



University of Exeter EdD in TESOL Thesis

From AMI Schools to EMI Universities: A Critical Examination of the Arab Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of their Academic Arabic Proficiency and Arab Identity in Three EMI Universities in the UAE

Submitted by

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To

The University of Exeter

For the degree of

Doctor of Education in TESOL

Submission date

March 2019

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ABSTRACT

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the use of English as a medium of instruction (MI) has been a naturalized and taken-for-granted practice without thorough questioning or problematizing. This very adoption of English medium instruction (EMI) policy is done at the expense of academic Arabic that is almost absent from the academic scene in higher education. What is more problematic is the association of academic Arabic with few elective courses in humanities that can be taken in English, while reserving for English all the major courses. The study aims to problematize the use of English as medium of instruction at three universities in the UAE. It aims to critically explore the perceptions of Arab undergraduate students, who were in Arabic schools, vis-a-vis their proficiency in academic Arabic that they previously studied in. It also aims to examine the psychological, academic, social and cultural transitional changes that accompanied the shift of the language of instruction from Arabic to English. Another aim of the study is to assess the preferences of these students regarding language of instruction and the utility of academic Arabic in their academic life and future jobs. The last aim is to examine how students perceive their Arab identity after studying in EMI universities. The study is based on critical theoretical framework because the decision to use English as medium of instruction is political rather than pedagogical. The study was approached from the interpretive and critical paradigms. A sequential mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data collection was used. 268 surveys, and 20 semi-structured interviews were used in Fall 2017.

The findings suggest that students were aware of the decline in their academic Arabic proficiency. The findings also suggest that students showed symptoms of academic Arabic language attrition based on forgetting academic words they knew before, needing more time to remember and facing difficulty coming up with the right words when talking about their major courses. They also reported psychological, academic, social and cultural difficulties associated with the transition from Arabic medium instruction schools to English medium instruction universities. Results also showed that many of the students seem to have lost their faith in academic Arabic as a language of academia and see English Medium Instruction (EMI) as the normal and required language of instruction, but still consider academic Arabic an essential part of their identity that cannot be wiped away, which raises questions about their

sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Overall, the study had several implications related to language policy and its impact on the status of academic Arabic in academic contexts. Students did not seem ready for EMI linguistically, socially or culturally but tolerated these challenges because the unbalanced diglossia between English and academic Arabic in academia seems to mislead them into believing that the relation between English and science is organic and that English is the only valued language in academia. Also, the use of EMI seems responsible for their declining abilities in academic Arabic and for acquiring new knowledge only in English. The study makes several recommendations that can help regain the balance in academia. First, language policy should be problematized, thought of and revisited because it is clear that any attempt to save academic Arabic cannot be effective if it is outside the academic arena. Only then, academic Arabic can be revived to reclaim its legacy as a language of academia and sciences. Also, students should be given the choice to study their major courses in English or Arabic. We need to embrace a discourse of hope intertwined with action because hopelessness is a form of sterile silence (Freire, 1972).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have seen the light without Allah's great support for me in every step and at every challenge, guiding me and giving me patience and tolerance to keep going and to look ahead with faith, satisfaction, gratitude and hope.

Since the first day of my doctorate, Dr. Salah Troudi was always there to guide me, to offer advice and to dazzle me with the depth of his knowledge, the distinction of his thoughts and the rigor of his research. I was lucky to have him as my thesis supervisor who was an example of dedication and sincerity, who checked on me when he felt I was behind, encouraged me when I felt down, and put me on the right track when I was uncertain of direction. I learned a lot from him and could not have written this thesis without his insightful comments and guidance.

I want to thank my family for their endless support and patience. Your encouragement made this doctorate real. I hope I could make you proud of me. I love you all so much. I want to thank my friends and colleagues from University of Exeter who supported me during my studies.

I want to thank the institutions that allowed me to do my research. A special thanks for the students who participated in this study, all of them, who gave me their time amidst having a very busy academic schedule and opened their hearts and enriched my study with data that would have been impossible without their contribution. I want to thank the professors who helped with distributing the questionnaires in their classes and for allowing me to observe some of them. Thank you all.

DEDICATION

الى من أهدتني الحياه وزرعت في قلبي حب العلم الذي ضنت عليها الحياه به
أهديك الحلم ألي تحقق بفضل الله وفضل دعائك وحبك.....
لك ياأمي هدى أهدي هذه الرساله....
الى من أحبني بدون مقابل و شجعني وحارب من أجل دراستي أبي أهدي هذه الرساله

To Mum and Dad

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AMI Arabic medium instruction

BICS Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

CALP Cognitive academic language proficiency

CLIL Content and Language Integrated Learning

CLP Critical language policy

ELT English language teaching

EFL English as a foreign language

EMI English medium instruction

EmSAT The Emirates Standardized Test

GCC Gulf Council Countries

HE Higher education

IELTS International English language testing

MI Medium of Instruction

LP Language policy

SA Standard Arabic

KHDA Knowledge & Human Development Authority

TOEFL Test of English as a foreign language

UAE United Arab Emirates

UAEU United Arab Emirates University

CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION

1.1. Nature of the Problem

English has gone beyond being taught as a foreign/second language to be the medium of instruction in many European, Asian and African countries. It is now considered an essential lever for success in many globalizing economies and is viewed as the mantle of 'language of power' (Marsh, 2006, p. 30). It has been taken for granted that "knowing English is like possessing the fabled Aladdin's lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates" to different spheres and that it provides linguistic power (Kachru, as cited in McKay, 2010, p. 96). This overwhelming power that English enjoys has become a threat to many indigenous languages that are losing the battle against English dominance and hegemony. One facet for this threat is the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Medium of instruction policy is considered the most powerful means of maintaining and revitalizing languages and cultures, and the most important form of intergenerational transmission (Tsui & Tollefson, 2004). While in the face of this linguistic 'invasion,' some countries succeeded in maintaining their national languages as the language of education at all levels (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 181), many others have fallen in the trap of English. The worldwide shift from English being taught as a foreign language (EFL) to English being the medium of instruction (EMI) for academic subjects is happening at a very fast pace (Chapple, 2015). Advocates of EMI perceive it as the panacea that would help students propel in a world that mostly functions in English. Shifting to EMI is viewed as one of the most significant trends that seek to internationalize higher education (Chapple, 2015). Internationalism is now perceived as equivalent to 'English-medium higher education' (Phillipson, 2006a). There is a wish to compete globally (Rogier, 2012) and to promote global university rankings in societies that have obsession with prestigious universities, studying at is seen as the route to success (Cho, 2012). English is now considered the Latin of the 21st century for the role it plays in the internationalization of academe (Corrigan, 2014). It is also argued that English is the de facto language of business, science, and technology worldwide (Badry & Willoughby, 2016), which necessitates Improving students' English proficiency, which is believed to provide them with access to cutting-edge knowledge available in English, attracting international students and improving graduates' competitive

abilities in the job market (Lei, & Hu, 2014). However, what lies underneath is more complicated than prestige or internationalization. For some, 'educational internationalization' is more of a polite word for educational imperialism (Mok, 2007, p. 437). Cho (2012) asserts that it is only vanity that is behind universities' pursuit of EMI, because "a causal link between the introduction of EMI and successful internationalization has not yet been established" (Dearden & Macaro, 2016, p. 457). Lured by the presumed outcomes, the Arabian Gulf countries have decided to take this leap by making English the language of instruction in most of their tertiary level institutions (Ahmed, 2011). Moreover, the entire university systems in these countries are reshaped according to a 'standardized Anglo-American model' (Ibid). In the UAE, where Arabic is the sole official language of the country, English has gained the status of the official language of instruction in almost all higher education institutions (Troudi, 2009). The use of EMI has become the norm where almost all universities, private and public, use English as a language of instruction; that "one of the core concepts in the federally funded tertiary institutions is English-medium instruction" (Rogier, 2012, p. 3). This fascination with English and the benefits it provides students with has overlooked or ignored the effect of such policy on students' first language and on their Arab identity. Because of English, Arabic is educationally marginalized, and is pushed back to play a very minor role in higher education (Troudi, 2009). Because of using English as MI in the UAE, it has been reported by headmasters and Arabic teachers in UAE private schools that parents persistently file requests to spare their children from taking Arabic-language lessons since children will eventually go to EMI universities that do not teach in Arabic ("Arabic language is losing ground," 2013).

There is a real danger that the use of a foreign language in education could alienate students from their language and could result in having a generation of young people who are devoid of the traditions and cultural values of their society, which are the constituents of identity (Tsui, & Tollefson, 2004) because the language of a nation is often a "symbol of its identity and allegiances" that embodies its values, cultures and traditions (Tsui, & Tollefson, 2004, p. 2). There is a consensus among researchers that the objective of learning a second language should be additive bilingualism, with the second language being acquired at no cost to the first language as opposed to subtractive bilingualism, "whereby both the mother tongue and, crucially, the identity of the learner, are gradually replaced by that of the new language" (O'Sullivan, 2015,

p. 426). Even though Arabs, like many other nations, need to master English to become active participants in the 21st century knowledge production, the major dilemma is when English replaces the national language in the education system because this very “adoption of English in higher education has reinforced the perceived link of Arabic to the past and old traditions and English to the future and knowledge societies” (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 197).

Moreover, this anglicizing of universities is occurring without a thorough evaluation of how this policy ends up with diglossia dividing the functions between languages where English is perceived as the academic 'high' language (Airey, 2009), while Arabic is playing a very minor role not only in academic context but also in society in general due to the dominance of English also outside the gates of universities.

However, the use of English as MI is a real threat to Arabic since in diglossic societies, the first to be lost is usually the prestigious and formal functions of the language, which explains the importance of higher education (Coleman, 2006).

There is a possibility that Gulf countries run the risk of having a new generation graduating from these institutions without being “connected in any kind of organic way to society as a whole; a generation of people who cannot even speak to their parents” (Ahmed, 2011, p. 125). This might be a natural consequence of the state of disconnect from Arabic during all the years of studying at university. We need to ask: How will students learn to see their own culture in a positive light “if Anglo- American norms dominate a newly homogenized ... academic discourse? [And] if the only language on the PowerPoint slides is English” (Coleman, 2006, p. 10).

However, the UAE is facing a major, perplexing contradiction. On the one hand, it needs the 'indispensable global medium' for pragmatic purposes; to survive in the global economy (Phillipson, 2001), especially that it is a young country with emerging economy. On the other, it has to deal with the fact that the medium cannot be ideologically or culturally neutral (Ibid). Watson (2007) describes this dilemma that countries like the UAE face as being “caught between Scylla and Charibdis” (p. 258) because both choices they have are difficult. He explains that if they choose to use English as the medium of instruction instead of the national language, they are widening the gap between those who have power and knowledge and those who do not. On the other hand, if they decide to use the indigenous language in schooling, they might face opposition from the very people they are intending to help (Watson, 2007). However, even though these pressures seem very daunting, they are not

justified when the country's national identity and language are at stake (Ibid). A critical analysis of the rationale of adopting English as a medium of instruction, according to Troudi, "reveals an underlying bleak message about the status and role of Arabic in higher education" (2009, p. 203) which should make us wonder, "How far should the requirement for native Arabic speakers to pursue their...studies in the language be seen as an inevitable response to market needs?" (Findlow, 2006, p. 21). Another question that should be asked is that: Should EMI be "pursued even at the expense of academic knowledge, for the purpose of improving English language proficiency?" (Cho, 2012, p. 20).

1.2. The Rationale of the Study

Adopting English as a medium of instruction in higher education is done at the expense of Arabic. Once Arab students step into their university campus, they mostly lose contact with Standard Arabic (SA), which is the language of literacy and the high variety of the diglossic Arabic language, used in education. They write in English, take classes in English, present in English; their whole mindset changes to English. Their academic life is colored with English. The competitions, activities, announcements, and instruction are all in English. Standard Arabic (SA) is almost absent from the scene.

Teaching in an EMI institution, I have seen and heard many Arab students speak in English on campus even when they discuss topics that are not academic. Their modern and westernized haircuts with the loud English music coming out of their headphones and the semi native American accent show that English is not just a language used for instruction but a whole culture embedded in English. There is a general perception that English is a synonym of status, modernity, liberty and freedom. English is the language of popular culture and speaking it is often associated by young people with prestige (Hillmarsson-Dunn, 2010). English particularly influences global youth culture as "the language of status and a source of identity and meaning" because "global English is prestigious, eagerly acquired, and valuable, and its speakers acquire 'linguistic capital'" (Hillmarsson-Dunn, 2010, p. 5). Schmieid (1991) suggests that in many parts of the Third World, English is generally associated with adjectives like 'beautiful', 'rich', 'logical', 'sophisticated' or even 'pleasing to the ear.' He argues that the high international prestige that English

enjoys has resulted in perceiving it “as an idealized world language” (as cited in Reagan & Schreffler, 2005, p. 117). In the Arab world, “speaking English is often associated with better education and is an ostentatious sign of upper social standing” (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 188). As a result, young Arabs are moving away from their native language towards English that makes them feel superior (Arab News Digest, 2013). Al Suweihi wrote, the danger lies not only in the fact that English is the language of instruction, but in that it is used for off-campus communication among students and sometimes between students and their parents (Arab News Digest, 2013). Those who were ‘not lucky’ enough to study in English medium instruction schools feel that they are stigmatized because they lack the language fluency and proficiency that other students have. They would whisper in Arabic to hide the fact that they communicate in Arabic and would do their best to excel in English in order not to be the outcast of this English-dominant sphere. One Emirati Master student was reported in *The National* saying: “If I open my mouth and speak in English, people say ‘Oh she’s amazing’. If I open my mouth and start speaking in Arabic, it’s like, ‘Oh she’s regular” (Zacharias, 2012).

Albirini (2016) warns that it is likely that the spread and adoption of English in the Arab region may result in disconnecting Arab youth from their Arab heritage, history and belonging. This is a “likely scenario because ‘modernity’ and ‘sophistication’ ... are associated more with English than with SA [Standard Arabic]” (Ibid, p. 158). Cho (2012) pointed out that English has become ‘a class marker’ among Korean students; those with weaker English suffered from lack of interaction with teachers, subsequent impacts on their academic studies, lower grades, and more importantly were stratified into the English haves and have-nots, which is in some way a microcosm of the wider society that suffers ‘collective neurosis of English fever’ which is very similar to the case in the Arab region.

EMI needs to be problematized. The decision to use a particular language as a medium of instruction is a very crucial decision because it decides on which language is given prestige, power, resources, and which language is relegated to a secondary position in society (Tsui, & Tollefson, 2004), which is here Arabic. These policies, which are not purely guided by educational agenda but by social, political, and economic agendas, should be questioned (Ibid). Ahmed (2011) argues that today's globalized system of education may be aiding in either erasing weak cultures or blurring and overshadowing stronger ones as a result of the imported education

and rampant spread of emphasis on English, which "is beginning to sideline Arabic resulting in the linguistic and cultural loss of those who identify with it" (p. 120). Even though the transition from AMI school to EMI university entails many challenges to students, most of the studies done about the overall experience of freshmen did not address specifically "the challenges those NNS students face as a result of their studying in an English medium of instruction educational context" (Morrison, & Evans, 2018, p. 3).

The study aims to spot light on EMI's impact on students' proficiency in Arabic and on their Arab identity. Rogier (2012) argues, "Once language is learned the proficiency level may actually decrease if there are not maintenance strategies in place" (p. 31). So, if the target of EMI is to improve the students' English proficiency, it might lead to first language attrition and students might lose their literacy skills in MSA as a result. When students leave high school, their proficiency in Arabic may have not reached a stable level. It may need to be developed especially if we take into consideration that Standard Arabic (SA) is not used for daily communication, being the language of literacy. Therefore, if students do not continue learning it, there is a possibility that they will lose it. L1 attrition is seen as "a by-product of a speaker's contact with a second language where input and use of L1 diminishes to a critical point" (Sebina, 2014, p. 55). Thus, students are denied their right to receive education in their mother tongue and are also "divested of their right to identify with, to maintain and to fully develop their mother tongue in the name of globalization" (Cho, 2012, p. 23).

The study also aims to let the students' voice to be heard. Giroux (1992) asserts that voice provides a critical referent for analyzing how students are made voiceless in particular settings by not being allowed to speak, or how students silence themselves out of either fear or ignorance regarding the strength and possibilities that exist in the multiple languages and experience that connect them to a sense of agency and self-formation (as cited in Pennycook, 2001). In the Arab world particularly, Zackaria (2010) points out that "youth have been at the center of recent development interests and agendas ... but their views are seldom heard" (p. 157). Moreover, the assumption that students need only English proficiency to function well in the job market also needs to be questioned. Graduates need Arabic after they graduate in their workplace. Phillipson (2009) pointed out that it is very likely that English fluency alone will not give its speakers a competitive advantage in the job

market because “It is a basic principle in economics that the market value drops for anything that is widely available” (p. 219). Canagarajah (2005) stresses the importance of bilingualism, arguing that being literate nowadays requires competence in multiple languages. He adds that teaching literacy in a single language “fails to equip our students for real-world needs” (p. 197) in which knowing as many languages as one can is the asset for postmodern citizens.

1.3. The Significance of the Study

This study comes at a time where the practice has been normalized to the extent that it has been taken for granted that English is the only good way to study at the university level. Empirical knowledge about the rationales, spread and roles of EMI in non-English-speaking countries is scarce (Bradford, 2013). Despite the fact that EMI has been discussed in Europe where the overwhelming bulk of EMI research seems to come from (Hu et al., 2014; Makombe, 2015), it has been rarely investigated or explored in any depth in the Arab world. Troudi and Al Hafidh (2017) argue that “the policy of English as medium of instruction (EMI) and its effects, such as alienation from one’s mother tongue during the years of formal education, remains under-researched in the Gulf” (p. 93). Ellili-Cherif and Alkhateeb (2015) argue that “research-based studies on the medium of instruction in the Arab world tend to be rare” (p. 208). Moreover, most of the international research examines the effectiveness of MI in improving students’ proficiency in English (Hu et al., 2014), assesses the students’ and instructors’ attitudes towards using it (Tatzl, 2011), or examines the impact of EMI on students’ learning experiences (AlBakri, 2017). There are few small-scale studies on the impact of the use of English as MI on Arabic language and Arab identity ((Tatzl, 2011). Also, the role that the educational system plays in shaping the students’ attitudes and experiences towards their SA is also under researched (Bani-Khaled, 2014b). However, to the best of my knowledge, there are no large-scale studies done on the effect of EMI on Arabic language and identity in the Arabian Gulf. The impact of EMI on Arabic as the language of science and academia “is still widely ignored by educationalists and ELT professionals in the Arab world” (Troudi & Jendli, 2011, p. 29). This study aims to fill this gap in literature and to critically analyze the impact English-medium instruction has on students’ proficiency in the Standard Arabic, and their sense of belonging and Arabness.

