correct way".

MS-5 "the interacting with a native English speaker is more useful for me to improve my English".

Hence, some of both engineering and medical student participants referred to the effectiveness of native English and revealed positive views and perceptions towards it, despite the wide conflict among the participants with regard to the difficulties and challenges of understanding native English speakers. Although, the participants argued that non-native English usage is easier to be understood, however, the participants revealed an attachment to native English as the only legitimate varieties of English.

6.2.1.3 Challenges

Although many of the students revealed positive views and opinions in terms of intelligibility and understanding non-native English speakers, others, especially medical students, indicated their views on the effectiveness of native English-speaking teachers. However, many participants, ES-5 and ES-8, for instance, mentioned challenges and

difficulties in understanding some teachers and students from different backgrounds due to their own use of English. Thus, the participants had varied attitude of the English in EMI programmes and, accordingly, some participants admitted that they sometimes did not understand the lectures, which probably led to "reduced learning in content subject" (Hu et al., 2014, p.36).

> *ES-5 "sometimes there are some difficulties in understanding some non-native teachers due to the way they pronounce some vocabularies which leads sometime to some confusion in the classrooms".*

> *ES-8 "sometimes, holding a constructive discussion with our teachers who are not native English speakers and not Arabs might be challenging sometimes because I think they use English in a different way to our use of English".*

Moreover, other participants, especially medical students, stated concerns regarding the use of English among some of the non-native English-speaking teachers in their courses. MS-10, for example, argued that some students pronounce certain medical terms in "*a wrong way*", as they had learned from some non-native teachers, claiming this might have some future implications and complications. Thus, regardless of their teachers' first language, the participants expected their English usage to be "correct".

> *MS-10 "we're at the final year and some students still pronounce some medical terms in a wrong way based on the way they learned from some teachers … this might cause some confusions or issues in the work field after graduation".*

However, many responses also expressed negative views towards using English with native English speakers. ES-7, for example, claimed that there was some inability to understand native English teachers, as well as feelings of a lack of confidence. Furthermore, some participants, ES-10 and ES-2, for instance, described their experience of using their own English with native English speakers as "*hard*" and of not feeling sufficiently confident which sometimes led to less engagement in classrooms.

> *ES-7 "I sometimes don't understand some native English teacher in the classroom, and I feel uncomfortable to participate in the classroom, it is sometimes hard to understand them".*

ES-10 "I have an experience studying in England and Canada, I always find it hard to interact smoothly with native English speakers … I don't feel confident enough".

ES-2 "Although my English is good, I always feel unconfident and inadequate while interacting with native English speakers".

Accordingly, it can be stated that simply because standard native English is used, it does not guarantee mutual intelligibility and effective communication. Both participants in an interaction share the responsibility of maintaining communication successfully, regardless of the varieties of English that they employ. ELF emphasises how this can be done by employing a range of communication strategies, such as repetition, accommodation and repairing. This range of strategies is particularly important in intercultural exchanges in order to overcome breakdowns in communication. In other words, the effective use of language does not necessarily involve using English that conforms to certain varietal norms, but navigating and accommodating a range of English varieties used by English speakers with a range of first languages. Furthermore, it should be noted that some of the students indicated that the accents of their teachers when speaking English was a barrier to their understanding, and that in some cases this had an impact on their use of English for a long time afterwards. This experience may have been reflected in the way that they unconsciously accepted the use of standard native English as the only acceptable and legitimate use of English as spoken by native speakers in the Anglophone countries of the Inner Circle (Kachru, 1985).

Therefore, the participants' views and experiences of understanding others' English, whether in the classroom or for social use, varied and differed based on the linguistic backgrounds of the user, as well as other factors such as intelligibility and the user's experience. The participants commented on the intelligibility of understanding the English of Saudis and others from an Arabic background, justifying this by the presence of the same style and use of the English Language. Unsurprisingly, many participants expressed positive views and attitudes towards understanding and communicating with NNESs due to clarity and self-confidence. Similar to findings in previous research (e.g., Hülmbauer, 2009; Cogo, 2012; Cogo & House, 2017), many participants of this study generally did not reveal that they felt worried about being understood when they spoke English, or about understanding others' usage of English. Some participants frequently mentioned that they felt united with

others from different backgrounds by their non-nativeness in English. Therefore, participants paid attention to accommodation and intelligibility, as they felt that these would increase the efficiency and relevance of their communication.

Interestingly, however, some participants, especially some medical students, expressed concerns over non-native English-speaking teachers' usage of English, claiming that misuse of English might lead to some confusion in understanding content as well as future usage of English. The findings also showed that some of the participants viewed their non-native English-speaking teachers' usage of English in EMI negatively because they were unfamiliar with different forms of pronunciation. This is in line with the findings of previous studies (Wong, 2010; Lei & Hu, 2014; Gao & Wang, 2017). Furthermore, some participants also revealed positive views regarding the effectiveness of native English, describing it as "*correct*", "*fluent*", etc., whereas some other participants claimed that they feel "*unconfident*" and "*uncomfortable*" when communicating with native English speakers, as well as having difficulties understanding them.

6.2.2 English language practices in EMI

It is important to note that the data in this study comes from the participants' reports of English language practices, rather than actual practices. However, though, the data provided beneficial insights into participants' beliefs and interpretations of their practices in EMI. English orientations and experiences of EMI were revealed by the participants as being varied with regard to the English language in EMI courses. The responses of the participants covered different aspects of learning experiences as undergraduate students as they revealed their perceptions, views, and experiences in relation to English in their EMI courses. Therefore, this theme can be divided into three broad sub-themes: classroom interactions, which include students' interactions with teachers and other students, presentations, participation, and other classrooms activities; academic writing, which also includes assignments, exams, and any other writing requirements; and English language evaluation, which includes students' experience and views of each school's regulation of the English evaluation in EMI courses.

6.2.2.1 Classroom interactions

In the engineering school, it was widely claimed that there was some tolerance from teachers in terms of English use in classrooms and acceptance of students' use of English

as long as there were "*successful interactions*". Furthermore, engineering student participants claimed that most teachers tended to focus on effective learning and communication, rather than the English language itself, despite some negative views of some teachers' focus on English use. According to ES-1, for example, he revealed an orientation towards ELF within classrooms, claiming that teachers on their EMI course did not focus on English use as long as students could learn and interact successfully. Similarly, ES-4 used the phrase "*most teachers don't pay much attention*" to describe teachers' expectations of English on their EMI course. Both participants used "*most*", as they were trying to indicate that teachers had different expectations and approaches in the classroom.

> *ES-1 "most teachers focus on content and successful interactions with students rather than how students use English".*

> *ES-4 "in my experience, I think most teachers don't pay much attention to how students use English in the classrooms".*

In addition, similar to some extent to ES-1 and ES-4, ES-7 also explained the differences among teachers in the classroom in terms of English language use. He claimed that some teachers "*expect students to use English correctly*" within the classroom and correct students' mistakes in "*grammar and pronunciations*". Similar to the other participants, he also used "*few*" and "*the majority*" to differentiate between teachers. Accordingly, the differences among teachers' choices in the classroom indicated that either there is lack of regulations of English in EMI or some teachers did not necessarily follow the language regulations and employ their own language agendas. Shohamy (2006) highlighted that even if a language policy exists, it is not always enforced. Implementation is not always successful. She added that some policies are actually only formulated as "lip service, declarations and intentions" and, therefore, have very little impact on practice (Shohamy, 2006, p.52). Therefore, many of the participants of the current study agreed that the intelligibility of effective and efficient learning was more important than following language norms:

> *ES-7 "only few teachers expect students to use English correctly and keep correcting students' grammar or pronunciations in classrooms, however, I think the majority of teachers in our school consider English as only a tool of learning content".*

Correspondingly, ES-10 also questioned the usefulness of focusing on the English language when learning content. He stated "*we only learn*" as he attempted to express that English was only a tool for learning content, as well as English not being a goal in EMI settings. He also revealed his satisfaction with teachers' focus on content rather than the English, by stating "*I'm glad most teachers understand that*". ES-3 also expressed some students' concerns over English use in the classroom, claiming that "*some teachers*" "*add more pressure on students*" by focusing on English use along with content, which has a negative impact on students' participation in the classroom.

> *ES-10 "… we are not English language learners anyway, what is the problem if we make mistakes … we only learn content, and I'm glad most teachers understand that".*

> *ES-3 "in my experience, I think most student avoid participating in the classrooms with some teachers … either they scared of losing grades or they avoid teacher's comments on language use … I think this would add more pressure on students with dual focus on content as well as English".*

Furthermore, code-switching or using the Arabic language as a linguistic resource in EMI was mentioned by some engineering student participants. Unlike some medical student participants who showed negative views towards code-switching (see 6.2.1.1), it was claimed that students sometimes mixed Arabic with English in the classroom as a linguistic resource for "*content understanding and better communications*" with others. Interestingly, some participants claimed that most teachers tolerated the use of Arabic in the classroom as a tool for effective content learning, as ES-3 comments in the extract below. ES-10 also revealed the necessity for the use of Arabic in the classroom, claiming that mixing Arabic with English facilitates efficient and effective learning and communication in that setting. In ELF perspective, code-switching is described as a functionally normal feature of ELF communication (Klimpfinger, 2009, p.367; Mauranen, 2013).

> *ES-3 "… most students use Arabic in the classrooms as a helpful tool to explain some content-related terms or make themselves understood and most teachers don't reject that".*

2. ES-10 "Arabic and English languages cannot be separated in content learning, we study the content in English but Arabic is always there to help us to better understand the content and communicate our ideas"

Therefore, the findings revealed that other language use is present and reported multilingual use in classroom activities in engineering school. On the other hand, unlike the engineering students, medical student participants expressed different views on their experiences of English in classrooms in the School of Medicine. Whereas most engineering student participants described their experiences as "*easier than expected*", "*fair*", "*acceptable*", etc., the use of English on the medical courses seemed to be more complicated, which was reflected in students' perceptions and experiences of the English on their courses. Most medical student participants revealed an orientation towards native English and argued that English was more than simply a tool to learn medicine content and communicate with others; as described by MS-2, English in medicine "*involves human safety*". Similarly, MS-8 indicated that medical students have to be careful with their use of English due to the importance of accuracy in English in the medical field as he put it. He then claimed that teachers tend to "correct students' mistakes".

MS-2 "… English use involves human safety … we learn our medicine content through English, as well as learning how to be accurate in English usage".

MS-8 "English use is important in medicine to be accurate, not as a choice, but an obligation … teachers always correct students' mistakes".

Furthermore, some participants, such as MS-4, described teachers as "*strict*" in respect of English language use in classroom activities. However, he also used the word "*understandable*" to justify his first statement and to show his satisfaction with teachers' focus on English in the classroom, as he claimed it "*prepare[s] students*" for medical fields. Similarly, MS-10 revealed his experience of learning medical content through EMI instruction, stating some difficulties at the beginning of the university due to teachers' expectations of English, which led to less engagement in the classroom. However, he also justified that "*language accuracy*" is important in the medical field.

MS-4 "well, most teachers in our school are very strict in terms of English language use either in classrooms discussion, presentations, etc. … it is actually understandable and I believe it is just to prepare students".

> *MS-10 "to be honest, in my early years at the university, I was very upset and used to blame teachers for complicating learning content by focusing on English language … I was trying to avoid participating in classrooms and avoid engaging with any discussions … now after about six years of experience, I realised the importance of language accuracy in medicine".*

Similar to MS-4 and MS-10, MS-1 also justified teachers' orientations towards English on their EMI course as he claimed that teachers "*prepare them for medical fields*"; he also specifically referred to the use of "*correct English*" as important in medicine. The use of the word "*correct*" implies a 'correct' standard native English, but no clear indication was given of exactly whose English standard that would be. Interestingly, most the medical school participants showed the same views and opinions in terms of English language in learning medical content.

> *MS-1 "… I'm sure teachers don't mean to make things difficult on students, but to help them to use English in a correct way in order to prepare them for medical fields".*

6.2.2.2 Academic writing

The participants also contributed different views and experiences on the subject of academic writing in EMI. Particular differences occurred among the engineering and medical student participants. Although both schools are within the same university, the participants from the two schools revealed different views, experiences, and orientations of English in terms of grammar, intelligibility, and writing style in assignments, examinations, and other writing tasks within EMI. Furthermore, the engineering student participants also revealed different experiences of academic writing with teachers in EMI, and claimed that their experiences varied based on different teachers' views and expectations of English writing. ES-9, for instance, elaborated on the differences among teachers in terms of academic writing, claiming below that "*most*" of the teachers considered the intelligibility in writing regardless of English use, whereas "*some*" teachers expected them to "*write correctly*". He also explicitly used "*most*" and "*some*" to indicate that the majority of teachers focused on meaning rather than language forms.

> *ES-9 "… well, generally every teacher is different, but while most of teachers focus on understanding the content of writing rather than how we write, but also some teachers expect us to write correctly"*

ES-8 revealed very similar views in terms of students' experiences of English in academic writing with different teachers, revealing positive views towards teachers' focus on content rather than language, which he claimed "decreased pressure on students". Furthermore, ES-8 also offered positive views and appreciation of students' grammar mistakes being corrected, which he claimed would help students to improve their writing skill. However, he also revealed negative views towards considering English use in evaluation in EMI, which he described as "unfair".

> *ES-8 "in my experience, one of the students' challenges in EMI is academic writing, however, fortunately, most teachers are helpful and they don't actually focus on language rather than content … this decreased pressure on students".*

> *ES-3 "… some teachers correct students' mistakes in grammar, in order to help them not to put more pressure on them, but also some other teachers unfairly make things difficult by evaluating students in English writing".*

Most of the engineering students also expressed their satisfaction with how teachers treated students in terms of 'E' in EMI. For instance, ES-9 described his experience by adding that although he had had some concerns in terms of the English in EMI in the early stages, he was "*very grateful*" for teachers' focus on content rather than English to facilitate the course. Correspondingly, ES-10 also revealed his concerns over English at the beginning of his university studies; however, he claimed that he found the course was much easier in terms of English language than had been stated in the course descriptions. ES-6 also justified his satisfaction with the English in EMI by stating that they were engineering students, debating that the focus on English in EMI would "*distract*" students from learning content properly.