Even though the decisions of the educational language policy are made by the higher authorities in the UAE and are influenced by many other factors that this study cannot directly affect or change, it can still be a step towards change. The immediate change might be very optimistic in a world in which power is often statute, and the reality of political power seldom extends to teachers or researchers who have little effect on the real locus of power and decision making, which often lies beyond our control, and little power on the workings of society at large (Cohen et al., 2011). However, even though we cannot effect changes easily, still we can call into questions such practices that have become set in stone. This study can contribute to more balanced and more egalitarian language policies when spotting light on inequalities that the current language policies might lead to and result in. The constant questioning and problematizing of the givens of the language policy in the UAE could lead to changes, even if these changes are slow and difficult.

1.4. Research Questions

The study was informed by the following questions:

1. How do Arab undergraduate students who studied in AMI schools perceive their competence in academic Arabic after studying in EMI universities?
2. How does the transition from AMI schools to EMI universities affect them psychologically, academically, socially and culturally?
3. What are the students' views of the utility of academic Arabic versus English?
 - a. How do they see the future of academic Arabic?
 - b. What is their preferred language of instruction?
 - c. Do they believe that Arabic can help them in their future jobs?
4. How do they perceive their Arab identity?

1.5. Methodology

Exploratory critical methodology forms the paradigmatic stance of this study that aims to explore the perceptions of the Arab students regarding their proficiency in academic Arabic in the light of studying in EMI universities, and to critically analyze this political decision on Arabic language and identity. This study is critical in nature that views society and social reality as shaped by the hegemony of power and

marked by inequality and therefore aims to help establish equity and to “alleviate pain in society and redress forms of alienation, discrimination, injustice, exploitation, and marginalization” (Troudi, 2015). The students are not feeling this oppression because the ideologies formed in their minds are “held with a false consciousness” (Shelby, 2003, p. 170). Therefore, the practices of the powerful groups become natural, and taken for granted.

1.6. The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis begins with an introduction that presents the rationale for the study, its significance and relevance, the research questions, and the methodology of the study. In chapter two, the context of the study is examined at political, social, economic, and educational levels. The three universities which are the immediate context of the study are described in terms of their language policies, rules and practices. Chapter three reviews literature on EMI in the light of globalization and marketization, sheds light on language policy and its centeredness, then explores the CLIL approach, examines theories of language proficiency and competence, first language attrition, and then concludes with language and identity. In chapter four, the methodology used is explained in detail to justify the research design and to clarify the paradigmatic stance that guides the study. It also presents the mixed methods used, the participants, ethical considerations, and data analysis. Chapter five presents the findings of the study, while chapter six presents the discussion of the major findings. In the last seventh chapter, conclusions are drawn, and implications and recommendations are presented.

CHAPTER 2- CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study critically analyzes the impact of using English on Arab students' proficiency in Arabic, and on their Arab identity in the context of higher education in the UAE. This chapter gives background information about the UAE in general being the country where the study takes place. It sheds light on the educational system in the UAE in the light of globalization. It finally gives a detailed account of the constitutional context of the three universities where the study was done.

2.1. The United Arab Emirates

Over a total area of 83,600 square km, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) lies at the southern tip of the Arabian Gulf. With the unity of six Emirates in 1971, and with the seventh one joining in 1972, a new country, named United Arab Emirates, was officially born. The UAE is ruled by the Supreme Council of the UAE that consists of the seven rulers of the seven Emirates led by the President of the country (Boyle, 2012). The UAE's political system is stable and has remained strongly in place after the Arab Spring due to the legitimacy that monarchies gained being based upon tribal, clan and family allegiances and being capable of providing enough jobs and housing, in addition to implementing a wide range of precursor economic and educational reforms (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Alnuaimi, 2012). According to the constitution of the UAE, Islam is the religion of the country and Arabic is its official language even though the country's large expatriate communities follow many other religions and speak many other languages. Linguistically, English, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi and Tagalog function in different domains at different societal and economic levels among the cosmopolitan population that constitutes predominantly of expatriates.

The economic shift to oil production was behind having a national income that is considered as one of the highest in the world. The discovery of crude oil was a historic turning point that brought dramatic changes to the young country (Sowa, & De La Vega, 2009). This transition from the poorest region in the world to one of the richest with control over oil reserves was described as the most perplexing phenomenon in the twentieth century (Karmani, 2005). The country emerged "into the mainstream of modernism over the past 30 years through an economy that embraces "an open laissez-faire economic approach" (Forstenlechner et al., 2012, p. 56). The need for building this strong economy in a relatively short period of time

created the demand for expatriates who make up almost 70 % of the population. These same economic pressures have also overshadowed and affected higher education and its policies because colleges and universities are expected to support the country's economic development with an educated workforce (Fox, 2007). The appointment of Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed AlNahyan as the ruler of Abu Dhabi and President of the UAE in 2004 marked the beginning of a programme of rapid diversification of economic resources (Boyle, 2012). In its plans for post-petrol era, the UAE has pursued the development of new economic sectors in order to diversify its economic resources (Fox, 2007). The most striking feature of this phase of fast diversification of economic resources was the doubling of the expatriate population from 3.3 million in 2005 to 7.24 million in 2010 (Boyle, 2012). The aspirations to diversify the economy away from oil are in some way connected to the trend that several academic institutions have embraced in adopting English language as the medium of instruction over the past decade (Belhiah, & Elhami, 2015). The government views "the establishment of a robust system of universities and colleges as an essential part of a credible economic development strategy" (Badry, & Willoughby, 2016, p. 15).

2.2. Arabic and English in the UAE

English is the de facto language in the UAE society at large to the extent that "a visitor to the country could perhaps be forgiven for believing that the E in the acronym UAE stood for English" (Solloway, 2018, p. 459). The continued reliance on expatriate labor has resulted in 'de-Arabizing' the country to a great extent, since the number of foreign workers (Badry, & Willoughby, 2016), recruited to fill the posts created by the booming economy has increased (Boyle, 2011, p. 144). These expatriates have created a new situation in the country and have obliged the people to create a combination of Arabic, English, and Urdu in the stream of their conversations. They also required international schools for their children. A recent research done by the International Schools Consultancy (ISC) shows that "the UAE has the highest number of English language international schools in the world" with 511 English language international schools ("The UAE has the highest number," 2015). Thus, their huge percentage in the population has affected the linguistic scene at societal and educational levels.

The extensive use of English in different domains of life has become a source of a strong concern over the fate of Arabic among Emiratis and Arab nationals in the UAE (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). Many experts are warning that Arabic is at risk of becoming a foreign language in the UAE (Pennington, 2014), and of “being replaced by English,” which prompts concerns about the preservation of national identity and culture (Amandolare, 2010). These concerns stem from the fact that due to the population nature of the UAE, Arabic has fallen behind English and Hindi to become only “the third most-spoken language in the United Arab Emirates” (Ibid). The AHDR (United Nations Development Programme, 2003) has also warned that Arabic is facing a glaring crisis in the Gulf region due to the marked absence of a real language policy at the national level, and due to the lack of development in the Arabisation of the sciences, the chronic deficiency in translation, and the significant lack of appropriate research which contribute to the alarming distortions in first language proficiency among the native speakers of Arabic (as cited in Karmani, 2005, p. 95).

Even though Arabic, with more than 300 million native speakers, will survive, as one of the world’s major languages, in places such as the UAE, Amandolare (2010) argues, Arabic has become endangered. The author considers it quite ironic how Arabic is losing ground in its own land and those whose first language is Arabic are losing it, while “those outside the Middle Eastern countries are working hard to learn Arabic language.” However, despite using English as the lingua franca, English proficiency is not gained. Valdini (2012) says that “Dubai is one of the poorest cities in the world for its proficiency in the English language.” She stated that “the emirate was ranked 49 out of 54 countries ... in the EF English Proficiency Index.” However, according the 2018 EFL English Proficiency Index, the UAE in 2018 was ranked 71 (Education First, 2019) among the countries who have very low proficiency, which shows that the situation is getting worse, not better despite the attempts and reforms to foster more English in education at the expense of Arabic.

2.3. Education in the UAE

2.3.1. Pre-Tertiary Education

Education is given a special attention in the UAE, which is demonstrated by allocating approximately 25% of federal government spending for education (Ozisik, 2015). The Ministry of Education operates and supervises public and private schools

in the UAE except for Abu Dhabi which established ADEC (Abu Dhabi Education Council) to supervise public schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In Dubai, Knowledge & Human Development Authority (KHDA) monitors the quality of education but public and Arabic private schools are still monitored by the ministry of education through secondary level with the Northern Emirates. This was valid until September 2017 when Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed AlNahyan, the president of the UAE directed “to unify the country’s education system and standardize the model of the Emirati school on a national level” (Masudi, 2017).

The education system of the UAE in general is divided into public and private sectors; the public schools are geared for national students. Arabic is the language of instruction for all subjects, and English is taught as a second language even though there are plans to use English to teach Math and Science in the near future. However, the private sector, which has initially started to meet the different expatriates’ religious, cultural and education needs, is growing faster with more nationals joining private schools than public ones (Gaad et al., 2008). The International Schools Consultancy (ISC) report (2016) showed that Emirati students compose the largest student nationality (50%) of the students enrolled at international schools in UAE (“UAE leads the world,” 2016). This is a result of the parents’ ‘lost confidence’ in public schools and their belief that private schools have better teaching methods and a greater emphasis on English, which justifies for them leaving free education and paying very high fees (Ahmed, 2011).

The linguistic scene in the wider society is not reflected in the language policy in the pre-university education. There is no bilingual programme for teaching English and Arabic in public or private schools that reflects their importance in the UAE society. It is either/or policy where students in public and Arabic medium instruction private schools have mostly poor proficiency skills in English, students in international schools have poor proficiency in Arabic. Public and private schools do not give equal attention to these two languages. Swan (2015) argues that students who come from public schools tend to have stronger Arabic language skills than those who studied in private schools who are not even able to “use Arabic for communication purposes effectively, particularly the written form.”

2.3.1.1. AMI Schools

Public and private schools that follow the ministry of education curriculum can be

classified as Arabic medium instruction (AMI) schools. The only difference is that public schools are geared only for Emirati students while private Arabic schools are for Arab and Emirati students. English is generally poor and of low quality that does not help students attain the required proficiency to excel in EMI universities. Ozisik (2015) points out that the UAE government believes that in public schools, “an insufficient knowledge of English remains a major employment barrier for UAE citizens.” Latest reforms, as Pennington (2016) pointed out, aimed to enhance the students’ readiness for higher education, so that students will get into college without a foundation year and will meet the goals outlined in the National Agenda’s vision 2021. So, despite the fact that Arabic is still the language of instruction, the ministry introduced new subjects in English, which are: “life skills, health sciences, business and entrepreneurship, technology and entrepreneurship, creative design and thinking” (Pennington, 2016). Also, Arabic and social studies curriculum has been revised (Ibid). The year 2017 was “an eventful year for education in the UAE,” as described by Masudi (2017), who stressed that “UAE education begins a new chapter,” a year that is marked “by curriculum changes and strategies, new courses and regulations, and greater focus on student wellbeing.” At the start of the new academic year 2017, schools began teaching Moral Education in Arabic, which is mandatory from grades one through nine. September of 2017 also witnessed the unification of schooling under the new common education system where all government and private schools that follow the government curriculum adopted the ‘Emirati School Model’ (Masudi, 2017). In the academic year 2016-2017, the ministry of education reduced the Arabic classes to 4 sessions a week while allotting 8 sessions for English.

However, the students who participated in this study did not witness these reforms. They are now year three, four or five (2017- 2018), so they have studied before the latest reforms that were initiated in 2017. They studied the old curriculum which was using Arabic exclusively to teach all the courses. Arabic was given more importance than English in the public and Arabic private schools. The maximum grade allotted for Arabic was 200, while the maximum grade for English was 100. Also, eight classes a week were allocated for Arabic language lessons, while five classes a week were allocated for English. Arabic curriculum was rich and had literature, grammar and writing. In contrast, English was easier and simpler. The English books were written for the UAE schools. “On Location” was used for grades 1 till grade 12,

which is a series of books that cover topics related to the UAE. The language is simple, and students have relatively short lessons with related questions. They had two books for each class; student book and exercise book. The student book has the lessons, while exercises and grammar are done in the exercise book. Arab teachers who are holders of BA in English language and literature teach English in these schools. Teachers are supposed to focus on the four skills by doing exams in listening and speaking as well as in reading and writing. However, the simple curriculum and the limited time available for teaching the language left students unable to finish the school with the required language skills necessary for university requirements. In the study that Masri (2014) did in UAE public schools, she reported teachers blaming the whole educational practices that do not support language proficiency. She reported one teacher saying, "How can we expect our students to be proficient in English when they only study it as a subject for five classes a week?" (Masri, 2014, p. 49).

2.3.1.2. International Schools

International schools' teaching of Arabic tends to be very poor and is almost done because it is a requirement by the Ministry of Education. Private schools are required by the Ministry of Education to teach Arab students six Arabic language classes a week from the Ministry Arabic language books until grade three, and five classes a week until grade six, after which a minimum of four classes a week of Arabic classes ("The board of the Knowledge (KHDA)," 2007). However, if they have non-Arab students, they should teach four Arabic language classes per week for all grades from Arabic language books for non-Arab speakers, which is compulsory up to grade nine (Ibid). However, the quality of teaching Arabic for Arab students in these private schools is mostly of low quality. The inspection report of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority's private schools revealed that "the general poor quality of teaching Arabic is the most persistent bugbear in the sector" (National editorial, 2014). Issa (2013) describes teaching Arabic in private schools that follow the International Baccalaureate curriculum as a 'disaster.'

2.4. Educational Reforms in the UAE

Given that "the UAE's education system is relatively new, having grown from humble beginnings just over forty years ago" (O'Sullivan, 2015, p. 426), it has witnessed lots of changes and reforms that targeted at providing students with "problem-solving and

critical thinking skills necessary for the twenty-first century” (Ibid, p. 427). These reforms have been necessary since many international agencies have repeatedly pointed out that the primary and secondary education in the UAE is of low quality which is documented in students’ low rankings on most international standardized tests (Badry & Willoughby, 2016). The acknowledgement of these drawbacks in education was the reason for initiating several reforms that aimed to improve the quality of education. Moreover, reforms were also in response to the forces of globalization (Donn & AlManthri, 2010). The late nineties of the last century witnessed many ‘reforms’ in the educational sector that were initiated with the ‘Vision 2020.’ The core of these reforms was the adoption of policies that foster more English (Badry and Willoughby, 2016).

Despite the many reforms that the educational sector has witnessed, they have been always criticized for being inadequate. There are many factors that can explain this inadequacy. According to Belhiah and Elhami (2015), these unprecedented developments in the educational arena in the last decade, coupled with modernization and globalization, have unfolded so rapidly that left little time for reflection, recalibration, adjustment, or consolidation. The authors argue that amid the rush to reap and secure the advantages that English proficiency supposedly provides, the evidence that supports that claim or what the required cost for sustaining such an effort was not thoroughly explored. Dr. Mouza criticized the educational systems in the UAE and said that “the educational process is always subjected to major problems that are not solved because educational institutions have not matured.” She called on the authorities to draw up a strategy and avoid ‘importing curriculum’ that has not been instilling creativity among youngsters and has not given them models to follow. Consequently, she warned saying, “There is a great problem-our culture will vanish” (Nazzal, 2001).

Another reason that would contribute to the failure of the educational outcomes in the UAE might be the language policies in the UAE, which have been noticed to be fluctuating and changing. Many experiments have been tried, implemented and then suddenly abandoned and something else tried and so on. The Ministry of education has implemented several types of schools such as ‘Model Schools,’ and ‘Partnership Schools,’ alongside the regular public schools following recommendations of the successive external consultants from different countries such as the USA, UK, Finland, Singapore, Australia and many others (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 119).

Thus, the instability of education policies has also contributed to the inadequacy of educational outcomes and the failure of reaching the wanted goals.

The latest decision that would affect education at schools and higher education was announced on February 8th, 2016 when His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid AlMaktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, introduced some changes to the structure of the government which included merging the ministries of Education and Higher Education into the Ministry of Education which supervises all levels of learning, from nurseries to higher education. Merging the two ministries is said to aim to prepare students for higher education and to ensure more harmony and alignment, which will therefore, in the words of Dean Hoke, co-principal of Edu Alliance, “enhance the ability of the Federal Government to promote and direct lifelong learning throughout the UAE” (as cited in Swan, & Hanif, 2016).

While some academics perceive that this unification of ministries brings alignment, coherence, efficiency and innovation to the education sector in the UAE, other concerns are raised about “the loss of a dedicated ministry for higher education” because they believe that having ministry of higher education ensures it has the political attention, the funding and support that it deserves. Some worries are also raised over the autonomy of higher education. The authors of the AHDR argue that “one of the main features of many universities in the Arab world is their lack of autonomy, i. e., they fall under the direct control of the ruling regime” (as cited in Swan, & Hanif, 2016). This lack of autonomy has resulted in a situation where universities run according to the requirements of the governing political agenda and not according to an educational strategy. This feature is common in the Arab world where higher education is characterized by a centralized bureaucracy which “implies a high degree of centralization and intervention from the governments/ministries of education to control all the educational institutions” (Al-Sulayti, as cited in Nour, 2011). Thus, higher education institutions lack independence, and are therefore subordinate to the negative effects of state bureaucracy, institutional rigidity and lack of transparency. They also sometimes lack a proper articulation of educational policies, planning, organizational development, monitoring, and assessment (Nour, 2011). The Ministry of Education has accomplished curriculum reform in the academic year 2016-2017 which aimed at “enhancing the students’ readiness for higher education and competitiveness in the job market’ and “to make sure that 100

per cent of the students, by 2018-2019, can get into college without a foundation year.” The reforms aimed at raising the standards by selecting new textbooks that are aligned with the international standards and by hiring new English-speaking teachers to teach new subjects (Swan, & Hanif, 2016).

2.5. Higher Education in the UAE

2.5.1. Public Tertiary Education

Higher education in the UAE is relatively new. This observation of its short history is telling “since higher education institutions, and universities in particular, require a long time to consolidate their institutional structure, and to foster their role in the dissemination and production of knowledge” (Nour, 2011, p. 399). The first national university; the UAE university, was opened in 1977 with Arabic as its medium of instruction. Since then, “considerable public and private investments have led to a tremendous expansion of the higher education sector” of a large number of public and private colleges and universities that offer a wide range of programmes (Hijazi et al., 2008, p. 69). Public institutions are UAE university, Zayed University and The Higher Colleges of Technology, while all other institutions are private or semi-private universities (Ibid).

The forces of globalization and marketisation have impacted all facets of education in the UAE (Fox, 2007). However, the impact on higher education in the UAE has been so pervasive because “higher education is more vulnerable to international commercialization than is basic education” (Tollefson, 2006, p. 16). A ‘Westernization’ wave swept the public universities in the UAE and other Gulf countries by the beginning of the twenty first century which transformed them into American model institutions (Badry & Willoughby, 2016). Over time and with changes in priorities due to globalization and economic pressures, the UAE Ministry of Higher Education has changed the goals from local to global prospects. Upon its establishment in 1991, the Ministry declared that its mission was “to place emphasis on the principles and precepts of the true religion of Islam and to provide learners with Islamic and Arab culture” (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015, p. 6). The vision has changed with the current ministry of higher education which aims to “promote the graduation of highly qualified and globally competitive staff” while its mission has changed to be aiming to “contribute to the knowledge-based society and sustainable development of UAE by providing educational programs and services in accordance

with international standards of quality and excellence” (Ministry of Education, 2016). This change was demonstrated when in 2005, the UAE university moved from “classroom instruction in Arabic to instruction almost entirely in English” because the leaders envisioned that English will be the language of commerce (Boyle, 2012, p. 320). Changing the medium of instruction from one language to another is a very critical decision that has lots of repercussions and connotations. Moreover, English became a gatekeeper for admission into these universities.

Federal institutions have almost the same admission requirements. In Zayed university and UAEU, as reported in their websites, EmSAT English score of 1250, or Academic IELTS overall score of 5.5, or TOEFL iBT total score of 71 is required for admission. EmSAT (The Emirates Standardized Test) is a national system of standardized computer-based test, based on the UAE’s national standards (MoE Website, 2019). It has been introduced in 2018 to replace or to be used as one of the assessment options beside TOEFL or IELTS in measuring grade 12 students’ skills and knowledge before they move to higher education in the UAE institutions and to provide decision makers with data about students’ English proficiency for college admission and placement (MoE, 2019). Because state school pupils are taught almost entirely in Arabic, few students are able to go directly to university. Most take foundation classes in English, which delays their graduation and consumes a large chunk of the higher education budget (O’Sullivan, 2015). Concerns have been also raised about the cost of bridge programs. That is why by 2018, all bridge programs in the federal universities were planned to be dismantled to cut down the budget (Ibid). However, till now, foundation programs in Zayed university and UAEU are still up and running.

2.5.2. Private Tertiary Education

Globalization has also resulted in the tendency to adopt western models of higher education as benchmarks and to accept Western quality assessment standards as criteria for educational outputs (Badry, & Willoughby, 2016, p. 28). However, this adoption was not systematic as it was not clear which model would be adopted because the contemporary socio-economic evolution that the UAE has witnessed created an urging demand to establish institutions that are similar to universities and colleges in the advanced capitalist world because stakeholders felt that the most efficacious way to join the global world and to reach development was through

importing the knowledge available from the west (Badry, & Willoughby, 2016). However, amid the rush to adopt western models, there was a clear confusion of whether the models are 'American-inspired' or 'Anglo-American' or just any western model of higher education. Also, the acceptance of these new organizational forms in higher education- 'accreditation', 'quality assurance, which are believed to transform the regional education systems of the Gulf and to replace them with structures, systems and processes that are located elsewhere, might not only represent 'policy borrowing' but also 'cultural replacement' (Donn & Al Manthri, 2010).

In the 1990s and 2000s, the UAE began to reorganize higher education and permit the establishment of western-inspired institutions. However, Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah took different approaches towards opening western universities on their land (Badry, & Willoughby, 2016). Abu Dhabi opened prestigious branches of high-profile New York University and Paris-Sorbonne universities, while Dubai was more of an 'education malls model' by providing universities with infrastructure in free trade zones and attracting a much larger number of less prestigious institutions (Ibid). Sharjah took another route and established University City which is, as Badry and Willoughby (2016) state, "one of the most important education hubs in the UAE and the region both in terms of quality and quantity" (p. 80).

Even though opening these branches of marquee universities might improve their international cachet, there are doubts about their ability to improve the education systems in the Gulf states (Krieger, 2008). Establishing these branch campuses of American and European institutions which are required to offer identical courses and to follow identical regulations as in their home institutions was in the hope that graduates would have the same prestige as the home campus (Badry & Willoughby, 2016). However, this is not guaranteed because, as Krieger (2008) argues, "a good university is not just a university that borrows a curriculum or a few teachers from another prestigious university" (p. 10) because many experts pointed out that what works in America might not work in the middle East and might not be in students' best interests. Krieger (2008) argues that American universities cannot operate in the Gulf region following their usual criteria and standards. He reports one American professor saying that she could only teach light versions of the courses she usually teaches back in the USA because students here have basic skill issues that include "poor study habits and limited math and science skills" (p. 10).

Having these branches is more motivated by financial considerations. Kirkpatrick (2011) argues that the 'Anglo' universities that have campuses in international locations, that offer English medium courses to foreign students in their home countries, have a primary economic purpose. Krieger (2008) also points out that the motivations for most of the universities that decided to open up 'shops' in Abu Dhabi are financial. He quoted Daniel Ballard, director general of the Sorbonne in Abu Dhabi, saying, "It is a pity but I must say that we are only in Abu Dhabi because Abu Dhabi proposed to pay for all of our expenses" (Krieger, 2008, p. 9). Moreover, even though the UAE and other gulf countries cloned Western higher education institutions, adopted English-language curricula, and most importantly accepted the demands of the western definitions of 'quality', 'standards', 'benchmarks', "they have little control, other than a purchaser and consumer, over the language or the artefacts of that language" (Donn & Al Manthri, 2010, p. 23). Building knowledge society cannot be done through importing scientific products, and through depending on cooperation with universities and research centres in advanced countries without creating the local scientific traditions, and institutional frameworks that form the basis for knowledge acquisition (Nour, 2011).

In the light of the absence of effective innovation and knowledge production systems in the Arab countries, and the lack of rational policies that ingrain those values (Nour, 2011), all these attempts to create clones of Western universities might not lead to building a real knowledge society. However, this combination of increasing cross-border collaborations with the adoption of common modes of ranking and accreditation has had clear implications on the language of instruction (Badry & Willoughby, 2016). In all universities in the UAE, whether they offer joint degree programs with universities from the West, or they are network branch campuses or are collaborating to obtain Western accreditation, "these developments have meant that instruction is in English" (Ibid, p. 37).

2.6. The Institutional Context of the Study

The study took place in three universities in the UAE. Doing the study in three universities aimed to have a large number of participants and to get more credible and valid results that can be generalized. The three universities use EMI while offering elective courses in Arabic and English. The first university, named here as university 'A' offers all majors in English and offers electives in Arabic and English.

Students can choose to take them in Arabic or English. University 'B' offers all majors in English except for Islamic studies and Humanities. All other majors are offered only in English with elective courses offered in Arabic and English. In the third university, which is 'C' the majors are taught in English. Electives are offered in English only except for Islamic culture, UAE society and Arabic which are offered in Arabic and English. The surveyed and the interviewed students are studying their majors in English. Some of them took their elective courses in Arabic and some took them in English.

2.6.1. First University (A)

The first university uses English as the language of instruction for all majors. Arabic is used for elective courses that are offered in English too. Its minimum required average for accepting an application is 80 percent or more in the final year of secondary school, or 80 percent or more in the last three years of secondary education. However, higher averages apply for certain programs in the university. In terms of English proficiency, the university places great emphasis on high English proficiency in order to be accepted in it. So, applicants must have a score of at least 80 on the Internet-Based TOEFL (IBT), or a score of at least 550 on the Institutional Paper-based TOEFL (ITP) or a score of at least 6.5 on the academic IELTS.

Students who do not meet the university admission standards go to the Bridge Program. English is a real gatekeeper in this institution because of the high grade that students should obtain prior to being admitted to university. However, a closer look at the numbers of students shows that the majority of students are Arabs. The university website shows a table of the number of the Fall 2017 undergraduate top 10 nationalities in the College of Engineering which shows that the total number of Arabs is 1,665 out of 1972 engineering students, which makes Arab students the majority in the university (Figure 1). The university has College of Architecture, Art and Design, College of Arts and Sciences, College of engineering, and School of Business Administration.

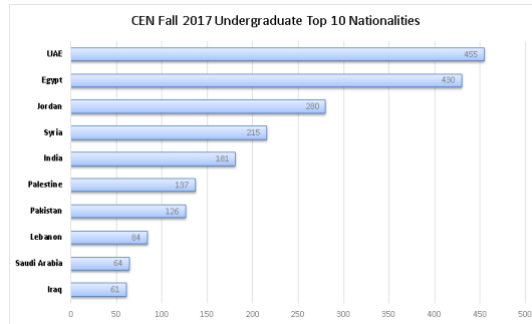


Figure 1: Undergraduate top 10 nationalities

2.6.2. Second University (B)

English is the language of instruction in all major programs offered at the university. It is the medium of instruction in the Colleges of Engineering, Business Administration, Fine Arts and Design, Sciences, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Health Sciences, the English Language and Literature program and International Relations program in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences; and Mass Communications program in the colleges of Communication. The students in the “English medium majors” are required to present a proof of English language proficiency Test of 5.0 in IELTS, or 61 in (IBT), or 500 in paper-based TOEFL. However, Arabic is the language of instruction in the Colleges of Shari’a and Islamic studies, Law, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences except for the English language and literature, and International Relations program, the program of Law in the Community College, Public Relations program in the College of Communication (University Website, 2018). The total number of enrolled students at Bachelor level in 2015-2016 was 12169. Arabs from the UAE, the GCC (Gulf Council Countries) and other Arab countries make 10, 949 out of the 12,169. This shows that the majority of enrolled students are Arabs.

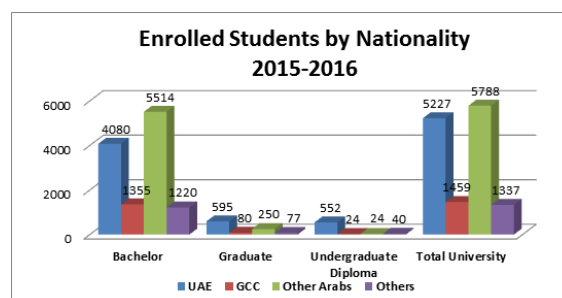


Figure 2: Enrolled students by nationality

2.6.3. Third University (C)

The third university is licensed by the UAE Ministry of Education-Higher Education Affairs. All of its programs are accredited by the Ministry of Education through the Commission for Academic Accreditation. Instructors are holders of PhDs and Master degrees. They are recruited internationally. PhD holders teach four sections and are expected to do research and publish while Master holders teach five sections which makes 15 teaching hours a week. They are also required to hold office hours for each of the sections they teach to meet with students.

2.6.3.1. Admission Requirements

The university has general requirements and program specific requirements. The general requirements include having high school certificate obtained from the UAE or its equivalent English proficiency requirement is part of the admission requirements. All students are required to present a certificate of English proficiency; a minimum of PBT 500/61 IBT in TOEFL or a minimum band of 5.5 in IELTS. Students who do not meet these required proficiency criteria in English should register in the university's English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program.

2.6.3.2. The University's Programs

The university offers programs in seven academic schools; six undergraduate programs which offer Bachelor degrees in: Architecture and Design, Business Administration, Communication and Media Studies, Engineering, Applied Sciences and Technology, Public Health and Health Sciences, and school of Graduate studies which offers two Master programs; the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master in Information Technology Management and Governance (MITGOV). The university also has English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program which is available for those who need additional English language skills; those who did not get 5.5 in IELTS.

CHAPTER 3- REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The study aims to critically analyze the views of the Arab undergraduate students of the impact of EMI on their competence in Standard Arabic and on their Arab identity. Chapter three provides the rationale for framing the study within the theoretical critical framework, reviews literature on neoliberalism, globalization and higher education, language policy and EMI. It also examines CLIL approach. Then, the impact of EMI on language proficiency is highlighted with an emphasis on the nature of language proficiency, and language attrition. Also, the relation between language and identity is explored in the light of EMI.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the intellectual structure that guides the study and informs the views of the researcher of the data and is a specially-designed set of lenses that a researcher uses in order to see the world in a particular way (Troudi, 2010). Moreover, having a theoretical framework helps keep research, from its inception till its end, consistent and logically coherent because an absence of vision will definitely lead to contradictions and inconsistency (Crotty, 2003). Thus, the theoretical framework enlightens the research process and guides it in all the steps. Based on my belief that medium of instruction policy is a political decision that has been normalized and accepted without questioning, but is resulting in the marginalization of Arabic and the powerlessness of its speakers, this study is informed by a postmodern critical approach based on critical applied linguistics that is concerned with “a critique of ways in which language perpetuates inequitable social relations” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 11) through “turning skeptical eye towards assumptions, ideas that have become ‘naturalized,’ notions that are no longer questioned” (p. 7). English-medium instruction is one of the areas that has been widely accepted without questioning or problematizing. It “has become *the normal* medium of instruction in higher education” (Crystal, 2004, p. 37, *Italics added*). Adopting a critical stance is motivated by my own observation that the choice of English as language of instruction is causing repression, inequality and marginalization, which is aligned with the critical paradigm that is concerned with revealing and exposing these inequalities, and repression. Studies that critically examined the use of English as medium of instruction have warned that the unchecked use of English as MI might not just marginalize Arabic but might lead to

its demise (Badry & Willoughby, 2016; Troudi & Al Hafidh, 2017; Findlow, 2006). Adopting English as MI is also perceived as a symptom of neo-colonialist power politics that has relegated Arabic in the UAE as non-useful language and Arab culture as 'other' (Findlow, 2006). Troudi and Al Hafidh (2017) argued that by making English the medium of instruction, we will not just be marginalizing but making dead our Arabic language. They allegedly believe that despite the awareness of the waning status of Arabic, there is no clear strategy to revive it or help it regain its status because "the real problem lies in the official educational position of Arabic when compared to English and the unwritten messages that the current language of instruction policy sends out about Arabic" (p. 104). Besides, such policy plays a major role in expediting Arabic's erosion "as a channel for academic and scientific context" (Ibid, p. 106). This policy has "downgraded Arabic in favor of English" (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 192). This shows that Arabic is marginalized and is in need for critical assessment and scrutiny.

Even though Critical Applied Linguistics (CALx) has been affected by critical theory, it differs from its emancipatory modernist version that develops a critique of social and political formations but offers only 'utopian' alternative visions. CALx proposes a postmodern- problematizing practice that is unwilling to accept the taken-for-granted components of our reality and the 'official' accounts of how they came to be the way they are. However, this critical stance does not seek an alternative truth but rather the constant questioning of these assumptions (Pennycook, 2001). Thus, critical applied linguistics, in this frame of thought, is not concerned with producing itself as a new orthodoxy, with prescribing new models and procedures. Rather, it is concerned with raising questions about knowledge, politics and ethics, with the aim of raising awareness through problematizing concepts and practices that have become naturalized and taken for granted (Pennycook, 2001). This postmodern-problematizing stance also turns on itself and implies an awareness of 'the limits of knowing' of the critical researcher. Pennycook (2006) says that critical work has always to be self-reflexive.

Postmodernism is "a philosophical questioning of many of the foundational concepts of received canons of knowledge" (Pennycook, 2006, p. 62). It is the restive problematization of the given and is anti-essentialist and anti-foundationalist (Ibid). It should be understood as "a skeptical view of the world that tries to take nothing for granted" (Pennycook, 2006, p. 62). Thus, it calls into question any claims to

overarching truths such as human nature, enlightenment, or emancipation. It makes us skeptical about talk of reality, truth, or universality. This attempts to understand things in more local terms rather than in terms of grand theories or utopian dreams of equality, that makes it hard to believe in notions such as emancipation. Adopting this postmodern-problematizing approach in this study implies questioning the use of English as medium of instruction with the aim of raising awareness to the effects of this practice on Academic Arabic language that suffers tremendously from being absent from the academic arena, which is contributing to its weakness and rigidity.

3.2. Neoliberalism, Globalization and Higher Education

Universities are the nucleus of the advancement of nations. As stated by Masri (2018), "It is critical to recognize that teaching institutions are not merely neutral settings in which educational practices are implemented but are powerful places that function as frameworks that create and sustain meanings and values" (p. 19). However, unfortunately HE is one of the public goods that neoliberal policies have heavily focused on and have succeeded to apply their metrics of "customer satisfaction of students" (Young, 2014, p. 34). Unchecked, the neo-liberal agenda for higher education continues to gain momentum through marketizing higher education and applying the economic theory of the market to higher education (Jones-Devitt, & Samiei, 2011). These changes towards commercialization of the university are refracted through the prism of neo-liberal ideology that is mainly an economic and political process of transformation par excellence, which has little or nothing to do with education, knowledge production or the wellbeing of staff or students (Gibbs, 2011). In principle, according to Furedi (2011), there should not be any objection for universities' competing for funds and selling their research, however, it should be resisted when this economic activity leads to the marketization of education because what represents a cause for concern is the intellectual, cultural, and pedagogic impact of these marketization policies. Higher education is prejudiced and compromised by marketization when "the presence of a market dimension necessarily causes an impaired pedagogical relationship" (Barnett, 2011, p. 43). These forces of the "market-driven logic of neoliberal capitalism" have altered the educational goals from being concerned with excellence and equity, to being excessively obsessed to conform to the corporate demand of having "the skills,

knowledge, and credentials to build a workforce” that can compete in the global economic markets (Giroux, 2011, p. 153). Education now is increasingly perceived as a social commodity that sees economic utility as the primary value and that learning equals earning (Morrison, 2017). Because of this view of education, universities, which are supposed to be global in the sense that knowledge is sought after without constraint, are now regarded as “businesses, and knowledge is treated as commodity” (Giroux, 2011, p. 153). Economic competitiveness has become the primary mode of measuring competition between nations, and the university is being re-evaluated and re-envisioned in light of this (Young, 2014). As a result of the prevailing power of neoliberalism, the conceptual understanding of the university’s role in contemporary society has undergone dramatic change driven by an underlying shift in the way in which countries compete in a globalized world (Young, 2014). Moreover, ‘accountability’ no longer refers to intellectual quality or truth-seeking but has come to mean acceptability to corporate-driven neoliberalism, while degrees are certified in terms of employability of graduates (Phillipson, 2009). University organizational systems are mostly “ineffectual, costly, isolated, and prey to neoliberal accountability pressures” (Levin & Greenwood, 2011, p. 33) that shape their policies.

The predominant neo-liberal concerns are reflected in the mission statements of universities whose most frequent words used reflect and extol prioritizing globalization, marketization, commodification and internationalization through the use of words like ‘*world*’, ‘*leading*’, and ‘*international*’ which are used as market strategies (Sauntson, & Morrish, 2011). This is very clear in the UAE where employability of graduates and economic growth are the two primary incentives of higher education that is declared very clearly in the vision and mission of many universities based in the UAE. Dedousis (2018) mentioned that more than two thirds of UAE colleges have not developed their own mission statements but have replicated the mission statements of the parent institutions in home countries. He also suggests that the mission statements of UAE colleges and universities are dominated by a market philosophy.

Barnett (2011) argues that there is no way of escaping from the presence of ideology in higher education which is represented in marketization as one of its ideologies. He considers marketization a genie that cannot be put back into the bottle which necessitates living in and with the marketised universities. However, Gibbs (2011)

argues that in our crowded world of training, skills and education providers, what might give universities 'the competitive edge' they are seeking is resisting the tools and consequences of consumerism instead of embracing them. In higher education, there is a concern over replacing worthy education that facilitates human experience, endeavor and imagination with void educational propaganda if universities continue following the traditional marketing practices (Gibbs, 2011). Other more pessimistic views consider that the only thing that will prevent universities from being technical training institutes and "free-for-service research shops under direct external control" is a radical transformation of universities (Levin, & Greenwood, 2011). Tony Morrison wittingly warns that "if the university does not take seriously and rigorously its role as a guardian of wider civic freedoms, as interrogator of more and more complex ethical problems ..., then some other regime or menage of regimes will do it for us, in spite of us, and without us" (as cited in Giroux, 2016, p. 142).