> *ES-9 "despite the fear at the beginning stages, I feel very grateful of our teachers' collaborations by focusing on content rather than how we use or write in English".*

> *ES-10 "I was worried if I would be able to study the content in English language, but it has been easier than I thought and read in the course description".*

> *ES-6 "we are engineering students, we only study engineering content in English, we should not be distracted by focusing on how we use English either in classrooms or writing tasks".*

Accordingly, it is likely that because most teachers and students are non-native speakers of English, they are more tolerant of what would be termed 'errors' in comparison with native English standards. The participants' responses implied that they had made the choice to give preference to meaning over form in EMI. In universities in ENL countries, where the local staff and students tend to be native English speakers, there is more of an expectation that international students should do their best to conform to the native speaker standards that the universities have set (Jenkins, 2014). However, in the context examined in this study, most staff and students were themselves non-native speakers of English, so they seemed to have more realistic expectations of English use.

On the other hand, medical student participants contributed to the subject of academic writing with different views and experiences of the English language on their EMI course. Whereas engineering student participants revealed an orientation towards English as a lingua franca in EMI, medical student participants revealed different orientations and experiences. MS-10, for instance, claimed that teachers focused on English to prepare students for future work. MS-1 also expressed his appreciation of the teachers' corrections of English, claiming that it helped him to improve his English. He also revealed positive views towards his experience with teachers in terms of academic writing:

> *MS-10 "all teachers consider English use important in medicine, especially in writing … I think it's part of students' preparations for the future".*

> *MS-1 "… in classroom activities, teachers correct our writing to help us to improve our writing skills, but in the assignments and examinations, it is included in the evaluation and I think they just want to help students to realise the importance of English use in medical fields … I personally ask some friends to proofread my writings, not only to avoid losing grades, but also to improve my writing".*

Furthermore, some of the participants also revealed an attachment to Standard English in their EMI course, as they believed that English should be "*accurate*", as MS-7 comments below. Some medical school participants explained the challenges and difficulties they experienced in academic writing and revealed mutual views among medical students that

Standard English is the only acceptable form of English in medical fields. This was specifically reflected in practice and students' experiences of the English language on their EMI programme. It was proposed by Jenkins (2014) that the "native-normative focus of any English language on offer" provides "evidence that native English is taken for granted as the acceptable norm" (p.91).

> *MS-7 "… as we have to try to be accurate in English use, it hasn't been easy, it has been a challenge for us, but with some efforts and teachers' help, I think my English and writing skills improved a lot".*

> *MS-6 "as I mentioned earlier, we, as medicine students and going to be working in a sensitive field, we should be careful … I admit I had some difficulties especially in academic writing, but after these years in medical school, I am satisfied now … I know I make mistakes but I try to learn from them".*

Further, Surprisingly, unlike students from the engineering school, the medical student participants revealed that the university provided an ongoing compulsory course through their EMI course for medical students, which was not stated in any of the policy documents collected for this study. The participants explained that the course was partly a focus on "*English accuracy*". MS-1 and MS-4, for instance, stated that the course involved different aspects, including English language, and claimed that the course aim was to help students to be "*correct*" and "*accurate*" in the English language and in their writing:

> *MS-1 "the course covers different aspects, some are medicine related, and partly in English … we learn and practice the correct usage of English, such as pronunciations, grammar, etc.".*

> *MS-4 "… the course helps us to improve our abilities to use English accurately".*

6.2.2.3 English evaluation

Similar to the responses with regard to classroom interactions and academic writing, the participants contributed to the subject of English evaluation on EMI courses with the same views and experiences: that English evaluation was based on teachers' choices of English, regardless of the English regulations within the university. Accordingly, it was widely claimed among the engineering students that there was some tolerance from "most teachers" in terms of English use and module evaluations in EMI, despite the "strict"

regulations set by the university administration as some participants put it. However, some participants' responses also revealed that a "few teachers" tended to adhere to the English regulations in EMI. Some participants, such as ES-4, claimed that 10% of the module evaluations were based on English language usage:

> *ES-4 "since we started our course, only few teachers have been strict in term of English use and writing … we know English accuracy (e.g., spelling, grammar, etc.) weight about 10 % of the evaluation, but most teachers don't take that into account as long as students' English and writing is intelligible".*

Furthermore, most engineering student participants expressed positive views and appreciation of English not being included in evaluations in EMI, as it would cause "*more challenges*". Some participants, such as ES-5 and ES-7, described including English use in module evaluations in EMI as "*completely unfair*" and as a "*distraction*" from the purpose of learning content. Interestingly, although ES-5 revealed a strong attachment to native English, as he first stated a "*dream to be native like*", he then expressed negative views towards evaluating students in English use in EMI, which indicates a conflict in the participant's belief and choices.

> *ES-10 "we are lucky that most teachers are helpful in term of English in our course and not considering English in evaluations".*

> *ES-5 "… we all dream to be native like in English and we try to be, but considering English use in evaluation like some teachers do is completely unfair".*

> *ES-7 "in my experience, with some teachers, I worry about my English usage and writing more than content and this is a distraction from what we actually should learn".*

Unlike the engineering school, where participants claimed that most teachers tended to focus on content rather than English forms, medical school participants revealed very different opinions and experiences in terms of English evaluation in EMI. The participants claimed, for example, that their teachers considered English use as important in content learning, as well as in evaluation, and was "*weighted up to 15%*", as mentioned by most of the participants. MS-10, for example, stated that medical teachers focused on English along with content and he described the teachers as taking English evaluation "*very seriously*" in

EMI. MS-6 also claimed that teachers were different with regard to English evaluation in EMI; however, he afterwards claimed that teachers followed "*standard rules of English*" in evaluations in EMI.

> *MS-10 "most teachers take English usage very seriously and evaluate students based on English use".*
>
> *MS-6 "each teacher has his own way in English evaluation … most teachers consider the standard rules of English when evaluating the performance of students".*

Indeed, the limited number of studies on the subject of assessment in EMI reflects the lack of attention received from EMI researchers. One of the issues that arise in the discussion of assessment in EMI is whether it is appropriate to examine both language and content. According to Doiz et al. (2019), teachers on EMI programmes typically offer three justifications for why they choose not to consider linguistic errors when grading students' assignments: they do not consider themselves to be English language teachers and, therefore, issues related to language are outside their capacity; most teachers in EMI primarily focus on content learning, rather than language; and they consider themselves unqualified to assess students' language use. Moreover, Mazak and Carroll (2017) argued that the potential use of L1 in EMI should be taken into account by language policies as well as tolerating students' creativity in language use, which might empower students in content learning. Nevertheless, despite EMI researchers having paid little attention to assessment in the past, issues related to assessment in EMI HE mostly continue to be overlooked. Further, there are many issues that need to be investigated, such as the integration of English in EMI and how other approaches to English could benefit students in EMI (e.g., ELF) (Murata, 2019), and the consideration of the use of L1 in assessment in EMI programmes (Mazak & Carroll, 2017).

To sum up, the fluctuations in participants' opinions and experiences of the linguistic practices in EMI in both the engineering and medical schools suggested different orientations of English based on the students' needs. Engineering students were shown more tolerance by most teachers towards English, considering it simply as a tool for learning and communication in EMI and that this was reflected in the teachers' methods and evaluation. The responses of the participants indicated that they had not been directed to employ English in a particular way, and thus teachers avoided acting like language

teachers. Instead, teachers accepted non-standard language use as long as the content was still intelligible and did not hamper communication. Clarity and intelligibility seemed to be the most important features of language to them. Although there was some variation in views, some of the participants believed that intelligible English could only be achieved with grammatical 'correctness'.

The responses above suggest that most teachers did not expect the students to conform fully to standard native English conventions when writing or speaking English. Therefore, the majority of engineering school teachers seemed to be lenient with regard to the English skills of their students, which underlines that the 'E' in EMI can be interpreted as English as a lingua franca, not as a variety of English that a native speaker would use. In this regard, the results are in line with Kirkpatrick's (2016) call for "a coherent policy developed by all stakeholders ... which sees EMI within a multilingual framework" (also see Jenkins, 2015; Fenton-Smith et al., 2017). However, medical students showed some concerns over English use in medicine, which were also reflected in students' views and experiences as well as the English orientation in their EMI courses. The responses of the medical student participants illustrated how the students were constrained by their assumption that the 'E' in EMI stood for the English used by native speakers. It was also clear that the university seemed more concerned with medical students' English, providing them with an ongoing compulsory course in English through their EMI programme.

6.2.3 Language ideologies

6.2.3.1 Conformity to standard native English

Participants from both the engineering and medical schools seemed to hold the same views and opinions in terms of native English language. Unsurprisingly, most participants described native English as "*correct*", "*perfect*", the "*best*", "*the way we should use*" and that it was a "*dream*" to use English like native English speakers. Despite stating the rare use of English with native English speakers, the participants also referred to native speakers as the "*owners of English*". Interestingly, despite the orientations of most engineering participants towards intelligibility over English forms and their choices and behaviour in practice (see 6.2.2), some participants from the engineering school associated being native-like speakers with success in education and a career. ES-5, for instance, claimed that being native-like is vital on postgraduate courses, when students are required to achieve a "*high*

score" in international English proficiency tests, such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Interestingly, ES-9 argued that the first impression that others have is based on English, claiming that being native-like would help in education and future career, regardless of discipline knowledge.

> *ES-5 "in order to apply for postgraduate programmes, most universities require a high score in IELTS or TOEFL and it is important to be a native like to get this score".*

> *ES-9 "being fluent and native like always give a good impression to people regardless how good the person is in his discipline".*

Similarly, ES-7 also clarified the importance of being native-like as a university student by claiming that some teachers would distinguish students based on "*English accuracy*", which seemed to be reflected in the students' experiences.

> *ES-7 "in my experience, some teachers consider students' English accuracy as a sign of hard working … they pay more attention to them in classrooms".*

In addition, some participants from the medical school revealed the attachment to native English generated in the schools. MS-2 and MS-5, for example, claimed that students had been taught English since school and that it was to be used as it is by native speakers, which seemed to be reflected in students' views towards English.

> *MS-2 "we have been tough to use English as its native speakers since we started learning English in schools".*

> *MS-5 "since early stages at school, we've always been taught English to be used in the correct way as native English speakers … I know it is not easy to be a native like but we always desire to be".*

MS-8 also tried to clarify his idealisation of native English speakers by arguing that NESs are "*the owners of English*" and that this is the way English must be used. He also strongly implied that the positive views of the participants towards the importance of native English had originated from their schools and universities by using "*what we have been taught*". Interestingly, other participants from the medical school, MS-10 for example, also expressed a desire to be native-like in order to gain better job opportunities in the future.

> MS-8 “every language should be used as its native speakers, that is what we know and what we have been taught”.
>
> *MS-10 “the more you speak English like native speakers, the more job opportunities you get after graduation and vice versa”.*

However, despite the positive views towards native English, some participants from the engineering school distinguished between being native-like and the need for English only as a tool for learning and communicating with others. ES-1 and ES-2, for instance, underestimated conformity to native English language, claiming that English is not their first language and that being native-like is not necessarily important for learning and communicating effectively with others. Interestingly, ES-1 revealed his attachment to native English before arguing the usefulness of native English in education and communication with others, which suggests a conflict between his belief and choice in practice. He referred to the “*authenticity*” of English, which led to a negotiation of the value of English and NESs’ roles as norm providers.

> *ES-1 “despite my dream to be a native like in English, I don’t think it’s important as long as I understand my lectures and speak with others effectively”.*
>
> *ES-2 “I know I make lots of mistakes in English but I think it is normal, I don’t care as long as I’m able to use it … English is not my first language, I use it for limited purposes, why am I supposed to be native like?”.*

Hence, most participants showed positive views and opinions towards native English, describing it as the “*best*”, “*the way we should use*”, “*a dream*”, etc. Interestingly, the participants associated being native-like with success in education, as well as getting better job opportunities, claiming that using English like native English speakers would give others a good impression of them. Therefore, overall, it was clear from the students’ perceptions and attitudes that they thought that they were trained in Standard (native) English and that their own English would be assessed in terms of Standard English norms. Furthermore, the majority of the participants seemed to concur with ideologies of Standard English: ‘nativeness’ and authenticity. However, some of the other participants argued the usefulness of native English, debating that English is not their first language and was only needed for limited purposes.

In the majority of instances, the participants viewed NESs as the "*owners of English*", and they thought that by dint of the language having been created by their ancestors, they had the right to design language standards. One characteristic of Standard English ideology is that it views NESs as the owners of English (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This is criticised by Jenkins (2007), who calls it the 'English first' argument; this essentially makes reference to "the assumption that because the native language had an earlier place in the chronological development of the English language it is somehow more suitable than other varieties for use as an international lingua franca several centuries later" (p.31). This assumption can be attributed to the fact that throughout their schooling students are exposed to "standard native English". They now need to realise that English can be viewed from a much wider perspective, as it is now often employed as a lingua franca, including in a large number of universities (Seidlhofer, 2011; Jenkins, 2014).

6.2.3.1.1 Language barrier and conformity to standard native English in the medical field

Medical English was an emergent code and one of the most debated topics among the medical school participants. Interestingly, most the participants expressed the same perceptions and views of using English in the medical field in terms of intelligibility and successful communication. The participants claimed that English should only be used in a standard way due to its involvement in human lives and safety. MS-9, for example, argued that although English is not their first language, they try to speak English like native speakers in order to avoid misunderstandings in the medical field, which "*might impact on patients' safety*".

> *MS-9 "we are not native English speakers, we all make mistakes while we use English, but in the medical field, we try as much as possible to use English in the right way in order to avoid any misunderstanding which might impact on patients' safety".*
>
> *Researcher "what do you think is the right use of English?"*
>
> *MS-9 "the native speakers' usage of English".*

Similarly, MS-8 stated that English language use is one of the concerns among healthcare professionals in terms of patients' safety. He specifically referred to "*communicating correctly*" to indicate that Standard English is the only possible way to communicate

effectively with others. Moreover, MS-5 justified that common views and beliefs among medical students in terms of English in medicine is due to common "*miscommunications*" in medical fields due to language use.

> *MS-8 "English in the medical field is one of the controversial topics amongst the healthcare professionals due to its importance in communicating correctly with other staff and patients".*
>
> *MS-5 "miscommunications caused by English use among staff or among staff and patients is very common in the medical fields and that is something we all should take very seriously"*

In addition, the medical student participants argued that Standard English is vital in the medical field in order to "*communicate effectively with others*", claiming that mispronouncing a medical term or spelling it incorrectly could lead to a different meaning being understood, as argued by MS-7 and MS-6 below. Moreover, MS-5 added that teachers encourage students to be careful with English use, especially medical terms, in order to avoid miscommunications, which suggested that the students' views and perceptions originated from the teachers on their EMI course.