The growth of English-medium instruction in higher education is the major aspect of neoliberal agenda in education. These neoliberal policies have used the internationalization of HE to exploit "the market value of the English language and of the term 'international'" (Hu, & Barnawi, 2015, p. 545). It is claimed to be mainly attributed to the wish to internationalize education and commercialize it by its proponents who believe that English is "without a shadow of doubt the dominant language of university internationalization" (Hazel & Mortensen, 2013, p. 3).

However, a closer glimpse into the use of English as a medium of instruction shows the opportunistic view of education in the light of marketization and neoliberalism. Ennser-Kananen, Escobar and Bigelow (2017) argue that "within the language education arena, neoliberal discourses often surface as ideologies and processes that promote the commodification of language" (p. 16) Thus,

the entry of neoliberal ideals into the education sphere has caused language programs and departments to be shaped to meet the demands of the corporate sector; so much so that decisions as to which languages should be taught and for what purposes have escaped the hands of many teachers and students and are instead driven by profit-oriented principles of marketing experts (Escobar, & Bigelow, 2017, p. 16).

Neoliberal ideologies have penetrated contexts of learning language in ways that consolidate powerful languages in their dominant positions. Because of these ideologies, the innocent delight of learning has been commodified, and turned from being an intrinsic good into a saleable one (Grant, 2009, p. xii). The most prominent

example is “English, which has become synonymous with economic growth and prosperity” because many countries perceive it as their access to prosperity and economic mobility, as the free market mindset promises (Ennser-Kananen, Escobar, & Bigelow, 2017, p. 17). However, it cannot be denied that the fast-growing role that English plays internationally is both a product of neoliberalism and a promoter for it because it is associated with social, linguistic, political, intellectual, cultural, and economic advantages (Hu, & Barnawi, 2015). In conclusion, modernization should not be taken as the reason for “the wholesale adoption of a Western curriculum and use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education” for science, math and technology (Badry, 2012, p. 95).

3.3. Language Policy

Language policy needs to be seen in the light of opposing views and paradigms that see language policy from different lenses. There are two major language policy options presented to language policy makers with regard to English worldwide: *The diffusion of English paradigm* that is characterized by a ‘monolingual view of modernization and internationalization’ and is distinguished by having certain features such as capitalism, science and technology, ideological globalization, Americanization, and unification of world culture and *the ecology-of-language paradigm* which seeks linguistic diversity, promotes multilingualism, and considers linguistic human rights to speakers of all languages at the heart of any language policy (Hornberger, 2002; Wiertlewska, 2012).

Within *the diffusion of English* paradigm, language policy is seen as a response for the need for English as the global language and the language of science and technology. It makes sense, according to Crystal, to teach advanced courses in English to better prepare students since English is the medium of knowledge, especially in science and technology. He points out that because “access to knowledge is the business of education” (Crystal, 2003, p. 111), English has been chosen by many nations as the medium of instruction. In this light, choosing English is “always educational- in the broadest sense” (Ibid).

Language policy in the UAE also reflects the awareness of the role that English plays in the world economy. So, from the diffusion of English paradigm, the UAE is adopting English to prepare its workforce to function through a good command in

English. Also, the wider social, cultural, political and educational factors have helped lay the foundations for an EMI policy in most of the tertiary institutions in the UAE as English represents power, success, modernism, liberalism, and equality as well as a departure from the old fashioned and didactic educational systems (Tollefson & Tsui, 2014). Troudi and Jendli (2011) argue that the proponents of the diffusion of the English paradigm in the UAE, and in the Gulf in general, employ “discourses of social progress, economic and technological advancement, global communication and trade as forces behind an inevitable EMI policy at the tertiary level” (p. 26). Within this school of thought, policy makers and academics take ideological and practical decisions regarding the learning of English and through English which is the vehicle of economic viability, the backbone of having competitive national workforce, and the means for having an active role in this era of globalization (Ibid).

The mainstream literature might be myopic, or implicated in reproducing the oppressive systems of class, race and gender (Casperken, 1996). While English is seen by one camp as a liberating force and unifying countries, it is seen by others as a divisive weapon used by political and corporate power brokers for the sake of control, power, money and cultural values (Troudi, & Alhafidh, 2017). From an *ecological stance* that is critical of language policy, language policy involves the “development of public policies that aim to use the authority of the state to affect various aspects of the status and use of languages by people under the state’s jurisdiction” (Schmidt, 2006, p. 97). Shohamy (2006) defines language policy as “the primary mechanism for organizing, managing and manipulating language behaviours as it consists of decisions made about languages and their uses in society” (p. 45). These ideological decisions are manipulative tools that determine which languages to be legitimized, used, learned and taught, which languages to be given status and priority in society and which language to be considered “important for its economic and social status” (Ibid).

Therefore, language policy becomes on the political agenda when political actors see that they need to intervene if something important is at stake regarding the status and/or the use of language in society (Shohamy, 2006). However, Johnson (2013) rejects the traditional view of policy that mistakenly portrays it as “something that some governing entity or polity enacts” and that when the word ‘policy’ is heard, people are often tempted to think about “government policies or laws or some type of regulation that comes from on high” (p. 7). This description, according to Johnson, is

not very accurate since language policies exist across many levels from the top governmental laws to the everyday language practices of a family; they range from the official regulations to the unofficial principles and cultural constructs within a community. Johnson (2013) offers a very comprehensive definition of language policy and suggests that it is “a policy mechanism that impacts the structure, function, use, or acquisition of language” which includes official regulations that are often enacted through written documents to effect change in the form, function and the acquisition of language, and unofficial covert, de facto, and implicit mechanisms that are connected to language ideologies and practices which have the power to regulate language use and interaction within communities (p. 9). In the same vein, Tollefson (2000) argues that language policy refers to “a wide range of governmental and non-governmental actions designed to influence language acquisition and language use” (p. 13).

Critical language policy (CLP) eschews apolitical language policy and planning (LPP) approaches. Pennycook (2001) argues that there is nothing inherently critical about language policy, but the problem mostly lies in these apolitical approaches to language policy that maintain a ‘veneer of scientific objectivity’ that deliberately avoids addressing the larger political and social matters within which language change, development, use and planning are believed to be embedded. Instead, CLP entails an implicit critique of these approaches and considers that policies have the power to create and to sustain multiple forms of social inequality. It “takes up an overt political agenda to establish or to argue for policy along lines that focus centrally on social justice” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 18). CLP perceives policymakers as people in power who are able to promote the interests of dominant social groups (Johnson, 2013). CLP researchers believe that an important political principle should be to enable the people who will experience the consequences of language policy to play a major role in creating these policy decisions (Tollefson, 2006).

Critical language policy, which is also informed by some of the tenets of critical theory, considers policy the mechanism that locates language within the social structure and determines who has access to political power and economic resources (Johnson, 2013). It is also the mechanism used by the dominant groups to establish hegemony in language use (Johnson, 2013). Tollefson (2006) explains that the term ‘ideology’ refers to the subconscious assumptions that have become naturalized in a way that contributes to hegemony. He clarifies that when these hegemonic practices

are built within the institutions of any society, “they tend to reinforce privilege and grant its legitimacy as a ‘natural’ condition” (p. 47). Thus, the focus of CLP research is questioning the reproduction of such systems of inequality and revealing the explicit and implicit policies that contribute to hegemony (Tolleson, 2006). Reagan (2002) suggests that language planning can be either a tool to empower groups and individuals, create and strengthen national bonds and maximize educational and economic development or it can be used to perpetuate oppression, social discrimination, and educational inequality.

Spolsky and Shohamy (2000) argue that “the process of making a language policy is complex” (p. 9). What makes it more problematic and complex is that the nation-state is under many pressures that may be beyond its control which turns language policy into regulating and addressing the symptoms rather than the causes (Phillipson, 2006b). Language policies are successful when they adopt a feasible plan to change the existing language practice into the desired one while considering the existing users of the language and their willingness to accept these changes and modify their repertoire (Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). It is so important because language policy may have no effect if they ignore the existing language practice, or if they are refused or resisted by the people who are expected to effect the change (Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). Another element that affects language policy is globalization. It is one of the pressures that serves as the legitimacy mask of a policy aiming to universalize particular interests and traditions of the economic and political powers, while “presenting it as a norm, a requirement, and a fatality, a universal destiny” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 84). Within the CLP paradigm, the spread of English is not seen as a process for an individual to willingly learn a new language, “but rather as a mechanism for the destruction of cultural identity and the imposition of an economic order ... in a capitalist economy” (Tollefson, 2006, p. 47). Tollefson (2006) argues that an important area of current concern in CLP is the value of language rights in education.

3.3.1. Language-in- Education Policy

Language education policy (LEP) refers to “a mechanism used to create de facto language practices in educational institutions” through imposing and manipulating language policy by those in authority who have the power to turn ideology into practice through formal education (Shohamy, 2006, p. 50). Through LEP, authorities

carry out LP decisions in the contexts of schools and universities and decide on the use of home languages, foreign and second languages (Shohamy, 2006). Language planning is a deliberate attempt that aims to affect the linguistic situation and to influence or modify the linguistic market (Bull, 2013). Schiffman differentiates between overt and covert language policies. He suggests that overt LPs are explicit, formalized, and manifest while the covert LPs are implicit, latent, and unstated (as cited in Shohamy, 2006). Thus, it is very important not to take the overt language policies at face value, but to dig inside to examine “what actually happens down on the ground, in the field, at the grass-roots level” (Ibid, p. 51). Thus, language policy has the power in determining the languages and their uses in education and society; therefore, the understanding of the language policy can be achieved through observing the impact of these very devices that are often subtle and hidden from the public eye but have power to determine de facto practices (Shohamy, 2006). Ferguson (2006) argues that because the different levels of education interlock, where the output of one level is generally the input of another, higher levels of education tend to exert considerable and undue influence on lower levels. Thus, where English is the medium at university, pressure develops for that language to be employed also as a medium at secondary level. Therefore, the pressure which comes largely from “parents and pupils, who harbor aspirations, no matter how unrealistic in practice, of progressing to university” is understood (Ferguson, 2006, p. 191). As Zakharia (2010), who studied language and education policies in Lebanon, points out, "changing the language of instruction at the college mean[s] that all schools who [feed] their students into the college would also need to change their language policies" (p. 159).

3.3.2. EMI in the UAE

Using English as a medium of instruction in postcolonial countries has been interpreted from different ideological perspectives (Badry, 2012). One of these widespread frameworks is what Pennycook (2001) calls, ‘celebratory postcolonial ideology’ that explains the adoption of English on the basis of functional and pragmatic considerations by policymakers. From this perspective, embracing English in the educational system is justified by expediency criteria; that implementing English saves huge efforts and time that would be otherwise required if a national language were to be used because for a national language to serve the needs of

globalization and the knowledge society of the 21st century, it would need to undergo standardization reforms and corpus planning which might not be easily achievable and may lead to social tensions. Another justification is that not choosing English as MI runs the risk of cutting off future citizens in the periphery from the international and research communities and increasing the barriers of access and participation in the production of knowledge in this global age (Badry, 2012). McLaren (2011) argues that the use of English as MI in the UAE is implemented because policy makers are, with no doubt, keen on rapidly developing the country and helping it to take its place amongst the elite countries in the world, and out of their genuine belief that English is the medium to modernity and development.

However, from another perspective, it is believed that neoliberalism disguises within a covert form of language policy to impose English as a neutral and natural medium of academic excellence and is therefore responsible for the massive power of English (Piller, & Cho, 2013). When English is used as the MI and as a requirement for acceptance to institutions of higher education, its power is perpetuated as well as the domination and influence of the speakers in the inner circle and their ideologies because these mechanisms turn ideology into practice (Shohamy, 2006). This is evident in the UAE where “English is now firmly established as the de facto medium of instruction of almost all tertiary and technical education” (Karmani, 2005, p. 94). Even though education policymakers know that mother tongue MOI renders significant educational benefits in most contexts, they prioritize the political agendas over educational ones when the two agendas come in competition for political reasons (Tollefson, & Tsui, 2014).

3.3.3. Discrepancy between Language Policies at Pre-Tertiary and Tertiary Levels

In the UAE, the situation is made complex because it is not clear whether language policy is a top-down or a bottom-up one (Troudi & Al Hafidh, 2017). While language policy at schools seemed until recently to be motivated by national agendas, higher education seems to be motivated by global and pragmatic ones. Even though more English subjects are finding their way to the school curriculum, Arabic remains the language of instruction at AMI schools, and English is taught as a foreign language (Gitsaki, Robby, & Bourini, 2014). Findlow suggests that “the linguistic bifurcation of the educational stages is coterminous with that between localism-authenticity and

globalization-pragmatism” (p. 27). Arabic is assumed to supply communication needs in childhood and therefore, the Ministry of Education in the UAE “emphasizes the importance of fostering Arabic culture” at that stage; however, the transition to learning in English requires a changed cultural mindset and therefore Higher education adopts English which has high socio-economic status, and is associated with modernism and internationalism (Findlow, 2006, p. 27).

Studying in AMI schools and then moving to EMI universities is one of the hurdles that students face. Shohamy (2006) argues that violating human rights has two forms: When students are forced to learn in the prestigious language without recognizing their previous knowledge or their home languages which results in loss of academic knowledge, and when these rights are given and then taken away as it is the case in the UAE when students are granted the right to learn via Arabic language but then this right is taken away at the university level when they have to learn through the medium of English. Shohamy (2006) says, “Not all rights can be viewed positive” (p. 89). She explains that when home language is used as a medium of instruction in schools and not in higher education, and then the language of education at tertiary level is the dominant language, “in such cases when rights are granted at a certain point but taken away at another point” (2006, p. 89), it is severe human rights violation. Sayahi (2015) argues that the impact of the change in the language of instruction is so sharp that it is very similar to immigrating from one educational system to another in a different county. In their study, Leung and Lu (2018) pointed out that the students who studied in Chinese medium instruction secondary schools faced more difficulty adjusting to the EMI environment at university level, which made them wish they studied in English at schools.

3.4. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

The use of English as a language of instruction is not a new idea. It has been introduced as a method that goes beyond teaching second language as an additional language to be the language of teaching content courses. One of the most prominent approaches is the CLIL, which is defined as an educational approach where content subjects are taught through the medium of a foreign language to students in mainstream education at primary, secondary, and also tertiary level (Dalton-Puffer, Nikula, & Smit, 2010). CLIL has become an umbrella term to cover “learning through any language that is not the language of the learner” (Ball, as cited

in Bonces, 2012). The purpose of using CLIL is to double the exposure to the language, without adding language lessons in the timetable (Bonces, 2012, p. 183). Even though the first 'L' in CLIL is meant to stand for any language, Dalton-Puffer (2011) argues that it would be an extreme case of denial to claim that it is the reality in the light of the overwhelming prevalence of English as CLIL medium outside the English-speaking countries. It would be fairer and more realistic, according to Dalton-Puffer (2011), to use CEIL, or "content-and-English integrated learning" (p. 183) because the dominant CLIL language is English, which reflects the fact that a command of English is increasingly regarded as a key literacy feature worldwide. However, CLIL is mostly dominant in Europe where most of the studies on CLIL come from.

Even though its proponents claim that CLIL is a 'dual-focused approach' that gives equal attention to language and content, provides additional proficiency in the language of instruction as well as the expected subject knowledge, and is "obtained at no cost to other skills and knowledge" (Marsh, 2006, p. 24), there are some voices of criticism of its validity in studies of practice. There is an incipient debate in Europe that "CLIL might have adverse effects on advanced L1 academic language proficiency, but no research on this is available at the moment" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 189). Dalton-Puffer (2011) sees CLIL a 'brand name' that is often considered to equate with success by 'CLIL activists.' Paran (2013) states that in many contexts, CLIL serves a number of agendas that are of political purposes and is a politically driven move. He warns that if such policies are poorly implemented, and we have reason to believe that it is, this "could contribute to a 'lost generation' of young people's learning" and the promised panacea will be a major contributor to this loss (Paran, 2013, p. 336).

It is noticed here that in CLIL, a foreign language, not a second language is used which means that the language of instruction is the one that students encounter mainly at school and is not regularly used in the wider society they live in (Paran, 2013). Dalton-Puffer (2011) emphasizes that CLIL is "an educational model for contexts where the classroom provides *the only site* for learners' interaction in the target language" (p. 182, Italics added). Thus, CLIL emerged to help students gain proficiency in the target language with no cost for the first language. These conditions do not exist in the UAE because English prevails in the outer society and students' exposure to Arabic in academic contexts has been rare. Another thing is

that the theoretical similarities between EMI and CLIL have encouraged some authors and academics to consider EMI an offshoot of the CLIL approach. However, “the shift towards EMI in European and Asian universities has been more about policy than pedagogy” (Corrigan, 2015, p. 161). EMI is based on ideological and political rather than on theoretical foundations, as it is the case in the UAE universities. Reaping the benefits of English language is the major motivation for adopting it as a language of instruction.

Research studies on CLIL and its impact on the Arabic language in the Arab world or the UAE are rare. Even though this educational practice is widely used and is affecting the lives of many Arab students in the Arab world, it is not investigated in depth. One of the few studies was the one done recently by Younes (2016) in which the author investigated the impact of CLIL on private school students’ L2 learning, L1 knowledge and content learning. The study revealed that the students’ proficiency in English was better than their proficiency in Arabic. The study also showed the participants’ concern over the negative impact that CLIL has on the students’ first language.

3.5. EMI and Other Academic Languages

3.5.1. Academic Language proficiency

Academic language refers to the “language that stands in contrast to the everyday informal speech that students use outside the classroom environment” (Bailey, 2007, p. 12). Academic language and everyday language are neither the same nor do they automatically develop simultaneously; still, there is no clear distinction between the two (Slotte-Lüttge & Forsman, 2013, p. 19). Everyday language does tend to involve more contextual clues, whereas academic language tends to be more cognitively challenging and more laden with uncommon terminology (Ibid). Cummins (2003) notes that a native-speaker of any language comes to school at the age five, virtually a fully competent user of his/her language, having acquired the grammar and sociolinguistic rules of the mother tongue. Then, it is the school’s role over 12 years to extend that basic linguistic repertoire into more specialized domains and functions. For academic Arabic, the situation is more complicated since it is not spoken at home and students do not come to school competent in speaking it. This makes the role of the school more important and more crucial in helping students acquire the academic Arabic language proficiency. Standard Arabic, which is considered the

high variety of Arabic, is the language used for writing, education and administration (Ahmad, & Bani-Khaled, 2014). Ahmad and Bani-Khaled (2014) clarify that “Standard Arabic has been used in school, universities, news” and that writers and scholars use it in highly formal contexts. They add that “Arabs use standard dialect in prepared speeches or in formal writing” (p. 182). So, the Standard Arabic is the written and spoken high variety of Arabic. It is the language accepted to be used in educational contexts, where it appears as ‘academic Arabic.’

Cummins argues that academic language proficiency (CALP) is what schools focus on developing in this endeavor, which he defines as “the registers of language that students acquire in school and which they need to use effectively if they are to progress successfully through the grades” (p. 64). These registers include the conventions of different genres of writing and the ability to use these forms effectively in academic contexts. In the same vein, Snow and her colleagues in their research concluded that even though the native language used at home enhances the conversational skills, it does not directly enhance the cognitive language skills needed in the classroom context which are the most predictive of school success and academic literacy (as cited in Cummins, 2003, p. 64). Conversational abilities develop relatively quicker because they are supported by interpersonal and contextual cues and make relatively few cognitive demands on the individual, while the mastery of the academic functions of language is a more challenging task because it requires high levels of cognitive involvement and are only minimally supported by contextual or interpersonal cues (Ibid). However, CALP or “cognitive academic language proficiency is not synonymous with literacy. It is manifested in oral interactions in academic contexts as in written interactions” (Cummins, 2003, p. 70). CALP can be defined as “expertise in understanding and using literacy-related aspects of language” (p. 70). Cummins argues that the distinction he makes is a reflection of the difference between the language proficiency acquired in interpersonal interaction by virtually all six-year-old children and the proficiency that develops through schooling, literacy and manipulating language in cognitively demanding and context-reduced situation.

3.5.2. The Impact of EMI on Academic languages in HE

First language is so important that it is “often viewed as a very specific gift, a marker

of identity and a specific responsibility vis-à-vis future generations” (Fishman, 2001, p. 5). However, using English at the expense of the national languages has resulted in “a number of challenges at all levels, but nowhere is the juxtaposition of English and national languages clearer or more significant than at the tertiary level” (Reagan & Schreffler, 2005, p. 122). Universities see that the functional knowledge of English is an important outcome of a university education, which deprives the national languages from developing technical lexicons and literatures which are basically developed in the university and professional contexts, “and if English is the medium of communication in these contexts, then there will be little support for linguistic development of the national language” (Ibid). It appears to be “part of a nascent, intercontinental systemic shift in higher education” (Corrigan, 2015) to have proficiency in English as a prerequisite since an increasing number of courses are offered in English, which makes proficiency in academic English highly required (Olsson, 2016). Thus, competence in English has become “a linguistic *sine quo non*” in higher education (Reagan & Schreffler, 2005, p. 117). When English has a higher status than the first language, we need to question whether English-medium instruction is an appropriate choice as the students may lose interest in maintaining a mother tongue with lower status if education is offered in a language with high status (Airey, 2009).

However, we need to ask, “What does the expansion of English signify for the future of other languages of scholarship?” and how can the educational system be able to create proficient users of English, and achieve this goal in harmonious balance with proficiency in other languages? (Phillipson, 2009, p. 211). Many voices have been warning that ‘the cuckoo’ English, as Phillipson (2006a) calls it, is definitely going to push other languages out of their own territorial nest, if it has not already done that. Many studies have argued that the growth of English means less emphasis on other languages, which threatens their existence as academic languages (Brock-Utne, 2001). Brock-Utne (2001) argues that the dominance of academic English in higher education might affect students’ ability to express themselves in their native language both in oral and in written form. She points out that if students are able to discuss professional matters in their mother tongues in addition to other languages, “they are getting a valuable additional linguistic competence” but when English is learned at the expense of the mother tongue, not in addition to it, English is subtractive. Brock-Utne (2001) warns that if a mother tongue is not used as the

medium of instruction and communication at the highest academic levels, it will be drastically reduced and will be consequently replaced by the dominant language, which is subtractive learning. Skutnabb-Kangas (2008) argues that learning a new language, including the dominant language, should not be done subtractively but in addition to the mother tongue. She adds that subtractive formal education that cares about teaching the dominant language at the expense of the first language is genocidal. Badry and Willoughby (2016) blame the educational reforms in the GCC countries that pushed for the use of English as MI for “the declining proficiency in MSA among students when they opted for using English as MI” (p. 181). While some studies reported that the use of English as MI improved students’ competence in English, others showed no proficiency gains in English. Rogier (2012) aimed in his study to assess students’ English language skills while studying in English-medium universities in the UAE. His research indicated a “statistically significant increase in all English skill area on the IELTS test for all the participants after four years of English-medium instruction at the tertiary level” (p. 122). However, Dafouz, Camacho, and Urquia (2014) in a study they carried out to examine the effect of teaching in English upon Spanish students’ academic performance, compared to their peers who studied via their mother tongue found that using English as a language of instruction didn’t seem to have a negative impact on students’ academic performance. However, King (2014) reported that English is rather a barrier and that “learning is happening in spite of the EMI policy rather than because of it” (p. 190). He explained that the quality of the education has been contested due to content reduction and skills avoidance because of the use of English as MI. He clarified that “if courses were taught in Arabic, it might be possible to cover more content and get students to write more as they would be more confident in their own language” (p. 190). This is supported by linguists who point to the fact that “reading textbooks in English may lead to weak acquisition of academic knowledge [because] one learns best in one’s mother tongue” (Andreassen, as cited in Brock-Utne, 2001, p. 228). King (2014) warns of the consequences of “ignoring Arabic learning at the post-secondary level in favour of wholesale English” (p. 190) and stresses that studying through English forces teachers to lessen the cognitive load for students which compromises the quality of education and that studying in EMI universities would result in students’ conscious or subconscious distancing from their mother tongue. Chapple’s (2015) study in Japan concluded that “the idea that

merely taking a content class taught in English will lead to substantial linguistic gains is dubious” (p. 4). Chapple specifically argues that “merely teaching a course previously taught in the national language in English alone is unlikely to achieve significant linguistic benefits” (p. 8) as it is the case with the participants of this study who previously studied in AMI schools. Overall, the findings remain inconclusive, as AlBakri (2017) said, “since many variables other than EMI could affect students’ language proficiency such as context, individual learner differences and teaching styles” (p. 48). More research is needed to find out how much language is gained in these programmes and how much of the academic content is actually achieved (Shohamy, 2013).

3.5.3. English Dominance and Arabic Marginalization in HE

The power, influence and dominance of English cannot be clearer than it is in the academic world, especially in the areas of science and technology (Reagan, & Schreffler, 2005). The sweeping power that English enjoys in academia has forced many postcolonial countries to choose English that has become so deeply rooted in their soil, and consciousness (Canagarajah, p.1). In global higher education, “English has become the dominant teaching language” and “a medium of knowledge production and dissemination” (Shin, & Kehm, 2013, p. 3). This overwhelming prevalence of English as medium of instruction comes at a cost. Phillipson (2006) argues that when English learning occurs combined with neglecting local languages, “the likely result is cultural rootlessness, blind acceptance of the dominant world disorder, and uncritical endorsement of more English, irrespective of the consequences for other languages” (p. 201). He adds that “if *English-medium universities* are part of this ‘global’ project, they are more likely merely to oil the wheels of the current inequitable economic system, contributing to social injustice” by adopting exclusive English-medium instruction which manifests their monolingual myopia and their complicity in linguistic neoimperialism (Phillipson, 2009, p. 210-211).

In a response to the increasing use of English as the medium of instruction in schools and universities in countries like the UAE, where western institutions and curricula are imported, many are voicing concerns about “the Arabic language being sidelined and relegated as ‘non-useful’ and the Arabic culture being cast aside”

(Ahmed, 2011, p. 119). The imported education and emphasis on English have begun sidelining Arabic resulting in the Arabs' linguistic and cultural loss because of the "incorporating institutional policies that require courses to be taught in English to the exclusion of Arabic" (Ibid, p. 122). Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2001) argue that if indigenous languages are not seen as a priority at tertiary level, and if they are not developed further, "their ability to compete on the national as well as international level will be significantly impeded" (p. 297). Cullinon (2016) also suggested that using English as medium of instruction at higher education "could have a dramatic effect on the native Arabic, as it takes a secondary role in academia and economy and could ultimately lead to Arabic being undervalued" (p. 65).

Arab students' competence in academic Arabic at university level has been reported to be undeveloped. Badry and Willoughby (2016) argue that "it is no secret that proficiency in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) has declined among literate young generations in many of the GCC countries and elsewhere in the Arab world" according to many research studies across the GCC which revealed how millennial generations recognize that they have lacuna in their Arabic literacy skills but hold a relatively negative perception of the value of SA in the labor market or in the knowledge society (p. 180). Swan (2015) reported how an increasing number of university Arab students say that "they are more comfortable speaking in English than their mother tongue." Badry and Willoughby (2016) have put in a nutshell the current case of university students' perceptions of their proficiency in Arabic saying:

Educated young Gulf Arabs generally admit to having low proficiency in writing in MSA and prefer to use English in written communication in formal contexts. In fact, they willingly confess to their low writing skills in MSA. It is fashionable and a symbol status to admit that one's Arabic literacy skills are weak because it suggests that the person is 'modern' and has been educated in a Western/private institution either at home or abroad (p. 188).

If Arabic continues to be absent from the higher educational scene, it will definitely lose its academic role. Arab students' low proficiency in Academic Arabic is just a reflection of the poor proficiency in Arabic in the wider society that uses English, not Arabic as the de facto language of communication. The value of knowledge of Standard Arabic is low among Arabs (Haeri, 2000); thus, fluency and high proficiency in SA is not widespread among them (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 185). This might be attributed to the fact that contrary to the Standard English that is associated with higher social classes and educated elites, Standard Arabic is not.

Arab elites have generally been educated in European languages and do not have high proficiency in Arabic. Modern secular higher education relies heavily on foreign languages as media of instruction. As a result, “highly educated elites generally continue to use a foreign language in all formal and academic functions” (p. 188). In fact, the higher social class is, the less likely it is for the Arab to learn it well (Haeri, 2000). Thus, it can be concluded that

contrary to expectations where knowing the standard variety confers some form of power, proficiency in MSA is a valued commodity in narrow circles such as poetry, literary and religious domains. These domains have emotional and nostalgic values but little market value in today’s Arab societies. It is proficiency in English that opens important social and business doors that cannot be opened with proficiency in MSA alone although it may be a plus. Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 188.

3.6. EMI and language attrition

So, if the target of EMI is to improve the students’ English proficiency, it might lead to first language attrition and students might lose their literacy skills in SA as a result. As Crawford (1998) points out, “Unlike natural species, languages have no genes and thus carry no mechanism for natural selection. Their prospects for survival are determined not by intrinsic traits, or capacity for adaptation, but by social forces alone” (as cited in Pennycook, 2004, p. 215). When a language is no longer used as a medium for academic discourse, the students’ mastery of that language cannot be expected to attain the level that it did when it was used as a medium of instruction (Wong & James, 2000). More research is needed to assess the impact of the fast-growing expansion of EMI on L1 such that “it may lead to a situation where no academic textbooks are published in the home language with the linguistic and social consequences that this might entail” (Dearden & Macaro, 2016, p. 458).

3.6.1. First Language Attrition

For a long time, the knowledge and acquisition of the first language have been thought to occupy a privileged status in the human brain (Schmid & Kopke, 2007). This faulty assumption has delayed the research in first language attrition, which is relatively new. Researchers have started raising questions about the possibility that a native language that was acquired in infancy can be forgotten or even lost, and if that occurs, under what circumstances and to what extent? (Schmid, & Kopke, 2007). De Bot and Hulsen (2002) suggest that “[n]either first languages nor second

languages are immune to loss. With non-use they fade, and though they keep their place in our memory system, they become less accessible up to the point where the knowledge has sunk beyond reach and is for practical purposes lost” (p. 253).

Attrition develops in both; bilingual individuals and bilingual societies, whether they are in indigenous or immigrant communities, and is characterized by “gradual loss of competence in a given language” (Negrisanu, 2008, p. 13). Even though attrition can affect the full range of the attritor’s linguistic competence and performance, the lexicon is the most “‘vulnerable’ or ‘sensitive’ part of the linguistic system, where attrition manifests itself first and most extremely” (Schmid & Kopke, 2009, p. 211).

L1 attrition is a very complex phenomenon that even after many years of diligent investigation in L1 attrition, theoretical and methodological questions still by far outweigh the answers (Kopke & Schmid, 2004). Jimenez (2007) argues that “despite the numerous efforts dedicated to the study of language attrition in the last two decades, language attrition remains one of the most enigmatic areas in the field of linguistics” (p. 242). In fact, “L1 attrition is a highly complex process that ... depends essentially on the particular circumstances of each speech community” (Ben-Rafael, 2004, p. 166). In recent decades, L1 attrition has been considered one of the typical processes of change that occur among languages in situations of contact. However, researchers do not regard all L1 changes as indications of attrition.

de Leeuw (2009) proposes a very detailed definition of first language attrition and describes it as “the non-pathological, non-age related, structural *change* to a first language within a late consecutive bilingual, assuming that acquisition of the first language precedes its *change*” (p. 11). The term ‘loss’ in her definition emphasizes that “the first language was, in fact, fully acquired and that the ‘changes’ occurred thereafter” (Ibid). Stolberg and Mu (2010) define first language attrition as the increasing difficulties in the retrieval and the accessibility of formerly available linguistic competence due to ‘untrained-ness’ as a result of lack of exposure and practice. Language use or disuse is so much connected to language attrition.

Attrition, as Schmid and Jarvis (2014) suggest, is a process driven by two factors: “the presence, development and regular use of a second linguistic system,” and “a decreased use of the attriting language, potentially leading to access problems” (p. 730). Therefore, attrition will be more pervasive among those individuals who rarely or never speak their L1 in daily life, while those speakers who use the L1 regularly

will to some degree be protected against its deterioration. This assumption is based on the simple fact that rehearsal of information can maintain accessibility. Measuring this loss is quite complex. Language performance of a bilingual cannot be equated to his or her actual competence. The elements of the native language which deviate from the norm, may in fact be stored and in the proper environment retrieved. Sharwood-Smith (2001) differentiates between competence and performance. He defines competence as the linguistic knowledge a person possesses, while performance is the use of this knowledge. Since research has shown that gaps in knowledge affect use and lack of practice affects linguistic knowledge, it is very difficult to distinguish these two notions (Ibid). Kopke claims that “L1 attrition in late bilinguals is not only the consequence of lack of L1.... Intense L2 contact might generate changes in linguistic competence” (2001, p. 355). She suggests that “performance attrition reflects difficulties in *control of native language knowledge*; whereas competence attrition entails a restructuring of what is known about the language” (as cited in de Leeuw, 2009, p. 14). She suggests that competence and performance in first language attrition go through three distinct phases. The first stage is characterized by systematic deviations in performance while competence remains stable. In the second stage, which is transitional, bilinguals develop a new hybrid variety, but are still able to switch back to the old variety. The last stage is characterized by a reduced competence and a decrease in the structures that are available to the speaker (de Leeuw, 2009). When late consecutive bilinguals display deviations from the monolingual norm, it is assumed that at the very least, a loss of structural control which represents performance attrition is evident, although the possibility for permanency of loss cannot be discounted (Ibid). Another challenge in assessing language attrition is that “one cannot be sure how much of the initial language was actually acquired” (de Leeuw, 2009, p. 15) Thus, it is difficult to be certain if the deficiency is a result of losing it or that it has never been acquired in the first place. It is arguable that in some cases of language disuse, it might be a result of competence never having been attained (de Leeuw, 2009).

Researchers do not agree on whether incomplete learning of L1 increases the chances for losing it or whether fully acquired language can be also attrited. Tsimpli (2007) argues that “although L1 attrition presupposes the attainment of a mature state of L1 knowledge, it is important to point out the significance of accounting for

incomplete L1 in attrition studies” (p. 83). This incomplete learning is proved by the process of attrition itself. He argues that attrition selectively affects certain areas of linguistic knowledge that are more vulnerable than others. Therefore, it is possible that L2 dominance and subsequent attrition effects on L1 are not the only possible causes for the attrition. Thus, it could be argued that “the input the speakers received in early childhood was not sufficient in quantity and quality...to attain native competence in the first language” (Tsimpli, 2007, p. 95). Tsimpli concludes that if this is the case, then “L1 acquisition is incomplete in these learners” (p. 95). When linguistic knowledge reaches a certain threshold in a language, it can be immune to loss, as Jesnner (2003) argues. That is why it is very important that “the first language should not be abandoned before it is fully developed” (Hornberger, 2003, p. 23). However, de Leeuw, Opitz, and Lubin’ska (2013) argue that “it is accepted that a fully acquired L1 can undergo L1 attrition” (p. 669). They add that the question is whether the changes in the L1 affect the performance of the speakers and their processing of the language, leaving the underlying language structures or competence intact, or whether the competence and the knowledge itself is affected. Attitude plays a role in language attrition. The status and importance of a language are most often measured by attitudes of the speakers to their language (Baker, 2011). Crystal points out that if people believe that their language brings them no social advancement, they are less likely to want to use and maintain it. When young people see their language as irrelevant, they identify more with the new language, and here the old language might be ‘gradually eroded’ until nobody likes to use it because it has no prestige or status (Hilmarsson-Dunn, 2010, p. 7). Some studies have shown that attitude towards language is so important that, under certain circumstances, it determines the fate of language, be it its longevity or demise (Ibid). As far as I know and to the best of my knowledge, Arabic language attrition has not been investigated in depth in the Arab world. I have not found studies done on Arabic attrition in English language journals. This scarcity of studies makes this study very important because it might be the first one that spots light on the possibility of the gradual loss of academic Arabic language proficiency as a result of studying via English.

3.7. Standard Arabic: First Language or Second Language Debate

Many discussions have revolved around whether SA is a mother tongue, native language or second language. Fus'ha or Standard Arabic is the language of the Quran and "as such cannot be compared to any other human languages. It cannot [also] be modernized or simplified" while "dialects are conceived as corrupted forms that should be eliminated by proper education" and "have no official recognition despite the fact that their informal use is widespread" (Miller, 2003, p. 4). While SA is the official language of the 22 Arab countries, as Badry and Willoughby (2016) point out, it does not belong to any social, geographical, political or economic group. They add that "it is nobody's mother tongue but has been the unchallenged and recognized official standard variety of all Arab states until recent times" (Ibid, p. 179). Haeri (2000) suggests, "If we define 'mother tongue' as a language that is learned at home without instruction, there is no community of native speakers of classical Arabic" (p. 64). Assad and Eviator (2014) suggest that "the two forms of Arabic are different enough such that the cognitive system of children and adolescents treats them as two languages" (p. 650). The diglossic or rather the multiglossic nature of Arabic language is one of the factors that contribute to the difficulty of developing proficiency in SA (Badry & Willoughby, 2016).