> *MS-7 "every single letter in medical terms is important either in pronunciation or writing as changing one letter in a medical term could lead to another one".*
>
> *MS-6 "whether in grammar, pronunciation, or writing, the wrongful use of English language is one of the common factors of miscommunication in the medical field".*
>
> *MS-5 "our teachers always urge us to learn and use English accurately, especially medical terms in order to avoid any potential miscommunications with other staff and patients".*

Surprisingly, most participants went beyond that position, arguing that 25% of medical errors worldwide were caused by miscommunications among staff themselves or between staff and patients, and claimed that langauge use is one of the main factors in such errors. MS-4 and MS-10, for instance, argued that one of the most common causes of miscommunication in the medical field was language use. They argued that the standard use of English would reduce miscommunication and, therefore, prevent medical errors.

MS-4 "we learned that twenty five percent of medical errors worldwide is caused by miscommunications … as the language is the obvious cause, the right use of the language could reduce medical errors and prevent miscommunications amongst staff and patients".

MS-10 "whether in English or other languages, the right use of the language in the medical field could help to prevent any potential miscommunications, and therefore, reduce the medical errors".

The data showed that the dominant perceptions and opinions among medical school participants were that English should be used very carefully in the medical field, as it "*involves human safety*" and in order to prevent potential miscommunications between staff and patients. In this study, research into English within health care had clearly had an impact on the participants' views and experiences of English. Interestingly, the participants claimed that 25% of medical errors worldwide were caused by miscommunication, arguing that the standard use of language would help to prevent miscommunication between staff and patients and help to reduce medical errors.

Interestingly, it has been highlighted by practitioners and scholars in the field of health care that communication difficulties are becoming a serious issue that can affect patient care. Foronda et al. (2016), stated bluntly that "Ineffective communication in healthcare results in delayed treatment, misdiagnosis, medication errors, patient injury, or death" (p.36). Other research has also highlighted the potential dangers of language barriers in the realm of health care, but this research mainly focused on ENL contexts. For example, when patients and doctors shared the same native language, i.e., were language concordant, Wilson et al. (2005) reported that there were "reduced reports of adverse medication effects and confusion with medication instructions".

The literature describes language barriers in similarly alarming terms, such as in hindering the quality of care (Flores, 2005) and increasing the risk of adverse medical events (Johnstone & Kanitsaki, 2006). Within the field of ELF, moreover, Tweedie and Johnson (2018) analysed a role-play exchange between nurses who did not share the same L1. The situation was a patient handover in a hospital. Nursing instructors' analysis of the nurses' exchanges showed that there were issues of L2 intelligibility that would pose a threat to patient safety in a real situation.

6.2.3.2 Tensions between Arabic and English languages

A few of the participants contributed to the subject of English in the context of Saudi Arabia and its influence on the Arabic language and local values. The participants indicated that they felt that the use of English had been threatening the values related to the Islamic and Arabic culture of Saudis, claiming that the English language had been "*spreading unacceptably*" in Saudi Arabia and "*influencing the value of Islam and local culture*". ES-6, ES-7 and MS-3, for example, questioned the dominant influence of the English language in Saudi Arabia, which they claimed was having an impact on the values of local culture and the Arabic language.

> *ES-6 "I can't understand the reasons behind the importance of English in our society … when we go to a native English country, we have to use English to communicate with them, and when native English speakers come to our country, we also have to use English too! … why don't they learn our language?".*

> *ES-7 "English language has been replacing the value of Arabic over the years, we must be proud of our language".*

> *MS-3 "I know how important the English language is, but not to make people forget the value of their own language … instead of English being an optional, it became compulsory in our own country".*

Correspondingly, some participants criticised the Saudi government's policy of 'Englishisation' and the dominance of the English language in education and employment in Saudi Arabia, arguing that no one had a choice any more of whether to choose English or Arabic in education and their future career. ES-10 and ES-2, for example, criticised the lack of courses taught in Arabic in Saudi universities, claiming that students were left with no options but EMI programmes, which sometimes affected students' ambitions and dreams. Researchers have outlined similar findings from students, such as research in Turkey during which students also expressed reservations over EMI, stating that they thought they would learn the educational content better if it were delivered in their L1 (Kırkgöz, 2014).

> *ES-10 "we are an Arabic country, but if you want to study for example, Engineering, all Saudi universities only offer Engineering courses in English … most courses in*

Saudi universities are becoming more and more in English language, leaving the students with no options to choose the language they want".

ES-2 "I know many students abandoned their dreams of studying the courses they want just because of the only English policy in the universities".

Moreover, some participants expressed their concerns with regard to finding job opportunities in Saudi Arabia. ES-7 argued that most jobs in Saudi Arabia required a high level of English and the passing of certain English tests (e.g., IELTS and TOEFL), claiming that Arabic seemed to have been abandoned.

ES-7 "most job offers now require English fluency, and sometimes English tests such as IELTS and TOEFL, and sometimes the interviewee is a native English speaker in order to evaluate our English whereas no one cares how our Arabic skills are!"

Therefore, some participants argued the overuse of the English language and its impact on the values of their Islamic and local culture. Interestingly, the participants argued the orientations of English language policy in education and employment in Saudi Arabia as well as the wide use of English language within society, which some participants claimed had had an impact on the local value of the Arabic language. Moreover, the participants expressed their concerns over the 'English-only' policy and the abandonment of the Arabic language and the absence of programmes with Arabic as a medium of instruction in Saudi universities, as well as job opportunities. Therefore, it was clear from their responses that some students believed that they would achieve better learning outcomes if they used their L1 as the MOI. This may be a reflection of their resistance to the English-only ideology that is present in a great deal of EMI curriculum design (Canagarajah, 1999). They did not, however, suggest that EMI was not useful or should be banned. Rather, they proposed making EMI courses optional so that students could choose the language they wanted, rather than having no other option than being taught in English.

Interestingly, despite recognition among the students of the significance of English as a global language of communication, some revealed a strong association between English and Western cultures and ideologies. The differences between a local culture and the cultures of countries of NESs is an issue in education in Saudi Arabia (Al-abed Alhaq & Smadi, 1996; Argungu, 1996; Al-Brashi, 2003; Glasser, 2003; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Consequently, students saw a disparity between their local

culture and values and the English they were learning (Maherzi, 2011). Further, this also have been reported in other studies to be accounted for some students' low level of achievement in English (e.g., Al-Seghayer, 2014).

6.2.3.3 The use of Arabic as a lingua franca: ALF vs. ELF

Some of the participants unexpectedly compared using Arabic as a lingua franca (ALF) with ELF within the context of Saudi Arabia, wondering why people held different views about the two languages. ES-3 and ES-8, for instance, stated that people had different views in terms of Arabic and English use in Saudi Arabia and that while it is very common to use Arabic as a means of communication, English is ideologically considered to be used as it is by native speakers.

> *ES-3 "we have lots of non-native Arabic speakers in Saudi, we don't ask them to use Arabic the way we do, why should we use English like its native speakers?".*

> *ES-8 "we use Arabic language to communicate with many non-Arabic speakers here in Saudi Arabia and we do not expect them to use it the way we do … at the same time, we learn English and we are supposed to use it like its native speakers!".*

In addition, MS-5 mentioned that he had different views of Arabic and English use. Whereas he focused on communicating successfully in Arabic with non-native Arabic speakers, he still tried to use English based on its native speakers' norms. Moreover, ES-2 argued it was common practice for people to simplify the Arabic language in order to communicate effectively with non-native Arabic speakers and, at the same time, English was learned as it is used according to native speaker norms. Hence, it was interesting that the participants linked tolerance of using Arabic as a means of communication with non-Arabic speakers with conservative attitudes towards English use within society.

> *MS-5 "when using Arabic to communicate with non-Arabic speakers, I mainly focus on making a successful communication, and I myself when I speak English, I try so hard to be native like!".*

> *ES-2 "the way we use Arabic with non-Arabic speakers is different than using it with native Arabic speakers, we try to simplify the language in order to be understood, however, in English, everything is different, we have been taught that we have to learn and use English like its native speakers".*

Therefore, unexpectedly, some participants questioned the different views towards Arabic and English in Saudi Arabia. Although Arabic is used widely in Saudi Arabia as a means of communication with others from different backgrounds, regardless of grammatical structure and Arabic native-speaker norms, English is still aimed to be taught and used as it is by its native speakers. Interestingly, the data showed an awareness of the effective nature of intercultural communications in ALF, whereas people were still restricted by the assumption of English as being that of native speakers of English.

6.2.3.4 Lack of self-esteem

It was notably expressed by some participants from both the engineering and medical schools that they felt some fear of judgement; or, in other words, fear of others' reactions towards their own use of English, either in the classroom or in their social use of English. This resulted in a lack of self-esteem due to expectations regarding English. The participants explained that the cause of this fear of others' reactions was either bad experiences in the classroom with teachers and other students, expectations of English to used based on native English norms or the ideological views of others that using English was accompanied by adopting Western cultures. Moreover, some participants were of the opinion that this issue resulted in less engagement in the classroom, some mentioning that some students preferred not to participate in classes or use English widely due to this lack of self-esteem, as ES-1 put it. Similarly, another participant, ES-5, expressed his experience of others making fun of his own use of English, which led to his avoiding participating in the classroom.

> *ES-1 "I sometimes fear using English because others' reactions to my own use of English".*
>
> *ES-5 "I have had experiences in using English in the classrooms … some teachers and students laughed in different situation at my use of English which led me into troubles participating in the classrooms or using English in general".*

ES-4 also argued that such lack of self-esteem sometimes occurred when using English with "non-Saudis". Surprisingly, one of the participants, ES-3, revealed his own experience of using English with a native English teacher, in which he claimed that the teacher mocked him in the classroom because of his usage of English, which negatively affected his progression to the extent of thinking of dropping out of university as he put it. Similarly,

ES-10 also claimed that such fear of others' reactions was common among students, claiming that some gave up university due to this lack of self-esteem in relation to English.

> *ES-4 "when interacting in English with my Saudi classmates or friends, I feel no hesitation or fear as all of us belong to the same culture and have similar ways of using English. However, when I talk to non-Saudis, I sometimes fear that they will judge adversely on my own English".*

> *ES-3 "I have had a very bad experience in the intensive English course at the beginning of the university, a native English teacher made fun of my use of English in the classroom and all the students laughed, this affected my progression so bad to the extent that I thought to quit the university".*

> *ES-10 "I believe that the fear of other's reaction in using English is one of the common issues with most students, I know some students gave up the university due to this particular issue".*

Other participants went beyond the situation in the classroom, suggesting an ideological conflict. ES-8, for example, claimed that it was widely common to link the use of the English language with adopting other cultures and abandoning the local culture and the Arabic language.

> *ES-8 "some people would accuse me of adapting a western culture and not being proud of my language and culture, thus, I sometimes avoid speaking English as much as I can".*

However, some other participants expressed different views. ES-2 and ES-6, for instance, stated that English was not their first language and they should not be afraid of using it. Their responses revealed an existing power relation which leads to a negotiation of the legitimacy of their creativity in English usage. This is known as the "order of indexicality", which, according to Blommaert (2007), is the "the metapragmatic organising principle behind what is widely understood as the pragmatics of language" (p.117).

> *ES-2 "I don't care what others think about my English as long as I learn and communicate with others".*

> *ES-6 "I was struggling with this fear for years, but when I started the university, I managed to get over it … why should I fear others' reactions? it's not my native language!"*

Some participants from the medical school also expressed similar views and opinions in terms of issues related to lack of self-esteem and fear of others' judgement of their usage of the English language, whether in the classroom or in social contexts. MS-3, for example, stated that he had been experiencing fear of others' reactions towards his English use since he started learning English. He claimed that this had had an impact on his English usage and participation in the classroom. Interestingly, he also justified his fear of participation in the classroom by claiming that most teachers judged students based on English use in classes.

> *MS-3 "I've been experiencing the fear of others' reactions towards my own use of English since I started learning English, and this in turn impacted negatively in my desire to speak English or participating in the classrooms".*

> *MS-3 "some teachers would take negative views of the student based on English use … if the student makes mistakes while speaking English, the teacher would think he is not a hard-working student, or would take bad impressions of students".*

Accordingly, it can be seen that some participants expressed their concerns over a degree of fear of others' judgement or reactions towards their own use of English, which led to lower self-esteem, claiming that this fear resulted in negative views and experiences in the classroom and their social use of English. The participants revealed diversified reasons for such fear, either the belief that English was expected to be used based on standard native English norms, which had an impact on students' confidence in English use, bad experiences of English use, and issues related to the local language and culture. However, some other participants claimed that they managed to overcome this lack of self-esteem after years of experiencing it by producing power relations and negotiating the legitimacy of their English usage. Furthermore, the expectation that students should use native-like speech was unrealistic, as it prevented some students from engaging in communication within the classroom because they were intimidated by high expectations and felt that they would fall short of these and would, therefore, be seen as unsuccessful.

Therefore, students tended to be unaware of the type of English that is referred to by the

'E' in EMI or of English as a tool for effective communication. This suggests that they would feel linguistically inadequate and become constrained by the belief that they were expected to conform to native speaker norms when taking part in an EMI course or when using English in social contexts. This is not true, as ELF is commonly utilised simply as a means of communication between students and others who have diverse linguacultural backgrounds. When students understand the norms of ELF communication, their views and experiences towards English can alter significantly (Lino & Murata, 2013, 2016; Murata et al., 2017, 2018).

6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the interview findings in respect of the participants' perceptions, experiences, and orientations of the English in EMI and social contexts. The findings have helped to unfold the participants' conceptual beliefs and contextual factors in terms of English use, whether on EMI courses or in the social use of English. Furthermore, the investigation revealed the complexity of the participants' perceptions in terms of English perspectives based on the complicated attitudes and perceptions of the participants' ideological outlooks and experiences. Although standard native English seemed to have prevailed in the interviews, the ELF perspective appeared to be widely found in practice. The findings also showed a strong attachment to native English among the participants from both the engineering and medical schools, as well as a prevailing view of standard native English as a desirable target.