However, in this study, academic Arabic is so important because it is the language used for literacy and education. Albirini (2016) considers that "together with QA, SA is the mother tongue of the Arabic-speaking people" (p. 50). He considers Standard Arabic as a mother tongue because "most Arab children are exposed to the two varieties from birth" (Ibid). He argues that even though children acquire colloquial Arabic from family, parents and community at large, they are exposed to Standard Arabic informally through watching cartoons and news, radio, religious speeches and sermons, books, prayers and Qur'anic recitations. Even though their exposure to SA may not be as rich as their exposure to QA, Albirini argues, it allows them to develop at least receptive skills in SA. He conducted a field study in Jordan in which he explored the comprehension of Arab children of five video clips in SA. None of the children had had formal education in SA. The videos were extracted from famous cartoon shows. The children, after watching the video clips, were asked in Standard Arabic questions about the general themes of the cartoon shows. The findings showed that all of the children could recognize the general themes of the clips

whether completely or partially. They could also identify very specific details that required meticulous understanding of SA. Badry and Willoughby (2016) argue that “in the Arab psyche there is only one ‘real’ Arabic, Classical Arabic (CA) and its descendant MSA” (p. 187).

In order to save threatened languages, Fishman (2001) argues that education should be offered in those languages which can operate as sole or, at least, as co-media. If the threatened language is not first acquired at home, before children arrive to school, as it is the case with SA, and if, in addition, it is not used out of school, as it is the case of Arabic in the UAE, then the school has much more difficult task on its hand, which is being the link in the established intergenerational sequence of teaching the threatened language (Fishman, 2001). Fishman (2002, p. 23) argues that “[the] staying power of sanctified languages within bilingual repertoires (Arabic and Islam) do not come and go the way quotidian vernaculars do. They may wax and wane, but due to the sanctity attributed to them, they do not disappear” (as cited in Al-Issa, 2017, p. 13). However, the connection to Islam is not a guarantee for the survival of Arabic since many Muslims do not speak Arabic. Hoefnagels (2015) argues, “Should no action be taken, then sometime in the very near future the Arabic language may well face the same fate as Latin.”

3.8. The impact of the use of English as MI on Arab identity

So, if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity -I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself. Until I can accept as legitimate [my language], and all the other languages I speak, I cannot accept the legitimacy of myself. Until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate..., and as long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate [sic] me, my tongue will be illegitimate. Anzaldua, 1991, p. 207, as cited in Kouritzin, 1999, p. 7.

3.8.1. Identity: definition and perspectives

Identity has recently moved to the center stage of social sciences and has been perceived from two contrasting views (Zhou-min, 2013). From the essentialist perspective, identity is regarded as fixed categories, a static entity and a complete whole (Ibid). The essentialist stance on identity as stable or non-changing is mostly rejected because “there is an absence of flexibility and it is difficult to apply such a theory to social reality, especially when this concerns language and its various manifestations in identity and culture” (Said, 2011, p. 192). Besides, the idea of static

identities seems irrational because the concept of identity cannot signify anything static, unchanging or stable, but is “always situated in the flow of time, ever changing, something involved in a process” (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, and Liebhart, 2009, p. 11).

From a social constructionism, critical approaches and postmodernism, identity is perceived as a social construct, not as a property of an individual, but as interactively initiated over and over, “so that the same individual can have different identities in different contexts” (Verschueren, 2008, as cited in Zhou-min, 2013, p. 79). Grad and Lusia (2008) consider identity as a unifying framework for the individuals’ processes of creating meaning while participating in all spheres of social activities as social actors (as cited in Zhou-min, 2013). Higgins (2015) argues that in the current era of the new millennium, the mechanisms of globalization have allowed to produce cultural and linguistic hybridity where “new millennial hybrid and alternative identities are made possible” (p. 377), especially with digital technology and the advent of social media where transnational learners connect the past, present and the future and access conversations on- and off-line (Norton, & De Costa, 2018).

The discursive construction of identity is circumscribed by various forms of power abuse and domination, as Zhou-min (2013) observes. In the critical approach, the process of identity is related with social conflicts and struggles that are derived from the particular structure of the social and discursive orders and the ideologies that support them (Zhou-min, 2013). Norton and De Costa (2018) argue that “power circulates in society at both micro and macro levels, constructing modes of inclusion and exclusion through and beyond language” (p. 92). Thus, “through this critical lens, researchers can examine more systematically how microstructures of power in communicative events are indexical of larger ideological practices and diverse forms of capital that impact learner identity” (Norton & De Costa, 2018, p. 92). The attitude and language identities that favor one language over another are not signs of the strength of any given language but of the political allegiance, and language policy that reflect choices favouring one language (Zwisler, 2018).

Llam and Watt (2010, p. 3) argue that “in spite of the ubiquity of the notion of identity in linguistic discourse, its exact nature remains elusive and its manifestations through language uses are as varied as they complex” (as cited in Zhou-min, 2013, p. 81). Ting-Toomey (2005) argues that the way individuals present their identities in social interactions depends on their feelings of social self-worth of themselves and of

others. In this context, “conflict of any kind is an emotionally laden, face-threatening phenomenon” (as cited in Tananuraksakul, 2012, p. 91). Tananuraksakul places security and dignity when communicating in English at the heart of students’ linguistic identities. Security refers to students’ self-confidence when they communicate with different cultural groups in English, while dignity refers to their self-worth when they communicate in English. He says that their confidence and dignity depend on their perceptions of their English performance. When they feel insecure, they perceive their ability in English to be incompetent. When they feel a lack of dignity, they perceive their English competence as low. Self-confidence is related to self-worth, “so self-confidence is a source of security that can boost speakers’ dignity” (p. 82). Tananuraksakul (2013) argued that “feeling confident or secure can neutralize the low level of non-native speakers’ English competence” (p. 103). Confidence is the essence because it is the key affective domain that facilitates learners’ spoken production which can significantly contribute to their readiness to speak in a foreign language (Ibid).

3.8.2. Arabic Language and Arab Identity

Ramzi Baalbaki (2008), the prominent Lebanese scholar and historian of Arabic language, argues that the Arabic language is the “DNA of a nation”; a repository of the common cultural lineage of all Arabs (as cited in Said, 2012). Suleiman (2006) argues that the constituents of Arabs’ national identity are: a common language, shared traditions and religion, but he prioritized language over religion as the bond among Arabs saying that Arabic language became “the bond of identity over religion, among those for whom the language is a common tongue” (p. 126). Abdulaliim (2012, p. 12) argues that “our way of escape from the trap of globalization is by supporting our Arabic and Islamic identity through realizing our unity in different spheres, particularly the linguistic one.” To preserve Arab identity, he suggests that Arabs should focus on strengthening the position of SA in education, media, and society at large. Hashimi (2012, p. 10) says, “if Al-Fus’ha becomes extinct, the Arab nation will lose its identity.” We need a reawakening of our national consciousness as Arabs because despite the awareness of the centrality of Arabic language to the future of a common Arab identity, using Arabic is facing a constant attack, especially that “modern Arabs no longer consider ... Standard Arabic as their only language of literacy” (Badry, 2011, p. 86). Al-Issa (2012) concludes that “if we view language as

a standard bearer of identity, then the gradual loss of Arabic in the UAE is a serious problem in need of immediate attention.”

3.9. Conclusion

The literature review shows that the use of English as MI appears to be driven by educational and pragmatic agendas while in reality it is a decision that mostly reflects political agendas that may result in marginalizing and sidelining the national language. The literature also showed that Arabic language has more complex issues because of its diglossic nature which makes learning academic Arabic restricted to academic settings that are currently taken by English in higher education. Also, it shows that the absence of the chances of using a language increases losing it, which means that not using academic Arabic at higher education might contribute to academic Arabic language attrition. However, it is clear that despite the importance of academic Arabic for Arabs, the studies that examined the impact of the use of English on academic Arabic tend to be rare.

CHAPTER FOUR-METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology adopted in this study and positions the study in the critical paradigm and provides the rationale for framing the study within the critical framework. It also presents the critical agenda of the research and the methods that are used in alignment with the methodology and in the light of the critical theoretical framework and the critical research framework. Data analysis and ethical considerations are also explained in this chapter.

4.1. The paradigm appropriate to the study

Before problematizing or questioning the use of EMI, the study aims to understand how students perceive their proficiency in Arabic and their identity as a result of studying via English. The study is also informed by the critical paradigm because using English as a medium of instruction is a highly political decision that expresses an unequal power relation between English, the preferred language in academia, and Arabic, the marginalized language.

4.1.1. The Interpretive Paradigm

Since the study aims to explore the students' perceptions of their proficiency in Academic Arabic and their multiple views and constructed realities (Grix, 2004), which is the result of their individual cognition (Cohen et al., 2011), the interpretive paradigm is part of the paradigmatic position. The interpretive paradigm can inform a study when the purpose is to understand and explore the attitudes and experiences of individuals in their unique context, capturing their unique thoughts, feelings, and meaning-making (Ernest, 1994). Understanding how Arab students interpret the use of English as the language of instruction and how it impacts their identity and their first language can be explored in the light of the interpretive paradigm. Interpretivism subscribes to the view that "the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it" (Grix, 2004, p. 83) because different people construe this knowledge in very different and diverse ways (Cohen et al., 2011). Thus, we depend on how the participants see the situation that is being studied (McKenzi and Knipe, 2006). Because social phenomena do not exist independently of our own interpretation of them and it is these interpretations that affect outcomes, researchers are an inextricable part of the social reality being researched (Grix, 2004). Interpretivism believes that objective analysis is not possible since knowledge is "theoretically and discursively laden and a researcher necessarily is the sum of his or her own

personal –and subjective-opinions, attitudes and values" (Grix, 2004, p. 84). Grix adds that interpretivism acknowledges the double hermeneutic as a means of understanding social actors in their society and their perceptions of their role or position in their context. These social actors give meanings to the world in which they live (Grix, 2004).

Since the ontological foundations of the interpretive paradigm believe that social phenomena cannot be observed, it affects the epistemological position. Therefore, its epistemology is that the knower and the known are inseparable because "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, 2003, p. 43). Moreover, knowledge is personal, subjective and unique. This imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects and a rejection of the ways of the natural scientists (Cohen et al., 2011).

4.1.2. Limitations of the Interpretive Paradigm

The interpretive paradigm aims to understand and explore the participants' views, but it is often criticized because it stops here and does not go further to critically challenge the underlying hidden agendas, or to go beyond the givens to critique the status quo. By combining the two paradigms, the study aims to explore while at the same time problematize and go beyond mere description. The interpretive paradigm is also criticized for aiming to understand the social reality through the participants' eyes who might be falsely conscious about their social reality (Cohen et al., 2010). However, the critical agenda of the study aims to question the 'false' consciousness that might be behind the powerlessness of individuals (Carr, & Kemmis, 2004). Also, the research takes into consideration all the quality criteria for qualitative research. 20 interviews were conducted with students from three different universities. They were conducted while realizing all the ethical considerations of conducting interviews. Also, it has been criticized for "going too far in abandoning the scientific procedures of verification and in giving up hope of discovering useful generalizations" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 25). However, in the interpretive paradigm, transferability replaces generalizations, which is ensured through accurate and detailed description of the design and the steps of the research. Moreover, the findings of the study are not intended to be generalized beyond the participants of the study since the research is exploratory in nature that does not claim the sample is representative of all Arab students studying in the UAE higher education.

4.1.3. The Critical Paradigm

The critical paradigm has a deliberate political intention, which is the emancipation of individuals and groups in an egalitarian society (Cohen et al., 2011). This paradigm is based on critical theory that considers much behavior is the outcome of illegitimate, repressive and domineering forces that operate in the interest of powerful persons or groups at the price of others' freedom and power (Ibid). Thus, it seeks to uncover these interests and to interrogate their legitimacy. Critical theory is not 'critical' in that it voices disapproval of social inequalities but in that it attempts to distil the historical processes that are responsible for systematically distorting subjective meanings (Carr, & Kemmis, 2004). It aims to realize a society that is based on democracy and equality through identifying and questioning the 'false' consciousness that is behind the powerlessness of individuals (Ibid). It seeks to bring into light the issues of repression, voice, power, representation, inclusion, and participation (Cohen et al. 2011). Critical theory aims to "uncover systems of exploitation, particularly those hidden by ideology, and to find ways to overcome that exploitation" (Tollefson, 2006, p. 44). Within the critical paradigm, criticalists reveal to participants how they might be acting in a way that perpetuates a system that keeps them disempowered (Ibid). The aim of critical research is to help the silenced and the powerless, and bring their problems to light (Cohen et al., 2011).

The epistemology, nature of knowledge, is that knowledge is not neutral but is determined by the social and political powers that define knowledge and shape it in a way that serves their interests. Knowledge is subjective and "meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject" (Crotty, 2003, p. 9). Knowledge is interest-driven. Because interests shape what counts as knowledge, those who have power determine what worthwhile knowledge is, which can deepen the powerlessness of the disempowered and reinforce the status quo (Cohen et al., 2011). This applies to the situation in Higher Education in the UAE where interests shape the selection of language and drive the language policy which keeps Arabic at disadvantage. In the critical paradigm, knowledge is also socially constructed that should have an 'emancipatory interest' that threatens the status quo (Cohen et al., 2011). Crotty (2003) defines emancipatory knowledge that the critical inquiry seeks as "knowledge in the context of action and the search for freedom" (p. 159).

The ontological reality is historical realism; the view that reality has been shaped by social, political, economic, and ethnic values (Scotland, 2012). In this reality, language contains power relations in that “it is used to empower or weaken” (Scotland, 2012, p. 13). In the reality of the context of the study, English is used as a language of instruction to empower English and its speakers and to weaken and marginalize Arabic, the mother tongue of Arab students. Reality, in the critical paradigm, is connected to power. Power relations and social bias form reality in the critical paradigm. Social behavior is the result of particular illegitimate and repressive factors, “illegitimate in the sense that they do not operate in the general interest- one person's or group's freedom and power is bought at the price of another's freedom and power” (Scotland, 2012, p. 28). The power of language is evident as it provides legitimacy. Saul (1992) said, when language is not controlled by military, political, financial or religious systems, “the public’s imagination can move about freely with its own ideas. Uncontrolled words are consistently more dangerous to established authority than armed forces” (as cited in Crotty, 2003, p. 114).

4.1.4. Limitations of the Critical Paradigm

Despite the promises that the critical paradigm holds for change, its aims and goals might be difficult to be accomplished due to the constraints of our reality. We need to be aware of the limits of knowing and the limits of doing as well. Scotland (2012) argues that “emancipation is not guaranteed” because even when “participants become critically aware of their situation, change may not be possible” (p. 14). There is a little evidence that critical research can make an emancipatory difference (Ibid). However, the study does not seek for emancipation and does not call for using Arabic instead of English. This seems very unrealistic because these decisions are made by the higher authorities and are influenced by many other factors that this study cannot directly affect or change. It might be a step towards equality and justice. Seeking emancipation might be very optimistic in a world in which power is often statute, and the reality of political power seldom extends to teachers or researchers who have little effect on the real locus of power and decision making, which often lies beyond our control, and little power on the workings of society at large (Cohen et al., 2011). Even though we cannot effect changes easily, still we can call into questions such practices that have become set in stone.

4.1.5. The Critical Agenda

The study aims to problematize the use of English and the impact of using it as MI on the participants' proficiency in Arabic language and their identity by questioning the policy. Problematization, as Janks observes, starts with the recognition that a situation is less than ideal. So, naming what is wrong in that situation as a problem constitutes the first step in the transformative critical agenda (Janks, 2010). Freire (1972) concedes that to humanly exist is "to *name* the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to its namers as a problem and requires of them a new *naming*" (p. 88). Locating the use of English within the broader, critical view of political and social context is also required in any critical agenda. Therefore, any attempt to depoliticize the notion of critical work should be resisted for critical work cannot be apolitical because problematizing any situation forces us to question the ethical and political situation (Pennycook, 2001). In the light of this view, "the understanding of education must see pedagogy as question of cultural politics, and the focus on politics must be accountable to broader political and ethical visions that put inequality, oppression, and compassion to the fore" (Pennycook, 2001, p. 334). After problematizing the use of English as MI, the study aims at raising awareness of the results of marginalizing Arabic in the academic context, which is suffering the consequences of the present policy of using the dominant language as medium of education. This policy is leading towards subtractive learning, in the realm of tertiary education, which will definitely lead to "the marginalization of Arabic, particularly as a language of academia" (AlRubaie, 2010, p. 17). Price (1999) suggests that consciousness is a prerequisite for the development of new conventions and practices that can lead to social emancipation. This awareness is necessary because, as Pennycook (1999) argues, "nothing will change unless people know things need to" (p. 336). He contends that the critical work has succeeded in avoiding the trap of articulating 'utopian' visions of alternative realities while seeing "the potential for change through awareness and emancipation" (Pennycook, 2001, p. 8). Fairclough clarifies that "raising consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others... is the first step towards emancipation" (as cited in Chacon, 2009, p. 215). This cannot be done unless participants "perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform" (Freire, 1972, p. 49). So, the study aims

at raising the awareness of the students in the first place towards their language. However, “attempting to liberate them cannot be done without their reflective participation” (Ibid, p. 65). Students need to be aware of the challenges using EMI entails for their language and identity because as long as they remain unaware of the causes of their condition, they fatalistically, as Freire (1972) suggests, are going to ‘accept’ their exploitation.

4.2. Research Questions

A very important part of the research process is clarifying the methodologies and methods applied and justifying choosing them. This justification is basically drawn from the purpose of research; with the research questions that the research is seeking to answer (Crotty, 2003). The study was informed by the following question:

1. How do Arab undergraduate students who studied in AMI schools perceive their competence in academic Arabic after studying in EMI universities?
2. How does the transition from AMI schools to EMI universities affect them psychologically, academically, socially and culturally?
3. What are the students’ views of the utility of Academic Arabic versus English?
 - a. How do they see the future of academic Arabic?
 - b. What is their preferred language of instruction?
 - c. Do they believe that Arabic can help them in their future jobs?
4. How do they perceive their Arab identity?

4.3. Research Design

Because the study aims to problematize the use of English as MI and raise awareness to the consequences on Arabic language and identity through critically examining the views of the students regarding their proficiency in academic Arabic in the academic context, exploratory critical methodology was adopted in this study with mixed methods data collection; which are questionnaires and interviews.

4.3.1. Methodology

The exploratory critical methodology aims to go beneath surface appearances to disrupt the *status quo*, and to unsettle neutral and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light the underlying and obscure operations of power and control. Thus,

its aim is to explore the students' perceptions of their competence in academic Arabic and their identity and to examine their interactions and proficiency in Arabic in the natural context which is their Arabic classrooms. Arab students' perceptions of their language and identity must have been shaped by several factors imposed by the prevailing political, educational and social systems. The goal of the study is to empower individuals studied in order to facilitate social change (Barab et al., 2004). This empowerment comes as a result of developing knowledge and critical awareness of the personal and political dialectic (Barab et al., 2004). It also aims to raise participants' awareness of the ways in which their daily lives are constructed, and to create a sensitivity to the role played by power differentials, and also to provide intellectual and practical resources for social and personal transformation (ibid). The study also aims to raise the participants' awareness towards "unrecognized social constraints and possible courses of action by which they may liberate themselves" (Karr & Kemmis, 2004, p. 157).

4.3.2. Research methods and data collection procedures

The methods used in the study should be consistent with the critical theoretical framework and the methodology adopted. A critical research will aim "at challenging and changing certain practices having identified a problem in the first place" (Troudi, 2015). Critical theory's methodology is dialogic that aims at the reconstruction of previously held constructions (Guba, & Lincoln, 1994).

4.3.2.1. Mixed Methods

A mixed methods research design, a procedure that combines the use of quantitative and qualitative methods, provides a better understanding of the research questions and research problems than using either method by itself (Creswell, 2012). Miles and Huberman (1994) state that "at bottom, we have to face the fact that numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world" and to convince the readers from different schools of thought (p. 40). Jick (1983) argued that "qualitative and quantitative methods should be viewed as complementary rather than as rival camps" (as cited in Flick, 2007, p. 92). By combining the two methods, using quantitative methods can 'persuade' the readers through stressing the use of established procedures and de-emphasizing individual judgement, "leading to more precise and generalizable results. On the other hand, qualitative research persuades through rich depiction and strategic comparison across cases'" (Miles, & Huberman,

1994, p. 41). Using mixed methods is pragmatic in that it rejects the either-or fallacy that is associated with the paradigm wars and focuses instead on ‘what works’ the best in answering the research questions (Punch, 2009). Therefore, combining the two approaches creates a third research model that allows “using these two in an articulated and harmonic manner” (Ponce, & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015, p. 114). The design was explanatory using sequential phases; quantitative followed by qualitative approaches. The use of sequential design was only in the order of the methods used since the analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the survey and the qualitative data obtained from the interviews was done simultaneously. In this two-phase mixed methods design, qualitative data help to explain and to build upon initial quantitative results (Punch, 2009).

4.3.2.1.1. Questionnaires

The main objective of using the survey was to get a general idea of the perceptions of students towards their proficiency in Arabic. 268 questionnaires were completed by undergraduate Arab students who are now in their third, fourth or fifth year of study.

Year of study	Number of students
Third Year	173
Fourth year	74
Fifth	19
Sixth year	2
Total	268

Table 1: Year of Study of the Surveyed Students

Prior to joining the EMI universities, they studied in AMI schools. Almost 500 questionnaires were distributed in the three universities; 200 in the first university, 200 in the second university and 100 in the third university. Because I had to exclude the students who were in international schools, who were in their first and second year, I ended up with 268 questionnaires completed by 137 females and 131 male students whose ages range between 19-27 years old as shown in the table below:

Age	Number of students
27 years old	4
26 years old	4
25 years old	6
24 years old	6
23 years old	25
22 years old	30
21years old	65
20 years old	75
19 years old	53
Total	268

Table 2: The age bracket of the surveyed students

They were 133 students in the first university, 76 students in the second university, and 59 students in the third university. The first university had the highest percentage of Arab students who were in Arabic schools, which might be due to different factors such as tuition fees, less IELTS score for joining the university and many other factors that attract Arab students in general and Arab students who were in Arabic schools in specific. That explains the reason behind distributing the same number of questionnaires but excluding more in the second university where most of the students come from International schools. The third university is smaller and had fewer number of students than the first two universities. The questionnaire participants were studying in different majors; engineering, medicine, business, media, pharmacy, biotechnology, and Law. Students were from different Arab nationalities with UAE nationals making 25% of the questionnaire participants as shown in the table below:

Nationality	Number of students
UAE nationals	67
Syrians	54
Jordanians	34
Palestinians	23
Iraqi	20
Sudanese	13
Egyptian	23
Saudi	14
Lebanese	6
Somalian	2

Libyan	1
Mauritanian	1
Yemeni	5
Moroccan	1
Omani	1
Algerian	2
Bahraini	1
Total	268

Table 3: Surveyed Students' Nationalities

Out of the 268 surveyed students who met the criteria of the research, 127 students volunteered to be interviewed by providing their details; names, emails, and mobile numbers in the last page of the questionnaire; 58 in the first university, 37 in the second university, 32 students in the third university. In the questionnaire, responding to the question of which school they went to, 73 students said they were in public schools while 195 students were in private Arabic schools. Students' previous high school was in the UAE; 106 were in Dubai schools, 122 were in Sharjah schools while 40 students were in Abu Dhabi schools.

After analyzing the interviews. I put all the questionnaires that provided me with their details together and contacted students. I put the questionnaires of the three universities separate in order to have representatives from the three universities for the interviews. The questionnaires provided me with some demographic information about the students and their background schooling, their emails and mobile phones if they would like to be interviewed. My sampling is purposive. I interviewed the students who were in AMI high schools in the UAE, in all the Emirates. Another thing is that some students may have been in international schools. So, their questionnaires were excluded and were not considered for the interview. The questionnaire also helped me identify the students who are in year three, four or five of their university studies (see appendix 8).

4.3.2.1.2. Construction of the Questionnaire

Guided by my extensive reading on EMI, and language proficiency, and by my own observations of students' linguistic choices, and guided by the research questions that aimed to examine how Arab students perceive their proficiency in Arabic, and to assess what features of their academic Arabic language were most affected, the

questionnaire was constructed, and its items were written. It was a self-constructed close-ended questionnaire. I formulated the items that were in three parts. The first part included 8 items. Students were instructed to complete the information about themselves. The items were designed to obtain background information of the participants' age, nationality, gender, major, department, starting semester at the university and the expected graduation semester and the year of study they are in at the time of completing the survey. It was very important to know what year of study the students are because only the students who are in year three, four and five were targeted. The surveys completed by students who were in year one or two were excluded from the analysis. Part 2 of the questionnaire consisted of 16 items that had 16 statements with three options: a, b and c. The first four items aimed to know more about the schooling of the students and whether they went to Arabic or English medium schools. It was very important to make sure that the students went to Arabic schools. All other students were also excluded. Items 5 and 6 aimed to assess students' perceptions of their Arabic back in school and their views on teaching Arabic. Items 7-13 corresponded to research question 1 and 2. Questions 14-16 aimed to answer research question 4. The third part was Likert scale questionnaire that consisted of 20 statements. Students were asked to tick in front of the statements they read in a table the box that shows if they strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The first five questions aimed to see how students perceive their Arabic at school and the teaching of Arabic and via Arabic. Questions 5, 6, 7, 10,11,10, 17, 19 aimed to see how students perceive the culture of university and the presence of the two languages in the university culture and students' academic lives. Questions 8,9,12, and 13 aimed to assess students' preferences regarding the two languages in their private lives, while questions 14, 18 and 20 aimed to see how students perceive academic Arabic in academic contexts and future jobs. Questions 15 and 16 aimed to assess the students' perceptions of their identities. In the last part of the survey, students were asked to provide their contact details if they were willing to participate in the interviews. Students were also thanked for completing the survey.

4.3.2.1.3. Administration of the Questionnaire

To guarantee that the students would take the questionnaire seriously and would complete it without any confusion, I preferred to distribute hard copies of the

questionnaire and to ask the students to do them in the classrooms I was given access to. I had the advantage of explaining the goals of the survey, responding to students' questions, and thanking them for doing the questionnaire. I administered the questionnaires in many classrooms in the three universities where the study took place, while I asked some instructors to distribute the questionnaires in their classrooms for classes I couldn't administer the questionnaire in because of time conflict or instructors' preferences. I distributed the survey in elective courses; Language of Quran, Arabic Grammar, Arabic language, Arabic heritage that were delivered in Arabic and English. I explained to the instructors the parts of the questionnaire and asked them to explain to the students the goals of the research and to notify them to the last page where they can provide their contact details in case they wanted to volunteer to be interviewed. I asked the instructors to give the students the questionnaires in the beginning or the end of the classes and to give them enough time to finish it. I also gave the instructors the information sheet and asked them to read it and sign it (See appendix 11). For the questionnaires I administered, I gave the students the information sheet (See appendix 10) about the purpose of the questionnaire. I also informed them orally about the purpose of the research and its significance as one of the very few large-scale studies on the impact of English on Arabic proficiency and identity. The administration of the questionnaire took about 10-15 minutes. After collecting the questionnaire, I thanked all the students and the teachers for allowing me to be in their classrooms and for participating in the questionnaire. I also thanked the teachers who administered the questionnaire for me.

4.3.2.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview is the most prominent tool for data collection in qualitative research. Interviews provide "descriptions of the lived world of the interviewees" which can "give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words" (Kvale, 2006, p. 481). Qualitative research interviewing is considered "the most sensitive and powerful method for investigating subjects' private and public lives and has often been regarded as a democratic emancipating form of social research" (Ibid, p. 480). All interviews were one-to-one interviews because students' experiences vary with their different backgrounds and their experiences would not be identical or similar, so it will be better to allow each student

individually to be interviewed and to describe and elaborate on his or her unique experiences.

Students who went to Arabic medium schools, who spent three and more years in the university were interviewed. The semi-structured interviews aimed to explore their perceptions of their proficiency in Arabic after studying in an EMI university and what changes, if any, occurred to their competence in academic Arabic; and whether they believe the use of English as medium of instruction has affected their language abilities in their first language and whether it has colored their identities and impacted them. The interview also aimed to see how the transition from Arabic schools to EMI university was at social, educational and emotional levels. The interview questions were developed to answer the research questions and to meet the critical agenda of the research (See appendix 1). The use of open-ended questions with probing allowed the participants to respond in their own words without forcing them to choose from fixed responses. Their responses would be rich and explanatory, meaningful and unanticipated by the researcher (Cohen et al., 2011). The questions are general and broad to allow the participants to share their views freely unconstrained by the interviewer's perspective (Creswell, 2012).

Exploratory interviews were conducted with the students who volunteered in the questionnaire and provided me with their contact details. 127 students volunteered to be interviewed (105 were in year three, 15 in year four and 7 in year five). I sent them WhatsApp messages asking them of the preferred time and place of the interview. Most students check their WhatsApp more than their emails. Also, the arrangements are easier via WhatsApp. I classified the students who volunteered to be interviewed into three groups; each group represents one university, so that I make sure that I have representatives from the three universities (58 in the first university, 37 in the second university and 32 in the third university). I used stratified random sampling in that I classified the volunteered students from the three universities based on the year of study. I put students who were in year five in one group, students who were in year four in one group, and students who were in year three in one group (105 were in year three, 15 in year four and 7 in year five). I started contacting the students who were in the fifth year of study, then the fourth, then the third. I believe that the longer time students spend in the university, the longer their exposure to English would be, which is likely to have clearer effect on their academic Arabic. However, many students in the fifth and fourth year

apologized because they were busy, some didn't respond, and some promised to come but failed to show up. Also, most of the students who took the survey were in year three. So, it was a random sample among the participants who volunteered, who fit the criteria of the sample. So, the interviewed students were 20 in total; one in year five, three in year four and 16 in year three.

I kept contacting students and inviting them to the interview until I felt that I had enough data to do the study and that I reached the point of data saturation. I had 20 students from the three universities in different majors and different years of study. Students were interviewed in their preferred language or variety of language. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed once done (See appendix 5). Then, the interviews that were done in Arabic were translated to English while transcribing.

4.3.2.3. Purposive Sampling

In purposive sampling, which is often considered a feature of qualitative research, the cases to be included in the sample are chosen on the basis of their typicality or the possession of particular characteristics, who are in a position to give in-depth information (Cohen et al., 2011). One objective of qualitative research is to present the complexity of the site or the context of the study and to provide an in-depth account of individuals which means that larger number of cases can become unwieldy and might result in superficial perspectives (Creswell, 2012). Thus, it is typical for a qualitative study to study a few individuals or a few cases (Ibid). In this study, nonprobability purposive sampling was used. Patton (2002) argues that "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in depth... [;] those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term *purposeful* sampling" (p. 230, emphasis in original). To begin purposive sampling, as Merriam (2009) points out, the researcher has to determine what selection criteria are essential in choosing the participants of the study or the context to be studied. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) prefer the term 'criterion-based selection' because the researcher creates a list of the attributes that are essential to the study and then proceed to find the participants that fulfil the list.

20 students were interviewed; 12 female students and 8 male students. All the students were Arabs from different nationalities; Egypt, Syria, Algeria, Jordan,

Sudan, Palestine, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. They were all in their third, fourth or fifth year of their studies at the university. They are from different majors: chemical engineering, electrical engineering, industrial engineering, nuclear engineering, biotechnology, nutrition, business, pharmacy and media (see appendix 8). Three students chose to be interviewed in English while 17 interviews were done in Arabic with a lot of codeswitching from Arabic to English at some points. So, the interviews that were done in Arabic were transcribed in English immediately and sent back to the participants to make sure that the translation was sincerely reflecting what they were saying in Arabic. Some students made some changes to the English version and replaced words like 'disappointed' with 'unhappy.' I was glad that they made these changes which gave me more confidence that I got their intended meaning. The twenty interviewed students were from the three universities as following: 9 students were from the first university; 8 students were from the second university and 3 from the third university.

4.4. Data Analysis

4.4.1. Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an eclectic process that is based on the researcher's trial to make sense of the data, which makes the approaches to qualitative data analysis vary considerably (Creswell, 2012). Still, it is an essential part of the research to clarify how the data is analyzed and what assumptions informed the analysis because it is very hard to evaluate a research or to compare it to other studies on the same topic if the method of analysis is not clarified or explained (Braun, & Clarke, 2006). The process of analyzing the data was very iterative. Even though it went through stages, I kept going back and forth between the phases.

In doing the analysis, I followed thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2006) with its eight phases. After I transcribed the audiotapes from the interviews (See appendix 6), I read them several times to familiarize myself with the data and to obtain a general sense of them. During these readings, I took some notes on the margins of the similar questions and interesting quotes that I thought would form the core of the themes. Because "researchers have a choice about whether to hand analyze data or to use a computer" (Creswell, 2012, p. 239), I chose the hand analysis of qualitative data. I felt as a researcher that I wanted to be "close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it without the intrusion of a machine" (Creswell,

2012, p. 240). I first highlighted and coded the interviews using my computer. Then, I printed out the interviews, read them, marked them by hand, wrote on the margins, circled interesting quotes and grouped them based on their relevancy to the research questions. I, then, analyzed the data using color coding to mark the parts of the text, and divided it into parts (See appendix 7) by “identifying text segments, placing bracket around them, and assigning a code word or phrase that accurately describes the meaning of the text segment” (Creswell, 2012, p. 245). I circled the frequent quotes from participants that supported these codes. Similar or repeated words or phrases used by the participants to express the same idea were grouped together into coherent categories (Auerbach, & Silverstein, 2003). Then, I grouped similar codes to eliminate redundancy and to reduce the codes to a smaller and more manageable ones. Then, I tried to make sense of the data by seeing what my interview participants said that would answer my research questions. Then, I grouped the responses into major themes. Themes were grouped but “the ‘keyness’ of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures – but in terms of whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question” (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

4.4.2. Quantitative Data Analysis

To prepare the survey data for statistical analysis, I coded all the questionnaires from 1-268. For the quantitative data analysis, I used *Excel Sheet* where I inserted all the data of the 268 surveys to prepare them for statistical analysis. For the first part, I inserted all the data without converting them into numerical form (See appendix 3). For part 2, I converted the data into numerical form (See appendix 4). Frequency and percentages of agreement and disagreement were calculated for each item. Descriptive statistics was used to compute the data for easier reporting. The quantitative data analysis was guided by the research questions (Punch, 2009).

4.4.3. Quality Criteria of the Research

Due to major differences in the ontological and epistemological stances of quantitative and qualitative paradigms, validity and reliability are approached differently. For the quantitative data, reliability was ensured through having a large sample. Cohen et al. (2011) argue that “the larger the sample the better, as this not only gives greater reliability but also enables more sophisticated statistics to be

used” (p. 101). 268 students from three universities, who met the sampling criteria formed the sample of the study. The sample size was large enough to ensure the reliability of quantitative results. Also, to establish content and construct validity, the items of the questionnaires were developed guided by the research questions, the relevant literature on EMI and my experience teaching in EMI institution. Construct validity was also enhanced through the use of multiple measures for one construct because, as Dörnyei (2003) suggests. For example, the role that academic Arabic plays in academia was measured through 5 items (8, 11, 12, 20 and 21 in part 3). Validity was also ensured through the careful sampling as suggested by Cohen et al., (2011). The sample was chosen carefully based on certain criteria that participants should have met, such as their previous schooling and year of study at university. Students who didn’t meet the criteria of choosing the sample were excluded. I tried to choose a sample that would represent the target population in the three universities. However, the sample is not meant to be representing all Arab students in the UAE higher education since the nature of the study is exploratory and the aim is not to generalize. Also, because appropriate statistical treatment of the data can improve the validity of the quantitative data (Cohen et al., 2011), the study used descriptive statistics to calculate percentages of agreements and disagreements of each item.

However, reality from qualitative lenses is ever-changing, holistic and multi-dimensional. There is no single reality that is objective, fixed waiting for us to be discovered, observed or measured (Merriam, 2009). Because human beings, who are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research, interpretations of reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews (Ibid). Thus, the concepts of validity and credibility are approached differently in qualitative research. Trustworthiness or “truth value of qualitative research and transparency of the conduct of the study are crucial to the usefulness and integrity of the findings” (Connelly, 2016, p. 435). The criteria that are widely accepted by qualitative researchers are credibility, confirmability, and transferability, which decide the reliability and validity of qualitative research.

Credibility or the confidence in the truth of the study and the findings is a very important criterion. I established the credibility of this study through triangulation, respondent-validation, my reflexivity as a researcher and my awareness of my likely biases. First, I triangulated my research methods by using questionnaires and semi-

structured interviews. Using multiple sources of data means comparing and cross-checking data (Merriam, 2009). The quantitative data were explained in the light of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. I also established credibility through respondent-validation. After transcribing the interviews, I sent them back to the participants to make sure that I understood their intended meaning. Regarding reflexivity, I was aware of my subjectivity and biases. An essential part of my role as a researcher is the awareness of my subjectivity. When reporting findings, I reported them through the eyes of the participants and their multiple realities to minimize my biases and to have a balanced and fair representation of their viewpoints.

Transferability of research replaces generalizability in the quantitative research. The researcher makes transferability possible through sufficient description (Merriam, 2009). Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) argue that data analysis should be transparent in order to be justifiable. This was achieved through detailed description of the context of the study, the sound and detailed description and justification of the research design at the level of theoretical framework, methodology, methods and participants, which makes the replication of the study in other contexts easier.

When the data are cogent, credible, dependable, and confirmable, and the research design is sound, internal validity is enhanced and assured (Cohen et al., 2011). In qualitative data, the subjectivity of the participants, their views, attitudes and perceptions result in a degree of bias. Thus, validity is seen as a matter of degree rather than an absolute state (Ibid).