The interview findings also revealed similarities, differences, and implications between the engineering and medical student participants in terms of the English perceived in EMI, understanding others' English, and the ideological factors behind their views and experiences of English. Furthermore, most of the participants from both schools seemed to be ideologically and educationally constructed to a standard native English orientation, as well as lacking awareness of other English varieties, which widely resulted in an assumption of conforming to native speakers' use of English. However, the participants, especially engineering students, revealed an ELF perspective in practice and expressed the importance of intelligibility over English forms. The findings also showed some tensions between Arabic and English, as well as some negative views towards the dominance of English in the given context.

The interview findings presented in this chapter shed light on individual students' views and experiences. The next chapter, chapter 7, investigates the dynamic focus group discussions among the participants by observing how their views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise during the FG sessions.

Chapter 7 The development of understanding students' perceptions during focus group discussions

7.1 Introduction

In addition to individual interviews, focus groups were carried out in order to attempt to answer my second and third research questions on a broad scale. Based on Spolsky's framework (2009) of language policy, language policy was considered to have three components: language management, language practice, and language ideology. Analysing documents helped to shed light on language management and ideological outlooks, and the interviews and FGs assisted in identifying students' behaviour and choices as well as language ideology. This provided an insight into the perceptions, knowledge and experiences of students regarding English language policies implemented within Saudi HE as well as their social use of English. The interviews helped to provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon and the FGs were of benefit in providing dynamic data based on discussions among the participants by observing how their views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise during the focus groups.

7.1.1 Collecting focus group data, transcription, and preparing for analysis

7.1.1.1 Focus group participants

Four focus groups were conducted: two focus groups with students from the School of Engineering and two focus groups with students from the School of Medicine. All the participants were interviewed and gathered in a FG in order to allow group discussions based on different views and experiences (see participants backgrounds 6.1.1.1). Each focus group involved five students in lengthy discussions of about 1–1:30 hours at Bisha University. Before starting the FG discussions, the participants watched a short clip (about 4 minutes) of a video presented by Dr David Crystal about the developments of English over the years and the increasing numbers of English speakers around the world (see Appendix B). In the results reported in this chapter, groups A and B refer to engineering participants, and groups C and D refer to medical school participants. In order to maintain the participants' anonymity, codes have been used in reporting the findings. I refer to

engineering students using 'ES' and medical students using 'MS'. As there are five participants in each focus group, the code is followed by a number: group A contains participants ES-1, -2, -3, -4 and -5; group B contains participants ES-6, -7, -8, -9 and -10; group C contains MS-1, -2, -3, -4 and 5; and group D contains MS-6, -7, -8, -9 and -10.

7.1.1.2 Focus group data transcription, translation, and coding

I transcribed the discussion from each FG group into a Microsoft Word file and named it using a code (ES-A, MS-C, etc.). Similar to the interviews, I did not include moments of silence, conventions, and other features of speech (overlapping, laughter, pauses, etc.), as they were not the focus of the research inquiry. After the data transcriptions, I tried to stay close to the material by re-reading the data, listening to the audio recordings again and reading my notes taken during and after the FG discussions, in order to prepare myself to engage with the data and start the coding process without jumping to conclusions. MAXQDA software was also used in the coding and categorisation of the FG data. I also used a similar procedure for the coding process of the interview transcripts (see 6.1.1.3). After I finished the coding process, I had identified two main themes (Students' orientations to the university's policies and English language ideologies), with a number of sub-themes in each (see 7.1.1.3.1). Finally, in order to begin reporting the findings, I started the translation process of the relevant extracts in the same way as I did the interviews (see 6.1.1.2 for more details).

7.1.1.3 Focus group data analysis procedure and coding frame

The choice of the focus group method in this research was justified earlier (see 4.3.3.1). One of the great advantages of focus groups is that they allow the researcher to understand how the topic under discussion is viewed by the participants themselves. A focus group is a research method that utilises the dynamics of language, thought and communication (Marková, 2004). By observing the interactions and discussions between the participants, the researcher can examine "how accounts are articulated, censured, opposed and changed through social interaction and how this relates to peer communication and group norms" (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999). With this in mind, this chapter covers the analysis of the FG interactions, which was largely data driven. The discussions and interactions between the FG members were examined carefully, with special attention paid to critical moments when the direction of the discussion seemed to change. This enabled the

researcher to identify which issues or particular points seemed to influence the discussion the most. The framework compiled by Stevens (1996) was particularly useful for this process, as its central focus is the context in which a statement is either reinforced or altered, and how that occurs. This brings to light the points that consolidate or change the arguments put forward by the group members. It must be remembered, nonetheless, to focus on the decisions made by the group, not by single individuals.

A number of researchers have called for interactive factors to be considered in the analysis of FG discussions, such as the 'sensitive moments' in this interaction (Kitzinger & Farquhar, 1999). Wibeck et al. (2007, p.259) highlight the importance of looking at how new ideas are co-constructed. It is important to note the points made by both the majority and minority voices during discussions and negotiations, as this influences whether particular points are consolidated or marginalised and, in turn, offers valuable insights into the subjects being researched. Another significant point to consider during analysis is differences and similarities between group members, as this can also deepen the researcher's understanding of certain topics. This can be described as exploring links between features of the group and its decisions. With these points and the focus of this research in mind, a thematic framework was created (see the coding frame below). As with the presentation of the findings from the interviews, each theme starts with the first case study (School of Engineering) and the findings from the second case study (School of Medicine) are then presented (see 6.1.1.3).

7.1.1.3.1 Focus group coding frame

1. Students' orientations towards the university's policies
   - 1.1 The 'E' in EMI
   - 1.2 Students' views and opinions of entry requirements
2. English language ideologies
   - 2.1 Orientations to standard native English/ELF
     - 2.1.1 Contextual factors of nativelikeness in medical fields
   - 2.2 The use of English in social contexts
   - 2.3 Englishisation and English-only policy

7.2 Results and findings – focus groups

7.2.1 Students' orientations towards the university's policies

The group discussions in the four focus groups developed in different directions, which led to the emergence of differences in views and perceptions with regard to the university's policies, as well as the students' choices and behaviour in practice on EMI courses. Despite both schools belonging to the same university, the participants in each school revealed different views and experiences of the English in their EMI courses. Accordingly, this theme is divided into two sub-themes: the 'E' in EMI and Students' views and opinions of entry requirements.

7.2.1.1 The 'E' in EMI

The participants in all the FG discussions contributed to the theme in various ways and expressed their views, opinions, and experiences of the English in their EMI courses. The group members from the two schools (medicine and engineering) developed the discussions in clearly different directions based on the participants' views and experiences in the two disciplines. Despite both schools belonging to the same university and following relatively similar policies within the same institution, the orientations of English in each school were revealed to be different. Whereas groups A and B (engineering students) indicated an orientation towards ELF in their EMI courses, groups C and D (medical students) revealed an orientation towards Standard English in their EMI medicine courses.

Extract (group A)

> *1. ES-2 I was a bit scared of studying engineering content in English but I had no other choice, now after five years of experience I can say it was a great experience and not as I expected. Most of teachers are helpful and don't expect students to be perfect in English as long as we successfully learn and communicate with each other.*
>
> *2. ES-5 Yes, I agree.*

3. ES-1 Yes, not all teachers are same, but most of them focus on content rather than English, and I think this is the right thing to do, we should not be destructed or worried of English use.

4. ES-5 Yes, I think every teacher has his own way in terms of English in teaching, but as you mentioned [refers to the other members] most of them show tolerance with students' use of English.

5. ES-2 Yes

Extract (group B)

1. ES-9 In our experience, I think we are different in terms of English in EMI than other schools, in our school, 10 % of overall grade in each module is in English use but most teachers don't take it into account, few teachers do but just few.

2. ES-10 Yes, that is correct, English forms is not important as long as our use of English is understandable whether in the classrooms, assignments, or exams. Few teachers expect students to use English correctly and unfairly evaluate students based on English, but other majority teachers focus on content rather than English.

3. ES-7 I agree, we indeed try as much as possible to use English correctly but I think it is unfair to be in our evaluation as engineering students, but fortunately, most of teachers understand that.

4. ES-6 Yes, I completely agree.

From the discussions above among engineering participants (Extracts - groups A and B), the groups' members shared common ground with an ELF orientation, revealing that "*most teachers*" generally focus on successful learning and communication regardless of students' use of English. Interestingly, ES-5 in group A clarified that every teacher had his own way of teaching content in English, which indicated that different teachers had different approaches and orientations on EMI courses. Therefore, most of the members of both groups revealed their satisfaction with how "*most teachers*" considered English only as a means of learning and communication on engineering EMI courses, despite the regulations of the university. ES-9 in group B clarified that English was weighted to 10% of the evaluation, which was described by ES-10 and ES-7 as "*unfair*". However, both discussions

concluded with agreement that most teachers did not take English into account in evaluations, focusing on content rather than the English. ES-7 also revealed an attachment to native English by stating "*we try as much as possible to use English correctly*"; the term "*correct*" is generally interpreted as an implicit reference to standard native English. He also used the pronoun "*we*", as he was trying to speak for the rest of the group. However, interestingly, he afterwards shifted his position in terms of conformity to native English in EMI describing it as "*unfair*", which suggests a conflict between his beliefs and the usefulness of native English in EMI.

While engineering student participants revealed an orientation towards ELF in their EMI courses, medical student participants developed their discussions in a very different direction. Groups C and D (medical students) revealed an orientation towards standard native English in EMI medicine courses, with different views in terms of English in the medical fields. The participants justified their positions in terms of the use of English in medicine as it involves human safety and must only be employed in a standard form in order to avoid potential miscommunications. Such views and opinions seemed to be reflected in the students' experiences, as well as the university's regulations with regard to the English on medical EMI courses.

Extract (group C)

> *1. MS-2 Due to the importance of English use in medicine, we consider English use as important as content, that is why our teachers mostly take English seriously and consider standard roles in evaluations.*
>
> *2. MS-5 Yes, it is challenging and sometimes hard to focus on English and content at the same time but we will be dealing with human safety and lives.*
>
> *3. MS-1 I sometimes blame our teachers, but I think they are right and only want to prepare us for a very sensitive job.*
>
> *4. MS-3 I agree with you, but don't you think 15% of evaluation is in English, I think this is way too much.*
>
> *5. MS-1 Maybe it is, but believe me this will encourage students to realise the potential risks of English use in medicine.*

6. MS-3 I think all students realised that, but I believe this would cause distractions and more pressure on students.

7. MS-2 I don't agree with you [MS-3], if there is no evaluation on English use, students would never take English use very seriously and this would affect them and others later.

Extract (group D)

1. MS-9 Our experience as students in medicine EMI course has not been easy and very challenging as we study content in a different language and required to be accurate in this language and use it in the right way.

2. Moderator What is the right use of English in your opinion?

3. MS-9 The way its native speakers use it, that is important in medicine.

4. Moderator Why is that important?

5. MS-9 because as we learned, miscommunication is one of the common issues in medical contexts, this could be due to mispronunciations, grammar errors, misunderstanding, etc.

6. MS-10 Yes yes, I agree with you [MS-9], as we have been taught that miscommunication is one of the common causes of medical errors.

7. MS-9 Yes, I think 25% percent, that is why everyone in medical fields must be careful of language use.

8. MS-6 I agree and that is why our teachers are very serious in term of English in our course and always encourage students to use English correctly.

9. MS-8 I agree … we also have an ongoing course which partly in English language in order to help students to use English correctly.

10.MS-6 Yes that is right.

Although the engineering student participants (groups A and B) revealed an ELF orientation in the EMI in the School of Engineering, the medical students (groups C and D) indicated an

orientation towards standard native English in the School of Medicine. It was clear that the members of both groups (C and D) developed the discussion in the same direction in terms of their views and experiences of English on their medicine EMI courses. Some participants (MS-2, MS-5 and MS-1) in group C justified the need for Standard English in EMI in order to prepare students for medical fields which involve human safety. MS-3 in group C interestingly revealed that considering English in evaluation would distract students from the content; however, his idea prompted MS-1 and MS-2 to assert that evaluation would encourage students to realise the importance of Standard English in medical fields. In addition, MS-9 and MS-10 in group D claimed Standard English as the only acceptable use of English in medicine in order to avoid the potential for miscommunication and to prevent medical errors. Moreover, unlike the students from the engineering school, MS-8 in group D mentioned an ongoing support course provided by the university which was partly on "English langauge", which he claimed helped students in using English "correctly".

Therefore, the engineering participants developed the discussions in the same directions, whereby they commented on teachers' tolerance towards students' use of English in EMI and that they were not expected to conform to certain varieties of English. The participants' responses implied that they made the choice to give preference to meaning over form in EMI. Therefore, intelligibility and effective learning and communication seemed to be the mutual concern for teachers, rather than English forms, which underlines that the 'E' in EMI can be interpreted as English as a lingua franca in engineering EMI programmes. In addition, perhaps unsurprisingly, the data also showed a conflict between an attachment to standard native English as a belief on the one hand, and the usefulness of native English in EMI practice on the other. However, the medical student participants revealed a different orientation towards English by developing the FG discussions in different directions. The participants expressed an attachment to standard native English as the only possible and acceptable use of English in medical fields, which reflected those students' views and experiences of the English in EMI. The participants justified their attachment to native English over the widely mentioned concerns in respect of successful communication and patients' safety.

7.2.1.2 Students' views and opinions of entry requirements

In some of the focus groups, such as groups B and C, the participants developed discussions

with regard to the university's entry requirements (see 5.2.4). Students are required to demonstrate specific levels of English language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) in order to be accepted for study on EMI courses. The university offers an intensive general English language course which is designed for students to improve their English skills before starting their EMI programmes as part of the foundation year (see 4.2.4). The members of both groups revealed views and opinions that went in slightly different directions. Engineering students (group B) claimed that the course itself was very helpful, although the participants argued that evaluations which were revealed to be based on native English rules were unfair as the course was considered to be part of the students' GPA. However, medical students (group C) revealed positive views and attitudes and showed their satisfaction with their experiences.

Extract (group B)

1. ES-10 One of the entry requirements was to pass an English course which was very helpful for us in order to improve our English before we start our EMI course.

2. ES-7 Yes, it was helpful but I think it should not be part of our G.B.A, it was unfair, some students passed the course but their G.B.A is still effected by this course.

3. ES-10 I agree with you [ES-7].

4. ES-8 Yes, especially most teachers were unfair in evaluations.

5. Moderator Why were they unfair?

6. ES-8 Their expectations were very high, unlike our teachers in EMI, they expect students to use English correctly or students would lose marks.

7. ES-7 I agree with you [ES-8], especially native English teachers.

8. ES-6 Not only native English teachers, I think most of them were same in evaluating students with same rules.

9. ES-7 Yes, I know but native English teachers were more critical.

10. ES-8 I completely agree with you [ES-7].

11. ES-6 Well, I agree with your point but maybe in classrooms and oral exams, but assignments and exams I think they all follow same rules.

From the above discussion among engineering students (Extract - group B), the participants revealed positive views towards the preparation of the English course, whereas they also revealed negative views towards the evaluation of this course, claiming that it was based on native English rules, which was indicated by ES-8, and linked with students' GPA, which the participants claimed had a long-term effect on their studies. ES-10 initiated the discussion by stating the usefulness of the course for students in being prepared for their EMI courses. ES-7 agreed and expressed some concerns over students' GPA, describing the inclusion of English course evaluation in students' GPAs as "*unfair*". The rest of the group showed their agreement, as no one tried to oppose the idea. Furthermore, the participants were critical over teachers' expectations, especially native English teachers, as mentioned by ES-7.

In group C (medical students), the discussion developed in a slightly different direction. The participants also revealed positive views towards the English language course. However, unlike the engineering student participants, the medical students showed positive views towards the university's regulations and revealed positive attitudes especially towards native English teachers.

Extract (group C)

1. MS-5 Well, the English course was a very useful course before we started our EMI course. It focused on improving students' English skills as well as disciplinary language in order to prepare students for the medicine EMI course.

2. MS-2 Yes, I agree and we were required to pass this course. My English was good before I applied to study at the university and I was disappointed that it was compulsory, however, I found it a great experience with great teachers from different countries.

3. Moderator Could you explain your experiences in this course?

4. MS-2 I think one of the attractive things in the course is that there were some native English teachers which was a great opportunity for us.

5. Moderator Why did you specifically mention native English teachers?

6. MS-2 Because they are better in teaching their language than others, I don't mean other teachers are unqualified but native English teachers are better.

7. MS-4 I strongly agree with [MS-2], we had a chance to learn English correctly and practice with them.

8. Moderator Do you mean that other non-native English teachers are not good teachers?

9. MS-4 No, I didn't mean that, but they are not as good as native English teachers.

10. MS-1 Yes, I agree with [MS-4], and yes, some non-native English teachers are sometimes wrong and make some mistakes and this would impact on students' usage of English.

11. MS-4 Yes, you are right.

During the discussion among the medical student participants with regard to the university's entry English requirements (Extract - group C), the participants expressed positive views and opinions towards their experiences in the preparation English course, which is one of the university's entry requirements. As with the engineering students, the medical students commented on the usefulness of the course. MS-5 started the discussion, stating that the course aims to improve students' English skills, as well as teaching medical terms in order to prepare students for medicine EMI courses. In addition, MS-2 claimed that the course was useful for him despite his "*good level*" of English before he applied to the university. Afterwards, the discussion turned slightly towards including the English language teachers. MS-2 clearly revealed a positive attitude to the course because of some native English teachers, arguing that native English teachers were "*better*" at teaching English. In contrast with non-native English-speaking teachers, MS-2 revealed his views that English speakers are the "*owners of English*" by using, as he put it, "*their language*", and that they are better at teaching it. MS-4 showed his agreement with MS-2 and claimed that native English speakers teach English "*correctly*" and "*better*" than non-native English teachers, which was agreed with by MS-1, who also claimed that some non-native English teachers make mistakes, claiming that this would affect the students' use of English.

Therefore, the variations in participants' responses during the discussions revealed slightly different views in terms of the university's English entry requirements. The discussions among both the engineering and medical school students revealed positive views in terms of the usefulness of the English language course as part of the foundation programme. However, the discussions concluded in different directions with regard to English language teachers and students' evaluation. Engineering students expressed negative views towards native English teachers and revealed their resistance to and rejection of the adaptation of native English rules in students' evaluation. Medical students, on the other hand, revealed positive views and acceptance of being assessed based on standard native English norms. Moreover, the majority of the medical students seemed to agree with standard native English, nativeness and authenticity, and showed a preference for native English teachers.

7.2.2 English language ideologies

Discussions during the focus groups expanded in various directions in terms of students' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of English, which revealed the complexity of the students' perceptions and orientations towards the English language, whether on the university programmes or in the social use of English. The participants in the four FGs from both the engineering and medical schools revealed attitudes and perceptions which reflected both native English and ELF orientations. Accordingly, this theme is divided into three sub-themes: Orientations to standard native English/ELF; The use of English in social contexts; and Englishisation and English-only policy.

7.2.2.1 Orientations to standard native English/ELF

During the group discussions, members of both groups developed their discussions in the same directions and expressed their attachments to and acceptance of native English. The participants revealed positive views and perceptions of native English, claiming native English speakers were the "*owners of English*" and presented the "*correct version of English*", whereas non-native speakers' use of English was characterised as not always "*correct*" or "*clear*". Although some participants referred to intelligibility in understanding non-native English speakers, some views towards non-native English were widely revealed to be negative. Interestingly, some participants identified their positions on native English as originating in school and the way they were taught English in school.

Extract (Group A)

1. ES-1 I know it's not easy but we always try to improve our English.

2. Moderator What do you mean by improving your English?

3. ES-1 I mean to use English correctly.

4. Moderator What is the correct use of English? Do you mean native usage of English?

5. ES-1 Yes, it is a dream to be a native like, but as I said it's difficult but I try as much as I can.

6. ES-5 We all try, native English is beautiful especially, American English, it is amazing.

7. ES-4 Yes, I agree, everyone wants to be a native like in English.

8. Moderator Why is it important to be native like?

9. ES-5 Obviously, native English speakers are the owners of English like any other languages' speakers, so we all should use English the way they do.

10. ES-1 Yes, and English is spreading so fast, I think English now determines everyone's future, education, career, etc.

11. ES-2 Well, I think it's not important to be a native like, it's not our language and we use it for limited purposes anyway, no matter how we try, we always make mistakes and I think that is normal.

12. ES-1 It is normal, but it is not normal to keep making same mistakes.

13. ES-2 I don't care as long as I can understand others and can be understood.

From the above discussion among engineering students (group A), most of the discussion members revealed mutual views and perceptions in terms of standard native English. ES-1 initiated the discussion with his claim that he tries to improve his English to be "native-like"; he used "*we*", as he tried to represent the rest of the group. Other participants agreed

with his argument and expressed their attachment to native English, claiming that native English speakers "*own English*" and that English should only be used in the way that they use it. One participant, ES-5, expressed his attachment in particular to "*American English*", which he described as "*amazing*". However, only one participant, ES-2, revealed an orientation to ELF and showed awareness of the effectiveness of English for successful communication with others. He also showed resistance to conforming to a certain variety of norms, which led to a negotiation of the legitimacy of creativity in English usage and questioning of the usefulness of native English in learning and communication, as he stated that "*English is not the first language*".

In another group discussion, also among engineering participants (group B), the discussion developed in the same direction and revealed very similar views in terms of standard native English. Group members also expressed their positions on native English as it had originated due to the way they had been taught in school.

Extract (group B)

> *1. ES-10 … This is what we have been taught and told since we started learning English in early stages in school.*
>
> *2. ES-9 Yes, I agree, off course we can use English and understand others but we make lots of mistakes in grammar, writing, etc. and that is the issue!*
>
> *3. Moderator What is the issue? What is the issue of making mistake as long as you can use English effectively?*
>
> *4. ES-9 the issue is that I use English wrongly.*
>
> *5. Moderator What do you think is the wrong usage of English?*
>
> *6. ES-9 Well, I mean grammar mistakes, mispronunciations, etc. I want to be a native like!*
>
> *7. ES-6 I agree with [ES-9], we all want to be native like but it is difficult!*

In the extract above (group B), ES-10 justified his views and attachment to native English by the way he had been taught in school as the only way to learn and use English. He also

tried to generalise the idea using the pronoun "*we*". ES-9 agreed with him and revealed his position on native English norms in grammar and writing and the desire to be native-like, which was also agreed by ES-6. The discussions in groups A and B revealed a complexity and a conflict between the participants' attitudes and their belief in native English as the only legitimate use of English on the one hand, and a resistance towards native English in practice on the other (see 7.2.1.1).

In comparison with the engineering student participants, the medical participants in group D also revealed very similar attitudes, perceptions, and attachments to native English, claiming that native English is solely the right use of English and English should only be used based on native English speakers' norms.

Extract (group D)

1. MS-7 What we all know is that native English is the only right use of English, like any other languages, English rules is based on its native speakers.

2. MS-6 That is correct, despite the fact they are sometimes hard to be understood unlike non-native English speakers, but it is their language, we should improve our English and try to use English like them.

3. MS-10 I agree but don't you think it is impossible?

4. MS-6 I know it is not easy but we should try as much as we can.

5. MS-5 Yes, I agree, even English teachers in the university, if you remember the first year [foundation year], we had native and non-native English teachers, native English teachers were hard to be understood but we learned English correctly, unlike non-native English teachers whom were easier to be understood but we learned lots of things wrongly. I know lots of students still facing consequences due to the way they learned English by non-native English teachers.

6. MS-8 Yes, I agree, and I'm one of those students

7. Moderator Ok what is the issue as long as non-native English teachers are easier to be understood?

8. MS-5 We were in English learning phase, small mistakes by English teachers would affect students for a long time especially the rest of the course.

9. MS-6 Yes, I strongly agree.

10. MS-7 Especially for us as medicine students who need to be accurate in English use, but to be fair, not all non-native English teachers, there are some non-native English teachers whom are native like.

11. MS-5 Yes, off course, I agree.

From the above discussion among medical student participants (Extract - group D), the group members revealed quite similar views and opinions to engineering participants in terms of native English. The participants viewed native English speakers as the "*owners of English*", and revealed their belief that native speakers had the right to design the language standards. MS-7 started the discussion with his argument that English should only be used based on native English speakers' varietal norms, which seemed to be agreed by the rest of the group. The discussion then moved to include native and non-native English teachers. MS-5 interestingly expressed an opinion on the intelligibility of non-native English speakers' use of English. He afterwards argued the usefulness of learning English from native English teachers, which he claimed was "*correct*", whereas some other non-native English teachers sometimes "*use English wrongly*", which he also claimed would have an impact on students' use of English in the long term which suggest a lack of awareness of other English varieties. MS-6 and MS-7 agreed with MS-5, MS-7 adding that they were medical students, whom he claimed needed to be particularly "*accurate in English use*".

7.2.2.1.1 Contextual factors of nativelikeness in medical fields

Discussions in groups C and D (medical students) developed in the same directions in terms of using English in medical fields. Members of both groups (C and D) contributed to the theme with constructive discussions and presented interesting insights into the orientations of English in medicine. Accordingly, the participants claimed that English language use involved human safety and, therefore, they argued that only standard use of the English language was acceptable in medical fields in order to avoid possible miscommunications.

Extract (group C)

1. MS-2 … Due to the fact that English in medicine involve human safety, we all should make efforts to use English correctly in order to avoid any miscommunications.

2. MS-4 I agree with you [MS-2].

3. MS-1 Yes, and I believe this is not a choice, everyone works in the medical fields ethically should be careful with English use.

4. MS-5 I agree, this what you have been taught and what teachers always keep mentioning.

In the discussion above, MS-2 claims that English in the medical fields involves human lives and safety, arguing that English should only be used as a its native speakers use it in order to avoid miscommunication between staff and patients. The rest of the group members revealed their agreement with MS-2 and, moreover, MS-5 revealed that such beliefs originated from the medical teachers on their EMI courses as he stated "*what you have been taught and what teachers always keep mentioning"*.

Similarly, in the extract below (group D), the participants seem to hold the same views and orientations towards English as group C in terms of English in the medical fields. The participants argued the importance of standard native English to make "*accurate"* communication and to "*avoid any potential misunderstandings*" which "*might reflect in patients' safety*".

Extract (group D)

1. MS-8 … Unlike social use of English, English in medicine must only be used as a standard native English because of the sensitive context … it involves human safety.

2. MS-7 That is correct, especially medical terms, one letter could change the whole meaning of a medical term to another.

3. MS-10 I agree with you [MS-8 and MS-7], I would also like to add that some English grammar is also important to make an accurate and understandable

conversations.

4 MS-6 Yes, Yes, that is why we always try to improve our English as much as possible.

MS-8 had initiated the discussion by revealing his views on English in medicine. He argued that standard native English use is important in medical fields due to the sensitivity of the context, which "*involves human safety*". Afterwards, MS-7 also revealed his agreement with MS-8, stressing "*medical terms*" in particular, as he claimed that a one-letter difference in a medical term could lead to a different meaning. MS-10 also indicated that "*some English grammar*" is important in "*accurate and understandable conversations*". He used the word "*some*", as he was notably trying to indicate that some grammar rules are not as important as other rules in what he described being "accurate and understandable".

In addition, groups C and D both discussed the medical errors reported worldwide and how miscommunications in language were one of the considerable factors in such errors. Accordingly, the participants in both group discussions argued that one of the most common causes of medical errors in medical fields is language use, claiming that the standard use of English would reduce miscommunications and, therefore, prevent medical errors.

Extract (group C)

1. MS-1 As we have been taught, 25 percent of medical errors worldwide is because of miscommunications.

2. MS-5 That is right and that is why English should only be used correctly and fluently in order to avoid any miscommunications.

3. MS-2 I agree with [MS-1 and MS-5] but I would like to emphasise particularly on medical terms as it is important to be used correctly.

Extract (group D)

1. MS-6 … English is one of the most debatable topics in the medical field and one of the factors of medical errors.

2. MS-9 Yes, I agree.

3. MS-6 And unlike other courses, the teachers in our course take English as important as medical content.

4. MS-10 That is correct, the right use of languages in the medical field could minimise miscommunications and prevent potential errors.

5. Moderator What is the right use of English?

6. MS-10 The way native English speakers use it.

From the above discussions (groups C and D), members of both groups seemed to believe that standard native English was the only acceptable use of English in the medical field to communicate effectively with others and to avoid any potential miscommunications which could have an impact on patients' safety and lead to potential medical errors. In the extract from the group C discussion, MS-1 claimed that they had been taught that 25% of medical errors worldwide were caused by miscommunication. MS-5 and MS-2 revealed their agreement with MS-1, arguing that English used "*correctly and fluently*" would reduce such miscommunications. In the extract from group D's discussion, MS-6 claimed that English was a debatable topic in medicine as it is "*one of the factors of medical errors*", with which he justified the attention to English in medicine EMI courses. MS-10 also claimed that "*the right use*" of English, which he used to refer to native English speakers' use of English, would reduce miscommunications and prevent potential medical errors.

7.2.2.2 The use of English in social contexts

While participants revealed their views and experiences of English in their EMI courses (see 7.2.1.1), some FG members also developed a discussion on using English in social contexts. Despite the fluctuating views and perceptions of the English in EMI courses, participants from both schools (groups A and D) contributed to this theme with similar views and perceptions in terms of English use in social contexts. Both schools' participants revealed an ELF orientation in the social use of English, claiming that in social contexts, the purpose of English is to communicate effectively with others, regardless of English language forms or rules. Surprisingly, most medical student participants who showed strong attachments to native English throughout the focus group discussions and individual interviews revealed different views and opinions of English in social contexts.

Extract (group A)

1. ES-3 We all try to be native like and use English correctly but in social use of English, we make mistakes but I think it is ok as long as others understand us.

2. ES-4 Yes, I agree, and I believe this makes us more confident.

3. Moderator What makes you more confident?

4. ES-4 I mean if I am less worried whether I make mistakes or not, I feel more confident in using English, I think everybody does.

5. ES-1 I completely agree, sometimes worrying about making mistakes could make it worse.

6. ES-2 That is true, it is not our first language anyway, all we need is successful communications with others.

7. ES-1 Yes, yes, I agree, I also think that using English in social context is more comfortable than using English at the university, where I feel more stress and I try to be correct as much as I can.

8. ES-5 I agree with you [ES-1].

From the above discussion among engineering participants with regard to using English in social contexts (group A), similar to their views of English in EMI, the group members also revealed an orientation to ELF in the social use of English. Interestingly, despite the attachment and conformity to native English revealed during the discussions, engineering participants claimed that English was a tool for communicating successfully with others and showed a resistance towards native norms. ES-3 started the discussion by revealing a native English orientation, stating "*We all try to be native-like and use English correctly*", and he seemed to be constrained by the idea that native English was the only legitimate use of English. However, he afterwards revealed his opinion on the purpose of English simply as a means of communications with others in social contexts. Unsurprisingly, participants, such as ES-4 and ES-1, argued that the less they try to conform to native English norms, the more they "*feel confident*" in using the English language. Moreover, ES-4 also argued that the English language is not their first language and was only needed as a means of communication.

Similarly, but surprisingly, medical student participants (group D) developed a discussion on using English in social contexts and also revealed an ELF orientation.

Extract (group D)

> *1. MS-9 … At the university we try to be more careful as we will be dealing with human safety, I think using English in social contexts is different, it is less stressful and wouldn't be an issue if we make any mistake. All it matters is to understand others and be understood.*
>
> *2. Moderator What is the difference in medical contexts? You can also be understood?*
>
> *3. MS-10 And maybe not or maybe I could be understood wrongly, that is why I said it is less stressful.*
>
> *4. MS-6 Yes, I agree, using English socially is completely different. In social contexts, even if others misunderstand due to the English usage, it would not be a big issue.*
>
> *5. MS-7 Yes, that is right. It is also more comfortable.*

Unlike the strong attachments to native English among medical student participants across their responses during the interviews and group discussions, the participants (group D) reveal above an ELF orientation in their social use of English. The participants claimed that the social use of English, unlike English in medical fields, which involves human safety as the participants put it, was "*less stressful*", and was considered to be a tool for communication and mutual understanding with others, regardless of English forms, as argued by MS-9. When the moderator questioned such differences in views of English use in medical and social contexts, MS-10 and MS-6 revealed an agreement with MS-9 and claimed that native English would prevent potential miscommunication and misunderstanding in medical fields; whereas, in social contexts, they argued that it would not be an issue if there were any miscommunications, which leads to a situation that is "*less stressful*" and "*more comfortable*", as described by the participants. Accordingly, the findings of such differences in students' perceptions of English in EMI and social contexts are in line with Jenkins' (2014) findings, in which the student participants also revealed an orientation to standard native English in EMI, however, the participants expressed their preference of intelligibility and successful communications in social contexts.

Therefore, the extracts above from the two discussions revealed a negotiation of the validity and effectiveness of standard English norms in social contexts. Despite the strong attachments towards standard native English revealed by the participants in both cases, the participants tried to create power relations and negotiate their legitimacy and creativity of English usage in social contexts. Unsurprisingly, the participants in both discussions described their experiences as feeling "*less worried*", "*more confident*", "*more comfortable*", and "*less stressful*". Therefore, raising awareness of the relevance of standard native English norms and the myth of NESs' ownership of English in intercultural communications would create a space for English users to negotiate their legitimacy and creativity in English.

7.2.2.3 Englishisation and English-only policy

During the group discussions, some group members developed a discussion with regard to the English language and expressed some tensions between Arabic and English. Accordingly, some participants raised concerns over issues related to the dominance of the English language and how it influences the local culture, the values of Islam, and the value of the Arabic language. Groups B and C developed discussions on this issue with different attitudes and perceptions among the participants. Whereas some participants argued that English had been "*unacceptably replacing the value of Arabic language*", others defended English and its importance as a global language.

Extract (group B)

> *1. ES-10 … I always wonder why English is spreading this fast, why people pay more attention to English more than Arabic, parents now teach their kids English more than Arabic, university courses are getting more and more in English, no much jobs opportunities without English fluency. Arabic is our language, it should not be abandoned, we all should be proud of it.*
>
> *2. ES-9 Ok, we all proud of our Arabic language, but we must admit that English is the language of the globe. If you want to be open to others' cultures and knowledge, you have to learn English. You know that most recourses even in our discipline [Engineering] are in English, so…*

3. ES-10 I know the importance of English language but it's not our first language, we should not abandon Arabic language in Education, we should not enforce students to study in English.

4. ES-8 I agree with [ES-10], look to some other countries like Turkey, Germany, I met some engineering students from those countries and they told me that only few universities offer engineering in EMI courses and the rest are in local languages, but here in Saudi Arabia no university, and I'm certain, offer engineering courses in Arabic language.

5. ES-6 Yes, I agree, and also jobs, most jobs opportunities for engineers require high levels in English language fluency.

6. ES-7 I understand and respect your views, but I mostly agree with [ES-9], without English language, your knowledge would be limited and this would be impacted particularly on you. So, I don't blame the universities to shift into English language.

In the extract above (group B), the participants developed a discussion about the English language in Saudi Arabia and expressed some tensions between the local values of the Arabic language and the increasing dominance of English in education and careers. ES-10 initiated the discussion by making an argument against the spread of English and its influence on Arabic and the local culture and values in Saudi Arabia. He questioned the overuse and dominance of the English language (Englishisation) and the abandonment of Arabic within Saudi Arabia in schools, universities, and careers. ES-8 and ES-6 tended to agree with ES-10 and made an argument on the issue, criticising the English-only policy in engineering programmes in Saudi Arabia with a comparison between universities' engineering courses in Saudi Arabia and in other countries where students can choose the language they prefer as an MOI. They also criticised the requirements for "*high levels in English language fluency*" in job opportunities, as commented by ES-6.

However, other group members, ES-9 and ES-7, opposed the above with their arguments that English was "*the language of the globe*" and enabled access to other cultures as well as its role in increasing access to publications, as ES-7 stated that otherwise "*knowledge would be limited*". Indeed, English is viewed as the standard language of academic research and teaching, as there are more academic journals published in English than in any other

language in the world (Montgomery, 2013; Liu, 2017). One of the reasons for this may be that English is very widely spoken and, therefore, publications in English are more accessible to audiences globally than work in any other language would be (Di Bitetti & Ferreras, 2017). Furthermore, in certain countries, the historic influence of EMI during colonial times is the reason for few teaching resources existing in their local language (Hamid et al., 2013) or academic publications (Galloway, 2021).

However, in the following extract (group C), the medical students developed the discussion in a different direction. While most group B members revealed fluctuating views and opinions on this issue, most group C members opposed the idea that English had been replacing the value of the Arabic language and showed acceptance and tolerance for the English language.

Extract (group C)

1. MS-3 … I know how important English language is, but don't you think that we lately focus on English language more than our own language [Arabic] in everything, education, jobs, etc. everything recently indicate that Arabic is not as important as English.

2. MS-5 No I think we are in the right direction, remember several years back when English language had not been taken seriously, we were moving forward slowly whether in Industry, trade, etc.

3. MS-1 I agree with [MS-5], whether we accept it or not, English language in the language of the recent era.

4. MS-5 Yes, that is right, I agree

5. MS-3 I don't actually agree with you both [MS-5 and MS-1]. Abandoning our cultural values and our own language and adopting others' cultures and languages under the pretext of evolutions is not true. Look at some Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, they are so proud of their own cultures and languages and look what they have been achieving.

6. MS-2 I agree partly with you both and I admit you made a point [MS-3], English is important, we all know its importance, but I agree English has been more and more influencing everything.

In the extract above (group C), some medical student participants also developed a discussion on the English language and its importance in Saudi Arabia. MS-3 opened this interesting discussion by arguing the dominance of the English language in Saudi Arabia over Arabic, claiming that English had been replacing Arabic and its importance as a local language. However, MS-5 and MS-1 expressed their rejection of MS-3's claim, describing English as a key factor in "*evolutions*". Similar to ES-8 in the earlier extract from the group B discussion, who described English as "*the language of the globe*", MS-1 in group C above also described English as "*the language of the recent era*". Therefore, it was interesting that when MS-3 made a counter-argument to MS-5 and MS-1's claims, he gave examples of other countries which, he claimed, were proud of their local cultures and languages and yet are leading countries. Interestingly, MS-2 seemed to be affected by MS-3's arguments and views when he clearly stated that "*I admit you made a point*".

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the focus group findings, which shaped the third part of the research findings, following the exploration of the presentation of English within the context of Saudi Arabia using document analysis and the participants' attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of English in EMI and social contexts as they emerged through the interviews. The focus groups also helped by providing dynamic data based on discussions among participants by observing how the participants' views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise during the discussions. This substantiated the findings from the individual interviews, adding profound levels of understanding. The individual participant interview findings and group interaction findings were interrelated and reflected in each other.

In the FG interactions among the participants, the findings revealed different choices and orientations towards English in EMI in the schools of engineering and medicine. Whereas the findings showed that English in engineering EMI courses can be interpreted as ELF with a primary focus on intelligibility and successful learning, rather than conformity to certain

varietal norms of English, the findings from the medical student participants unfolded an orientation to standard native English as well as contextual factors and concerns over miscommunication and patient safety. Furthermore, the findings also revealed the similarities and differences between engineering and medical participants in terms of the university's English entry requirements. While both schools' participants expressed positive views towards the English course before starting EMI courses, the findings show different views and opinions among the two schools' participants with regard to English language teachers and students evaluations.

Similar to the individual interviews, the focus group findings also showed a strong attachment to native English among the participants from both the engineering and medical schools. In some responses, students were subdued by the expectation of the expectations of English that should conform to standard native English norms. However, in some responses, it seemed that Standard English, most often American English, was desired. At the same time, although the background agenda was the use of Standard English only, in reality, there was a pragmatic attitude and leniency among most teachers in engineering schools towards the use of non-standard English. Although, there is clearly an important distinction between the tolerance or acceptance of non-standard language use and valuing it. However, in the social use of English, the findings revealed an orientation to ELF, especially among medical student participants, who, surprisingly, shifted their position towards intelligibility and successful communication with others rather than the English forms in the social use of English.

In this chapter, the focus group findings provided insights into the discussions among participants by observing how the participants' views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise. The next chapter concludes this thesis by answering the research questions and presents a discussion of the research implications, limitations and suggestions for future study.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed summary of the study. The research rationale is briefly restated, as well as the theoretical framework, in order to justify the research questions. The research methodology is also revisited briefly and then the research questions are answered. The chapter then provides a discussion of the research implications and contributions. The research limitations and suggestions for future study are then discussed before concluding the thesis.

8.2 Research rationale

The significant expansion of EMI/EME programmes in HE has been well established (Dearden, 2014), and this has particularly been the case in the context of Europe (see, for example, Wächter and Maiworm, 2014) and several areas of Asia (e.g., Macaro et al., 2018). However, despite a significant increase in research over the past 10 years, many important aspects remain unresolved (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018). The current study focuses on some of those issues, including roles and conceptualisations of English in two different disciplines (engineering and medicine) in a university setting and the need for comparative studies across disciplines. Further, the lack of comparative studies of EMI/EME settings, particularly from more in-depth qualitative perspectives, is another significant research gap that this study sought to address. There have been some recent publications (e.g., Dearden & Macaro, 2016; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019) providing comparison studies between different EMI settings at a variety of levels, including stakeholders' perceptions, management policies, and classroom linguistic practices. However, the similarities and differences between disciplines are generally overlooked.

This study aimed to explore the linguistic issues at the levels of language management, ideologies and beliefs, and linguistic practices in two different disciplines in a HE context in Saudi Arabia. Every governmental educational policy will have practical outcomes for the language practice and language ideology within its governed society (Smit, 2010). As such, with regard to language practice, following a particular English language type within the Saudi curriculum would mean facilitating various methods that would enable the

reinforcement and adoption of that type of English. However, within the context of Saudi Arabia, there is no such highlighting of this issue among decision makers in the Saudi government; moreover, at the academic level, as yet, no study has examined the ways in which English is represented in Saudi Arabia. Hence, there is a gap (i.e., an absence of relevant studies) in the literature with regard to determining the way in which English is represented in Saudi HE and this study had the aim of bridging this gap.

Further, this study has explored the perceptions of students (language users) of the type of English used in the Saudi HE sector. By investigating students' views, experiences and perceptions, the researcher was able to identify their perceptions of the type of English they use in their studies at their university, in areas related to the efficiency of the type of English studied in their communication in real life, and the effectiveness of the form of English language studied as a useful tool for empowering students in EMI/EME as well as future career. Moreover, investigating students' experiences and perceptions of English will help in this being taken as a reference in language planning in EMI/EME programmes. Indeed, this study is unique within Saudi Arabia, as it is the first to seek students' perceptions of the type of English and how the English language is presented in their EMI/EME programmes. This is different from previous studies (e.g., Faruk, 2010, 2014) that have traditionally explored students' attitudes and perceptions of the role of the English language itself, instead of investigating the role of a type of the English language implemented in higher Education.

Lastly, within the domain of English as a lingua franca, the majority of the research has been conducted in European and other Asian countries, whereas the phenomenon has not been sufficiently explored in the context of Saudi Arabia, in which only a few studies have been conducted on this topic. For example, Alharbi (2016) explored Business English as a lingua franca in the Saudi context. Therefore, the phenomenon should be investigated on a broad scale, particularly in the educational sector, within which it is important to understand the government's orientations towards the English language within the policy implemented in HE and the perceptions of this policy among students. Therefore, this study aimed to shed light on and provide insights into the context of higher education in Saudi Arabia.

8.3 Theoretical framework

Spolsky (2004, 2009) highlighted the lack of a complete theory that was capable of addressing the complex issues involved in language policies at all levels. Spolsky therefore introduced a framework for language policy theory that would encompass data from all levels of language policy research. Spolsky (2004, p.4, 2009) suggested that research on language policy should encompass the three elements of language management, language practices, and language beliefs or ideologies. Rather than focusing on language management. Spolsky's framework is more rounded and takes into account how language is actually employed and perceived in practice. In relation to this thesis, this framework had considerable influence on the interpretation and investigation of language policy, as it led to the thesis being structured on three macro and micro levels: policy management, language practice, and participants' beliefs and ideology.

However, Shohamy (2006, p.52) claimed that policies are often "only lip service, declarations and intentions" and are not actually implemented, meaning that their impact in practice is limited. Furthermore, policies can be implemented but their implementation may not be successful. One of the reasons for this lack of success is that a language policy may contradict rather than reflect how language is actually used. This can, in turn, lead to clashes between those who try to impose the policy from the top and those who use the language in practice and are resistant to change. When these clashes occur, attempts to create new language practices or to maintain existing ones often employ both covert and overt devices. These are referred to as "mechanisms" by Shohamy (2006, p.57), who states that mechanisms are actually used (rather than official documents) to generate "de facto" language policies.

Therefore, two distinct language policy frameworks were adopted in this research study. Spolsky (2004, 2009) uses a framework that incorporates many perspectives and levels, allowing language policy to be considered from various aspects of language practice, beliefs and management. The interpretation of language policy by Shohamy (2006) makes clear statements about language policy and provides an in-depth study of the overt and covert devices used to implement ideologies into policies. Therefore, the two frameworks provided the study with tools to use for investigating language policy by investigating the use of language in practice and the power issues involved in language management.

Moreover, the frameworks also provided an insight into the perceived effects of current English language policies and practices on Saudi students.

8.4 The study

8.4.1 Research questions

The research was conducted to explore the way in which English is represented in an EMI/EME context in a Saudi university, which would enable understanding of language management within Saudi Arabia. It also aimed to discover the experiences and perceptions of students in Saudi universities of the way in which English is represented in an EMI/EME context as well as the social use of English. The study aimed to answer three research questions:

RQ1. How is English represented in Saudi Arabia in a higher education context?

RQ2. What are the explicit and implicit English language expectations, and to what extent do students evaluate the English used/accepted in their EMI programmes?

RQ3. How, and to what extent, do students perceive English in terms of:

a. Native/non-native and their own English;

b. Social use of English;

c. L1 and local culture and values.

8.4.2 Methodology

The orientation of the philosophy in this current research followed that of a qualitative interpretivist case study. The use of this orientation was based on the research purpose and aims. The research aimed to investigate and understand the presentation of English within a university setting in the context of Saudi Arabia. It also aimed to conduct an in-depth exploration of the views, perceptions, and experiences of the chosen student participants from engineering and medical schools with regard to the English language policy implemented by the HE and institution authorities in Saudi Arabia, as well as their language ideologies. I was also interested in exploring the participants' perceptions of their own English and how they evaluated this as being different from that of native speakers of English. Therefore, this case study, which examines the nature of the English in EMI,

encompasses multiple case studies and is both explanatory and instrumental. Two case studies were considered: the School of Engineering and the School of Medicine, which are the only schools using English as an MOI within the University of Bisha.

Using a qualitative research perspective, the study used three qualitative research instruments: document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. The document analysis provided initial understanding of the language policy followed within HE in Saudi Arabia. Obtaining such data from document analysis was essential for this research in embracing Spolsky's (2004, 2009) framework of language policy, which highlights the role of language management implemented by the stakeholders in order to understand the presentation of English in a university setting. The semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to collect sufficient data about the perceptions, knowledge and experiences of students regarding the English language policy within EMI in Saudi HE as well as their social use of English. The focus groups were of benefit by providing dynamic data based on discussions among participants by observing how the participants' views and perceptions developed, changed, or reached a compromise during the FG discussions. Therefore, while the interviews helped to provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon, the focus groups were able to provide dynamic data based on discussions among the participants.

The fieldwork took place in Bisha University in Saudi Arabia over approximately four months. The participants included students from the engineering and medical schools, which were the only schools offering EMI programmes within the university. The participants were either about to graduate or were in the final year of their programme. The rationale behind this was to gain in-depth data based on extended experience. The data collection was conducted in the participants' L1 (Arabic) upon their request, in order for them to feel more comfortable and able to express their ideas and thoughts efficiently and effectively. In terms of the documents, I tried to collect any available relevant material, which included: national policy documents, entry requirements, programme booklets, evaluation documents, university materials for students, and module descriptions.

8.4.3 Summary of research findings

The following table summarises the research findings based on the frameworks adopted in this research project.

Table 4: Summary of research findings

Component	Research findings
Language management	• The findings from the documents revealed that the adoption of EMI is motivated by a variety of factors, such as, improving students' English language proficiency, developing students' employability skills, and providing access to wider material. • The findings demonstrate unawareness of different English language approaches and paradigms within the various levels of national and institutional policies. • The general orientation of the policy is towards a monolingual standard English ideology, often conflated with Anglophone varieties of English, especially through the embedded standard native English norms (grammar, pronunciation, etc.), entry requirements, and language evaluations. This orientation towards a standard English ideology in policies in HE programmes supports other findings in the literature (e.g., Doiz et al., 2013; Jenkins, 2014; Liddicoat, 2016; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019).
Linguistic practices	• In this study, there were significant differences between schools, as well as between students' perspectives. The findings from the students in the engineering school showed more diverse views of Anglophone English, which was considered as prestigious; however, intelligibility and content knowledge and learning were given equal importance over any specific varieties of English, reflecting the diverse beliefs of students reported in many studies in the EMI literature (e.g., Jenkins, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019). • The data from the students in the medical school suggest that it is difficult to distinguish between linguistic competence, disciplinary language, and subject-related knowledge. Therefore, it is challenging to make clear distinctions between the roles and relationships among subject knowledge, disciplinary language, and linguistic proficiency, adding a new level of complexity to linguistic practices. • In line with numerous EMI studies (e.g., Macaro et al., 2018), language proficiency was one of the emergent themes; however, in this study, there was also a significant difference between the two schools. Students in the medical school believed that English language proficiency had an impact on the learning process and, most significantly, the final assessment. Moreover, it was also clear that the university stakeholders seemed to be more concerned about medical students' English proficiency, providing them with an ongoing compulsory in-session course to improve their English language skills throughout their EMI programmes. • At the level of practice, the dominant role of English in every aspect of these two EMI programmes was established. However, similar to Mortensen's (2014) study in Denmark and Earls' (2016) in Germany, there was much more multilingualism reported by the participants; this included the use of participants' L1 in the classrooms, especially in the engineering school.

Component	Research findings
Language ideology	• The participants' ideologies and beliefs varied and, therefore, the majority of the students in both schools tended to prefer standard native English due to its perceived prestige as a result of the view that NESs are the "owners of English". However, the findings showed that such views of standard native English, as well as the expectations of English, had a negative impact on some participants' experiences of English. As a result, they had lower self-esteem, felt linguistically inadequate and became constrained by the belief that they were expected to conform to native speaker norms • Most of the participants from both schools seemed to be ideologically and educationally constructed to a standard native English orientation, as well as lacking awareness of other English varieties, which widely resulted in an assumption of conforming to native speakers' use of English. Although, students, especially those in engineering school, revealed their resistance to monolingual and standard native English in their EMI programme, the findings demonstrate that students still have that belief of good and bad, correct and wrong English etc. in their minds • The data showed a more varied picture of non-native speakers and non-native English language use; nevertheless, despite the diversity of views and the tolerance towards linguistic variation, the findings revealed issues related to the legitimisation of these varieties of English language use. However, there is clearly an important distinction between the tolerance or acceptance of non-standard language use and valuing it. • The findings showed some tensions between Arabic and English in terms of the monolingual ideology and the lack of Arabic as MOI, the local values, and the association between English and western cultures.

8.4.4 Research findings with regard to the research questions

In answer to RQ1, the findings from the documents revealed the reasons for the adaption of EMI, which are, in turn, motivated by a variety of factors. As such, the documents maintained that EMI would help students improve their English language proficiency, develop students' employability skills, and provide access to wider material. Moreover, the findings demonstrate a clear misunderstanding and unawareness of different English language approaches or paradigms within the various levels of national and institutional policies. The findings in respect of the documents also demonstrated an orientation to standard native English, often conflated with Anglophone English, and raised issues related to awareness and legitimisation of other English varieties that differ from standard native English varietal norms. However, the documents contained relatively few statements that could be interpreted as a sign of an ELF perspective. Furthermore, interestingly, the findings from the documents showed an obvious lack of detail and regulation of the English in EMI

programmes, while the primary focus of the available documents, whether pertaining to national or institutional policy, was on English language teaching.

In answer to RQ2, the findings from the interviews and focus groups suggested that the participants of the two case studies (the schools of engineering and medicine) had different experiences in terms of English language expectations in their EMI programmes. The findings from the interviews and focus groups suggested different orientations of English in both schools. The findings from the engineering school revealed an orientation towards intelligibility and successful learning and communication over conformity to certain English varieties. The findings suggested that most engineering lecturers do not expect the students to conform fully to standard native English conventions when writing or speaking English. The findings showed that the participants had not been directed to employ English in a particular way, and thus teachers avoided acting like language teachers. Instead, they accepted non-standard language use as long as the content was still intelligible and did not hamper communication.

Therefore, the majority of the teachers in the engineering school seemed to be lenient with regard to the English skills of their students, which underlines the notion that the 'E' in EMI can be interpreted as English as a lingua franca in the engineering school, not as a variety of English that a native speaker would use. However, the findings from the medical student participants suggested an explicit orientation towards standard native English and illustrated how the students were constrained by their assumption that the 'E' in EMI stood for the English used by native speakers. This orientation seemed to be constrained by studies on 'English barriers' within the medical field which defended the need for standard native English in order to avoid miscommunication and medical errors, which appeared to be reflected in the medical students' experiences and perceptions of English. It was also clear that the university stakeholders seemed to be more concerned about medical students' English, providing them with an ongoing compulsory course which was partly on English language skills throughout their EMI programmes.

The findings from the focus groups in terms of English expectations in EMI substantiated the findings from the individual interviews. The findings from the engineering student participants also suggested that their teachers were mostly tolerant towards students' use of English in EMI and that students were not expected to conform to certain varieties of

English. Therefore, intelligibility and effective learning and communications seemed to be the mutual concern of most of the engineering teachers, rather than certain forms of English. The findings from the medicine student participants, on the other hand, suggested a different orientation towards English, demonstrating an attachment to standard native English as the only possible and acceptable use of English in medical fields, which was clearly reflected in the medical students' views and experiences of the English in EMI.

The findings also suggested different views and perceptions towards code-switching or mixing Arabic with English, which is considered a functionally normal feature in ELF interactions. In relation to the engineering school, the findings demonstrated positive views towards code-switching and suggested it was a helpful feature for successful communication, as well as efficient and effective learning. In contrast, interestingly, the findings from the medical school demonstrated negative views towards code-switching or translanguaging between Arabic and English, which was considered an obstacle to understanding others which caused difficulties and confusion in interactions and was claimed to have an effect on English intelligibility.

In answer to RQ3-a, the findings from the interviews and focus groups demonstrated a strong attachment towards standard native English among the participants in both cases, which indicates a struggle between what students think of as proper English and what they think is effective and intelligible to use. Although standard native English seemed to have prevailed in the interviews and focus groups, the ELF perspective appeared to be widely found in practice. The findings showed that the participants viewed NESs as the "owners of English", which is one of the most common characteristics of standard English ideology (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The findings suggested that such positive views of the participants towards standard native English had originated from their schools and the university. However, the findings showed that such views of standard native English, as well as the expectations of English, had a negative impact on some participants' experiences of English. As a result, they had lower self-esteem, felt linguistically inadequate and became constrained by the belief that they were expected to conform to native speaker norms when taking part in EMI or using English in a social context.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrated fluctuating views towards non-native usage of English. The findings showed the intelligibility of English usage among speakers with the

same L1 as well as with others from different backgrounds, due to greater clarity and self-confidence. However, the findings also revealed some negative attitudes towards non-native usage of English, as well as to non-native English teachers. The findings suggested that such negative attitudes are linked to unawareness of different English varieties and an attachment to native English as the only legitimate and acceptable usage of English. Therefore, the variations in the participants' attitudes towards native and non-native usage of English demonstrated a negotiation of power structures and a struggle in the participants' belief regarding native English as the only legitimate usage of English on the one hand, and the effective and intelligible usage of English on the other.

In answer to RQ3-b, despite the strong attachment to standard native English among the participants in both case studies, the findings demonstrated issues related to the legitimisation of their use of English, which led to fluctuations in views towards the effectiveness of standard native English. The engineering school participants showed a preference for intelligibility and effective communication over conformity to standard native English, whether in EMI or in the social use of English. The medical school participants, on the other hand, revealed an orientation to standard native English and justified their views with contextual factors related to concerns over miscommunication and patients' safety in medical fields. However, interestingly, they shifted their position towards intelligibility and successful communication in respect of their social use of English.

In answer to RQ3-c, the findings also revealed tensions between Arabic and English, English and local values and culture, and the orientation towards Englishisation in higher education. The findings demonstrated some negative views towards English among some participants and some concerns regarding the implementation of English within the context of Saudi Arabia and its impact on L1 (Arabic) and local values. Some participants also criticised the 'Englishisation' or, in other words, the 'English only' system in HE and in employment and the lack of AMI programmes in Saudi universities. Moreover, a considerable number of participants revealed a conflict between the expectations of English and Arabic, whereas there was wide acceptance and tolerance towards non-native Arabic speakers' use of Arabic; English, however, is still strictly expected to be used based on its native speakers' varieties.

8.5 Implications and contributions

Based on the findings of this research and other research that has been conducted in other contexts (e.g., Smit, 2010; Jenkins, 2014; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019) which investigated the presentations of English in HE, I can highlight some implications and suggestions for language planning and EMI in higher education in the context of Saudi Arabia. First, the findings revealed a discrepancy between management policy orientations towards standard English language ideology and students' more open-minded views on the use of the English language, as well as linguistic practices that are very complex and varied. Therefore, in terms of the implications for language planning, due to the very limited influence of other approaches of English in the language planning, it is important to increase awareness of the existence of other English paradigms, such as ELF, and the benefits of shifting the focus to people and context-needs rather than the usual referring to standard native English as the only model in language use. As Van Lier (2014) commented, in order to learn something new, it must be noticed first. Accordingly, the functions of other paradigms of English, such as ELF, should be overtly, vividly and plainly declared in language planning.

As Macaro et al. (2018) argued, there is an “almost total absence of any comparative studies amongst disciplines, institutions and/or amongst countries”. By investigating new issues from a comparative perspective, as well as the local ideologies in one of the under-researched contexts in both fields, this explanatory study has, it is to be hoped, added to both EMI and ELF research. Therefore, the research has highlighted the value of comparative studies between schools and disciplines in identifying common themes that may be present throughout EMI/EME programmes, together with potentially important differences such as linguistic practices and linguistic proficiency. Moreover, whereas other studies have focused on the similarities, differences and implications among different contexts (e.g., Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019), the current study has focused on the similarities, differences and implications between two different disciplines within higher education EMI/EME programmes. Therefore, by conducting a comparative study, this study has contributed to the field of EMI and ELF by highlighting concerns over English language use within medical fields in relation to patient care and safety, as reflected in the students’ experiences and views of English in EMI/EME programmes.

Moreover, this study has also provided a platform for Saudi students' views, experiences, perceptions and ideological outlook in terms of English use, both in their EMI/EME programmes and in their social use of English. That conflict, doubt, and deviations appeared in the participants' experiences and perceptions of English use, either in EMI/EME or in the social use of English, demonstrated a struggle between what students thought of as proper English and that which they believed to be effective and intelligible to use. Furthermore, the findings also provided profound insights into the interrelationships between an attachment to standard native English and lack of self-esteem, negative experiences of English, and intolerance of the non-standard use of English. Therefore, raising students' awareness of English as a lingua franca would empower them by instilling confidence in and satisfaction with their own use of English, increase students' acceptance of non-native uses of English, and would be likely to improve students' learning experiences and outcomes.

Finally, ELF research has been criticised for its limited range of contexts, such as Europe and some parts of Asia and very limited research has been conducted in other contexts, including Saudi Arabia, which has not been sufficiently explored within studies on ELF (e.g., Alharbi, 2006; Bukhari, 2019). Therefore, this current study provides insightful implications for the presentation of English in EMI/EME programmes in Saudi Arabia, which offers an opportunity to extend the scope of ELF research considerably in the context of HE in one of the Gulf countries. The Gulf states include very large international populations from different backgrounds due to the presence of the largest oil companies in the world. Thus, this study has shed light on and provided insightful implications for the context of Saudi Arabia. As Doiz et al. (2013, p.219) asserted, "every context has its own characteristics and, therefore, studies rooted in each specific context will be much welcomed. Results from other contexts may always be helpful and enlightening".

8.6 Limitations and recommendations for future studies

Some limitations of the current study must be acknowledged, as well as directions and avenues for future studies. The first limitation is the selection of the participants, The study excluded teachers and language policy makers from the research. As the study was confined to students, it would be necessary and beneficial to involve teachers and language policy makers in future work in order to fully understand the implementation of English in

EMI in the context of Saudi Arabia. Focusing on students was vital to answer the research questions of the current study and to investigate their views, experiences, and perceptions of English, both in EMI/EME programmes and in the social use of English. However, including others involved in the process of English language regulation and the process of teaching content in English would provide more insights to understand the top-down process of language policy, as well as teachers' experiences and perceptions of English, as they are considered to be the bridge between language management and language practices (Spolsky, 2004; Shohamy, 2006).

The second limitation of the study is that the documents collected revealed an obvious lack of detail and did not provide sufficient comprehension of the regulation of English in EMI to fully understand the presentation and implementations of English in EMI programmes in the particular setting of the study. The primary focus of both the national and institutional documents was on the English language itself in language learning, rather than the English in EMI/EME programmes. Therefore, other settings, the top-ranking and most well-known universities within the context of Saudi Arabia in particular, might provide more insights and understanding of the orientations of English in EMI/EME programmes at the institutional level.

The last limitation to be considered is that the findings have provided some insights into an under-researched area within ELF research: medical English as a lingua franca. The study explored medical students' experiences and perceptions of English, which helped to highlight some concerns over English language use within medical fields in relation to patients' care and safety. However, while to the best of my knowledge, a few pieces of research have been conducted in this area (e.g., Tweedie & Johnson, 2018), MELF still needs exploration, which would provide an opportunity to extend the field of ELF considerably. Accordingly, as little is known of the use of English in medical fields, it would be beneficial to explore areas related to linguistic features. More specifically, research is needed in relation to disciplinary language, as was widely reported in this study among medical student participants, as well as intelligibility, in order to better understand and address such concerns.

8.7 Conclusion

The current study has, it is hoped, made contributions to the context of Saudi Arabia as well as the field of English as a lingua franca. First, the study has contributed as the first research in the context of Saudi Arabia to explore the presentation of English in language policy, language practices and language ideology from an ELF perspective based on Spolsky's (2004, 2009) and Shohamy's (2006) frameworks of language policy. The second significant contribution is that the study has, it is also hoped, provided insights into students' experiences and perceptions of English in order to be taken as a reference in language planning in EMI/EME programmes. Furthermore, importantly, as the concern of the research project was to focus on what actually happens, rather than how such issues should be resolved, it was aimed at developing sufficient awareness of English as a lingua franca and its existence in EMI/EME, as well as the social use of English. It is also hoped that the study has offered some insights into the phenomenon of MELF, which is still under-researched within the field of ELF. Based on the aforementioned contributions, the study provides a platform for researchers to gain some understanding of the situation regarding English in an EMI setting in Saudi Arabia and offers directions for further studies in the Saudi Arabian context as well as other contexts.

Appendix A Semi-structured interview guidelines

1) Interviews prompts

Language Experience:

1. Can you describe your experience in studying your courses in English language?

2. What have you learned from EMI classes?

3. Do you have any difficulties in terms of English use during studying curricula in English language?

4. What does native speaker and non-native speaker mean to you?

5. How do you describe the status of English in Saudi Arabia?

English management (the adopted English in higher education)

6. How do you feel about English in the university curricula in Saudi Arabia?

7. How do you feel about the English use of your (local or foreign) teachers?

Linguistic practices (usage of English language)

8. How often do you speak English? Why?

9. Do you use English in your Daily life activities? Why, why not?

10. How do you describe or evaluate your own English?

11, Have you ever faced any issues related to English within your EMI courses?

12. Do you use Arabic in your English learning classrooms? Why?

13. What do you think makes the good use of English in communication?

14. Can you recall some personal experiences about your difficulties of using English in classrooms?

15. Do you use English in your Daily life activities? Why, why not?

English Ideology (students' views on the ideal type of English)

16. What would be an ideal use of English in your curricula?

17. What kind of English use can meet your future need? For what reasons?

18. Can you predict with whom you will use English in the future?

19. What do you think your study of EMI study might help in your future use of English?

20. Based on your class experiences (lectures, activities, etc.), do you have any aspects that you like the best and aspects that could be improved in term of English usage?

Appendix B Focus group design

Focus groups design

A. **Self-introduction**

B. **Recording information and consent form**

C. **Discussion structure**

D. **Introduction (handout to participants)**

E. **Selected parts of an interview with David Crystal – Will English always be the global language (**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Kvs8SxN8mc)

F. **Discussion questions:**

Questions to initiate the discussion:

1. How do you feel about the English Language?

2. What do you think of using English in your courses?

3. What motivates you choosing EMI programme?

English Management:

4. What are the English language entry requirements to your courses?

5. What do think about those requirements?

6. What do think about learning content through English in your curricula?

English Practice/choice:

7. In your opinions, how do you feel about using English in your EMI curricula?

8. How do you evaluate the English usage of your teachers during your EMI study?

9. Can you recall any learning or personal experiences related to English use? How do you feel about these experiences?

10. Have you ever had an opportunity to speak English outside your classrooms? Explain that?

11. Do you use Arabic in your classrooms? Why?

12. How do other people think about your English?

English ideology:

13. How do you think of your English? Is it good? What makes good English?

14. Can you predict how you will use English and with whom in the future? What kind of English use can meet your future need? For what reasons?

15. Which kind of English do you think teachers should consider while teaching university students to meet their needs in the future? Probe: standard English, purpose of use, intelligibility, communication.

16. What are your expectations of your English? What are your teachers' expectations to your English?

17. If you can choose, what level of English do you want to reach? For what reasons?

G. Ending discussion:

If you have a chance to take part in making the English language policy in Saudi Arabia, what would you do

Appendix C Handout to focus group participants

- **The spread of English**

Görlach (2002): 370 million native English speakers, 220 million second language English speakers, 240 million other speakers of English.

Jenkins (2003): 337,407,300 native English speakers, 235,351,300 second language English speakers.

Jenkins (2009): 329,140,800 native English speakers, 430,614,500 second language English speakers.

Crystal, D. (2008): 2 billion English users around the world .

Appendix D Examples of descriptive and interpretive coding

Sample Responses	Descriptive code	Interpretive code
• *"Saudis have same style in using English and much easier to understand"* • *"familiarity with the use of English in terms of pronunciations and grammar would make understanding English language with other Saudis or Arabs easier than using it with others from different backgrounds"*	English usage with others with same L1 background	Intelligibility
• *"I have an experience of studying abroad, using English with non-natives is easier to understand than using it with native speakers of English, I feel more confident and comfortable"*	Understanding non-native usage of English	
• *"since early stages at school, we've always been taught English to be used in the correct way as native English speakers … I know it is not easy to be a native like but we always desire to be"* • *"we have been tough to use English as its native speakers since we started learning English in primary school* • *"being fluent and native like always give a good impression to people regardless how good the person is in his discipline*	Attachment to native English	Conformity to standard native English
• *"every language should be used as its native speakers, that is what we know and what we have been taught"*	Ownership of English	

Sample Responses	Descriptive code	Interpretive code
• *"I can't understand the reasons behind the importance of English in our society … when we go to a native English country, we have to use English to communicate with them, and when native English speakers come to our country, we also have to use English too! … why don't they learn our language?"*	Pride of L1	Tensions between Arabic and English
• *"we are an Arabic country, but if you want to study for example, Engineering, all Saudi universities only offer Engineering courses in English … most courses in Saudi universities are becoming more and more in English language, leaving the students with no options to choose the language they want"* • *"I know many students abandoned their dreams of studying the courses they want just because of the only English policy in the universities"*	English-only policy in higher Education	

Appendix E Participant information sheet

Study Title: An investigation into the role of English in language policy and practice in EMI in a university setting in Saudi Arabia: English as a lingua franca perspective

Researcher: Omar Mansour S Alqarni

ERGO number: 48709

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

This is a PhD research. Briefly, the research is about exploring the role of English in language policy, practice, and language ideology within English medium of instruction programmes at Bisha university in Saudi Arabia.

Why have I been asked to participate?

I am looking for students who are in final year studying their courses through English as medium of instruction in medicine and engineering schools.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will involve semi-structure interviews and focus groups. You will be interviewed for approximately 45-60 minutes, after conducting the interviews, you might be invited to the focus groups discussion which might last for one hour. The focus group will be a discussion with 8 different participants about the role of English in your EMI courses and the perceptions of English being used in EMI settings. Please note that the focus groups and interviews will be in English Language and it will be recorded.

You can withdraw your participation anytime you want without giving me any reasons. All the data collected will be anonymised and only I can access the data.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Your participation is valuable to the research project in order to understand the perceptions of the role of English within Saudi Arabia. Your participation will be adding to the current knowledge and might help you to reflect in your experience of using English in your courses and future career. You will also have opportunities to exchange views with me and other participants.

Are there any risks involved?

You might not feel free to participate because you may think that the answers will be available for the administration. However, I assure you that your participation will be confidential, anonymised, and not accessible to anyone but the researcher. Moreover, as I mentioned, you can withdraw your participation anytime you want without giving me any reasons

What data will be collected?

I will investigate the role of English and Saudi students' perceptions of English in EMI practices and the perceptions of English in daily life use. Data will be collected from 32 participants in 4 focus groups and 30 selected participants for interviews. The length of the focus groups and interviews will be around 1 hour. The focus groups and interviews will be audio-recorded, you will be asked for a permission at the beginning. In regards to the focus groups, you will be joining a group discussion, which includes other participants, after you have being interviewed individually by me. The focus groups will help to discuss and collect more data based on the interviews' data. The participants belong to medicine and engineering schools in Bisha university, Saudi Arabia.

Your personal data will be handled securely. I will make sure that your answers will be anonymous and your consents will not be shown to any members of the university. The audio recording will be kept secured on a password protected computer and will be deleted after the transcription. I will email you the questions before you decide to participate in the study which will give you an opportunity to think about the questions and decide whether you are comfortable to participate or not. You also have the right to withdraw at any time.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation and the information I collect from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data collected from you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals

from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

You can email me at (omsa1a15@soton.ac.uk) and I will arrange a meeting to discuss your participation.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

You can email me at (omsa1a15@soton.ac.uk) to inform me any time that you would like to withdraw.

If you withdraw from the study, I will keep the data that we have already obtained for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only. However, you have the right to withdraw your data and participation.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

The results will be written under a PhD thesis. You will not receive a copy of the findings. However, the completed thesis will be accessible to anyone after the publication.

Where can I get more information?

If you have any enquiries or you would like to know more about the study, you can email me at (omsa1a15@soton.ac.uk)

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher who will do his best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for two

years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

Appendix F Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Study title: An investigation into the role of English in language policy and practice in EMI in a university setting in Saudi Arabia: English as a lingua franca perspective

Researcher name: Omar Mansour S Alqarni

ERGO number: 48709

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (*03/05/19 /48709*) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw (at any time) for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	

Name of participant (print name)……

Signature of participant……

Date……

Name of researcher (print name)……

Signature of researcher……

Date……

Optional - please only initial the box(es) you wish to agree to:

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