There is one additional criterion of assuring the validity of the research that is a major feature of the critical paradigm. It is catalytic validity which suggests an agenda to help participants better understand their world and to empower them to transform it. This agenda is political because it seeks to discover whose definitions are operating in the given situation (Cohen et al., 2011). So, for research to be valid, it has to meet the catalytic validity's demands and should demonstrate its ability to empower both the researched and the researcher (Ibid). The critical agenda of this study aimed to raise the awareness of the participants of how they are made powerless by seeing their situation as inevitable with the aim of empowering them and showing them that they might have been sent wrong messages that have caused their false consciousness and their powerlessness and that there are alternatives to the situation that they see as the only option they can possibly have. In the interviews and by responding to the questions, the participants realized that

they falsely believed that their academic Arabic was fine. Most of them came to realize when asked to talk about their majors in academic Arabic that they cannot transfer the knowledge they got only in English at university to academic Arabic, which transformed their knowledge through a process of self-determination and self-understanding that came to happen as a result of their research participation (Lather, 1986). This transformation was also extended to me as a researcher as a result of the critical dialogue with the participants.

4.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical transparency and commitment should be observed throughout all the stages of research. Ethics are so important that they “should, without doubt, be at the heart of research from the early design stages right through to reporting and beyond” (Webster et al., 2014, p. 78). Following Bryman’s framework (2012) of what ethical research should involve, I obtained the consent of participants, assured them that their participation is voluntary and free from pressure, respected the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and didn’t make unreasonable demands on the participants, with the assurance that participating in the study would not yield any harm for them (as cited in Webster et al. 2014).

Prior to conducting this research, I obtained the permission from the university of Exeter to do the research (See appendix 13). In the ethical approval application (See appendix 12), I provided the university with a synopsis of my research project, explained how I would protect my data, participants and how I would respect the voluntary nature of the research. I got the ethical approval from the University of Exeter afterwards. Then, I started emailing the universities asking for permission to do the research in their institutions. I emailed deans, HoDs, in five universities and got the approval to do the study in three of them. I also got the consent of all participants before the beginning of the study. Their identities were protected completely through using different names. All participants were given an information sheet about the study and were asked for their consent prior to conducting the questionnaire, and the interviews. I explained to the student that they had the right not to take part in the research. I informed the participants about the objective of doing the research prior to starting the interviews. Instructors were also informed about the research aims and their consent was obtained before observing their

classes. All students were informed that participation is voluntary and that they have the right to say 'no.' Teachers also have the same right. I explained to them that they can accept or refuse having me in their classes. They were assured that participation is voluntary and is free from pressure. All participants were assured that they can refrain from participating or withdrawing at any stage.

All participants were also informed about the aims of research. The participants in the interviews are the students in the university who were contacted through the emails or the WhatsApp number they provided in the questionnaires distributed. I invited them to be interviewed in the library, or in a coffee shop near their place. I assured them that the information they give is completely confidential and that their names would not be used in the research. I also assured them that they can withdraw from the study if they want, or they can ask me not to use their data in the study. I also thanked them for agreeing to participate in the study and explained to them the purpose of the study. They also signed the consent form before they were interviewed.

Because the participants' identities were not revealed, and pseudonyms were used, no harm would happen. This is for the interviewees. All students' names were changed immediately during the interviews so that they cannot be traced. Students in the questionnaire phase were not required to write their personal details unless they were willing to be interviewed. In the interviews, I assigned the students pseudonyms to hide their identities and ensure anonymity. I also asked for the students' permission for recording the interviews. For the observation, I made sure that my presence in class did not affect the class routine by arriving early and sitting in the back without disturbing the class. Soft data were all stored in my laptop that is completely secured with a password. Recordings were all transferred to my laptop and kept secured. After transcribing the interviews, the recordings were deleted. I did that step by step for every interview. Once I was done, I would transcribe it and delete it from the recording device. Other hard copies like the documents, questionnaires and observational notes were kept under locked storage.

4.6. Challenges and Limitations

Writing this thesis was an intellectual journey that was embroiled with challenges. These challenges are part of making the journey worth taking. One of the challenges

was finding relevant research on the effect of the use of English as a medium of instruction on first language proficiency. Very few studies looked at this area of research, especially the impact of the use of English as MI on Arabic language in the Arab world. Also, research on Arabic attrition in relation to English was almost nonexistent. Another challenge at the level of data collection was getting the approval of deans and professors to observe the classes. I had to approach different universities and waited for replies that for some universities never came. The universities that gave me the permission also had lots of queries about the study. Arranging for interviews and administrating the questionnaires in three different universities was difficult and time consuming. My sampling was also challenging. After distributing the questionnaires in Arabic classes to students from different majors, I had sometimes to exclude most of the questionnaires because the majority of students didn't meet the criteria of the sample. Some students were in year 1 or 2; while others were in English schools. One last issue that can be a limitation in this study might be the variations between the three universities. I did the study in three universities to get more population and to have more generalizable data. However, there were small variations between the three universities in terms of the admission required grade in IELTS or TOEFL.

CHAPTER FIVE- FINDINGS

This chapter reports the data collected from the thematic analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data that aimed to answer the research questions of the study. The data collected from the surveys and interviews are triangulated depending on the theme that emerged from the data. However, for some themes or subcategories, qualitative data was only sought because they cannot be examined or approached quantitatively. When the theme examines the students' feelings, qualitative data methods are only used. The major themes are reported in five main sections that corresponded with the research questions. In the first theme, students' perceptions of their competence in Arabic back at school when they were studying in Arabic are reported. The findings were drawn from qualitative and quantitative data. The second theme reported the findings of students' perceptions of their Arabic after studying in EMI universities. Qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated in reporting the findings for this theme. In the third theme, the symptoms of academic Arabic language attrition were reported, which was approached using quantitative and qualitative data. Then, the fourth theme was the transition from AMI schools to EMI universities, which was reported using qualitative data that aimed to highlight the psychological, academic, social and cultural suffering that students had to go through as a result of the shift in the medium of instruction. In the fifth and final theme, qualitative and quantitative data were used to examine the students' views on English and Arabic including their preferred language of instruction, their views on the future of Arabic and their perceptions of their Arab identity in the light of studying via English. The major themes are reported as below:

Students' perceptions of their competence in academic Arabic back at school.
Academic Arabic after studying in EMI universities.
Symptoms of academic Arabic language attrition.
The transition from AMI schools to EMI universities.
Students' views of English and academic Arabic.

Table 4: The major themes of the findings

5.1. Students' perceptions of their competence in Arabic back at school

The majority of the surveyed and the interviewed students believe that their proficiency in Arabic at school was excellent. They are satisfied with their Arabic back then and attribute that to teaching Arabic as a subject besides taking all other subjects in Arabic. They feel that their whole academic life was colored in Arabic.

5.1.1. Academic Arabic at school- “My Arabic in school was reaaally really good”

The findings reveal that 64% (n=171) of the questionnaire participants (n= 268) believe that their Arabic at school was excellent, while 26% (n=71) said it was good, in contrast to only 9.7% (n= 26) who said it was average. This shows that almost all the students were satisfied with their Arabic at school, ranking it as ‘excellent’ or ‘good.’

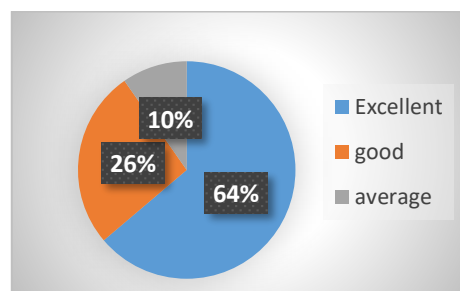


Figure 3: Academic Arabic back in school

Similarly, all the interviewed students, except for one, said that their Arabic at school was excellent. They described their Arabic proficiency at school as “excellent,” “very strong,” and “very developed.” Marah said, “I was so distinguished in the school in Arabic,” while Hadeel said, “My academic Arabic was excellent. Reading and writing were excellent.” Lara also pointed out, “My Arabic in school was reaaally really good.” Marah said,

I was so distinguished in the school. Since grade four, we had ‘ukaz souk’ (a traditional Arabic souk that was famous for reciting poetry and literary work) which was for older students to go and listen to poetry. The first time I heard the poem, ‘record I am an Arab’ was there. So, I fell in love with Arabic poetry, literature and language.

The findings suggest that students were mostly satisfied with their proficiency in Arabic back in school and felt that they owned the language at that stage which is

important for the study because it shows that students believed that the Arabic language proficiency was acquired at school. Jaspaert claims that the point of reference for an attrited speaker's L1 should be "the level of language proficiency a language user is supposed to have had at some earlier moment in time" (as cited in Stolberg, 2010, p. 21). It is important to keep in mind that "a particular lacuna in a [native] speaker's vocabulary knowledge can only be said to be the result of attrition if there is evidence that this speaker did have this knowledge at an earlier point in time" (Gharibi, 2016, p. 17).

Also, students' satisfaction with their Arabic at school, as the questionnaire and the interviews show, indicates that they believed the teaching of Arabic at school and using Arabic for teaching other subjects helped them become proficient in Arabic. The exposure to Arabic was in Arabic classes, other subjects, activities, clubs, and morning assembly. All the messages they got from the school environment made them believe of the supremacy of Arabic and marginalization of English that was taught as a subject. All of this seemed to have made Arabic engrained in their consciousness and helped them become deeply rooted in the Arabic culture.

5.1.2. The Four Skills- "We would look at each other and laugh, 'Who would speak SA?'"

The findings reveal that 83% (n= 224) of the questionnaire participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that taking Arabic as a subject in school was beneficial in helping them understand the Arabic language, while only 3.6% (n=10) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 13.4% (n=36) were neutral. This huge percentage shows that students believed that teaching Arabic helped them gain proficiency in Arabic. However, according to the interviewed students, this proficiency was mostly located in reading and writing. 16 of the 20 interviewed students felt that their reading and writing skills were better than their listening and speaking skills, while 3 students felt that all their skills were good, and one student felt that all of her skills in Arabic back in school were not developed.

Using colloquial Arabic in Arabic classes has affected students' listening and speaking skills. Students and teachers mostly relied on colloquial Arabic in communication in class. Only three interviewed students pointed out that their teachers used Standard Arabic in class while the 17 other interviewed students

revealed that their teachers used colloquial Arabic in the Arabic class. Bassem said, “I was the best in reading. I used to write the Arabic program for the morning assembly. So, I was writing it daily from grade seven.” Faten also felt that listening and speaking were ignored and not given any interest except for exams. She said, “I used to hate listening exams because we didn’t practice listening. So, my grades were low in listening. The listening exams had strange vocabulary different from what we know. So, I didn’t like it.” Faten also pointed that the Arabic teachers didn’t use Standard Arabic. She said, “The teacher didn’t use standard Arabic in class. I don’t remember any teacher of Arabic speaking in MSA; only when reading from the book.” The use of dialect in class and the absence of exposure to Standard Arabic made students feel awkward when using it. Aziza said, “We didn’t use MSA. But if we wanted, we could. But we felt it was fun, not serious because we were not used to using it. At the end of the conversation, we would laugh.” Hadeel also pointed out to the awkwardness of speaking in SA. She said,

We used the dialect; mix of dialect and SA. They used to try to make us speak Standard Arabic. They used sometimes to tell us, ‘we will not accept any answers if they were not in Standard Arabic.’ We would look at each other and laugh, ‘Who would speak SA?’

However, three students believed that the four skills were good and equally developed. Lara said, “My four skills were very, very developed. Everything. We used to speak only in Arabic. We answer questions in Standard Arabic. But in daily use and in other classes, we didn’t. We used the dialect.” Ayat felt that all skills were good because the teacher used SA in class. She said, “The best skill was writing. My essays were very good. My teacher liked my essays so much. I still have them.” Ayat said, “We used to speak in SA in class and she would correct us if we say a word wrongly in SA. All skills were taken care of and given emphasis.” Samar was the only student who pointed out that upon leaving school, all her skills were not developed.

5.1.3. Competence in Arabic upon Leaving School- “We cannot stop learning”

The findings of the survey reveal that more than half of the surveyed students; 53% (n=143) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that teaching Arabic at school did not help them gain mastery of the language; while 20.7% only (n=56) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and 26.4% (n=71) were neutral. This shows that more than half of the surveyed students believe that teaching in Arabic

helped them gain mastery of the language. This is consistent with the students' overall satisfaction with their level of competence achieved back at school. However, interviewed students stated that despite their good proficiency in Arabic, gaining mastery of it at school might not have been achieved. In response to the question of whether they felt their Arabic is stable or established upon leaving high school, Hadeel said, "No, it was not. It is a sea of vocabulary that we cannot stop learning." Samia also said responding to a question of how she evaluates her Arabic upon leaving school:

I was not fully competent in Arabic in school to be competent after school. I didn't have the chance to speak SA. It was just writing, and it was the thing that I was weak at. If I continued studying in Arabic, for sure my language would have been better.

However, even if students believe that they have gained mastery over academic Arabic at school, research shows that if language is not developed further, it might stagnate or get lost. If first languages are abandoned at the tertiary level, students' linguistic abilities might deteriorate because "once language is learned the proficiency level may actually decrease if there are no maintenance strategies in place" (Roger, 2012, p. 31). Language should be developed; otherwise, "students' writing and communication skills [will] generally diminish if not developed and practiced over the 3 or 4 years of study" (Craig, 2007, p. 252). Rothman (2007) claimed that "the only external variable necessary to guarantee linguistic acquisition is sufficient exposure to input" (as cited in Gharibi, 2016, p. 21) because the absence of input hinders acquisition and causes attrition (Ibid).

5.1.4. Studying other subjects in Arabic - They "added something to my Arabic competence"

60% (n= 161) of the surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that teaching all subjects in Arabic at school was helpful in acquiring the language and the vocabulary from different subjects while only 18.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. 23.8% (n=64) were neutral. This shows that teaching in Arabic can enhance students' competence in it. The interviewed students had different perspectives towards the role that other subjects played in improving their Academic Arabic. Eleven interviewed students believed that studying the school subjects in Arabic added to their Arabic language and made it richer, while nine believed that taking other subjects in Arabic didn't help them improve their Arabic

proficiency. Hatim believes that taking other subjects in Arabic enriched their Arabic language. He said,

The other subjects made my Arabic stronger of course. In physics, words like 'energy' in Chemistry 'interaction,' 'equilibrium,' were taught in scientific courses rather than in the Arabic classes which was poetry, literary expressions that are devoid of scientific terms. Physics, math, chemistry... we had lots of terms in Arabic.

Hatim pointed out that "being for twelve years in Arabic school writing and reading in Arabic language gave us innate ability to know how words should be pronounced or grammatically written." Marah also believed that the other subjects at school in Arabic enriched her Arabic competence. She said,

All other courses I took added something to my Arabic competence and skills. I remember once in geology, we took a lesson about stars and sun and meteors and such vocabulary. I noticed after some time that I used these words in my writing.

Marwan believes that studying all the subjects in Arabic helped him understand the courses at university. He says, "Other subjects helped my Arabic like physics. I understand it till now because I learned it before in Arabic. There are some terms we took in school that still help us understand physics at university." On the other side, Ayat says, "The other subjects didn't add anything to my Arabic language." Similarly, Sally says, "Studying other subjects in Arabic did not help with my Arabic." Hadeel explains further this perspective and says,

We also took all other subjects in Arabic but that didn't help me improve my Arabic because all scientific concepts are either written in poor translation from English or they are English written in Arabic. 90% of the concepts are English written in Arabic, like in biology; names of medicines, chemical components. Some concepts have no translation. Even the translated ones, how can they improve our SA?

What Hadeel said reveals that she believes that Arabic is insufficient to be used as a scientific language because "the first names given to new inventions are English," as she mentioned. What these students said may imply that they lost their confidence in Arabic as the language of science, which might indicate that Arabic is losing its credibility among its people. Even though Rama believes that taking other subjects in Arabic didn't add much to her Arabic competence, she believes that it helped her understand the content more. Rama said,

Teaching other subjects in Arabic didn't add to my language but I felt that my understanding of the subject was different when they are taught in Arabic.

When someone studies in his mother tongue, you feel that the information sticks in his mind more. Now at university, we study in English, no matter how much he studies it or memorizes it, he will not understand it in the same way if he studied it in Arabic.

More than half of the surveyed and the interviewed students pointed out that taking other subjects in Arabic at school helped them improve their Arabic proficiency and vocabulary in the different subjects and sciences. This shows that using Arabic as a language of instruction at school can strengthen students' academic competence and help them gain vocabulary and expressions from different domains. Taking Arabic only as a subject might not help them achieve that. That is why teaching sciences and math in Arabic can help students get to know new scientific terminologies in Arabic that they would miss if they learn in English. However, we cannot ignore the nine interviewed students who pointed out that teaching sciences in Arabic did not add to their academic Arabic. This might be due to the way these students perceive Arabic. I noticed that some of the interviewed students think of Arabic as a language of poetry and literature. In this limited perception of Arabic, they couldn't see how learning scientific terminologies can help them with this Arabic they had in mind. Also, using colloquial Arabic in teaching science might be also responsible for this perception. Some students see that science terminologies are translated from English, so they don't add to their Arabic language.

5.2. Academic Arabic after studying in EMI university

5.2.1. Students' recognition of their declining abilities in Arabic- "Ya Allah I am losing my Arabic"

In response to the question of whether they believe academic Arabic is absent from their university life, 53.6% (n=144) agreed and strongly agreed that it is absent from their lives. Only 21.2% (n=57) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while 25.3% (n=68) were neutral. This shows that more than half of the surveyed students believe that Academic Arabic is not present in academia, which is a recognition of the marginalization of Arabic in higher education due to the adoption of English as medium of instruction. Also, in response to the statement, "studying at university in English has affected my Arabic competence negatively," 48.4% (n=130) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 27.2% (n=73) were neutral and

19.4% (n=52) disagreed or strongly disagreed. These findings show very clearly that students believe that using English as MI has drawn them away from Arabic. More than one third of the surveyed students were neutral in their response to whether their academic Arabic is good despite studying in EMI university with 36.5% (n=98) neutral, while 57.8 % (n= 155) agreed or strongly agreed that their academic Arabic is good despite studying in EMI university. More than half of the surveyed students believe that their academic Arabic is still good despite studying in English. The findings also suggested that more than one third of the surveyed students (39%, n=105) stated that their proficiency in Arabic after studying in the university declined, while almost half of them (49%, n=132) stated that it has been almost the same, and 11.5% (n=31) believed that their proficiency in Arabic has improved as shown in figure 2.

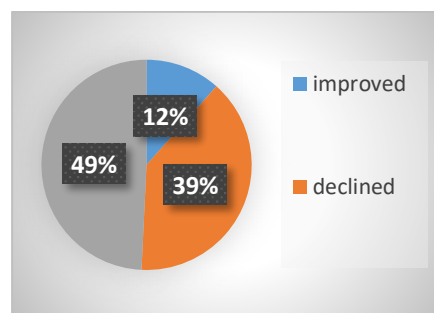


Figure 4: Proficiency in Arabic after EMI university

When we talk about more than one third of native speakers of the language feeling that their proficiency in their native academic language declined, the percentage becomes significant. Third of the surveyed students are aware of their declining abilities while those who believed it was the same (49%) might not be aware of their declining abilities in Arabic and believed so because they thought Arabic is their first language and would always be there. Literature suggests that people usually believe that their first language is immune to loss and is so sacred that it will never be wiped out even with disuse (Schimdt, 2010). Also, what the interviews later on revealed and clearly showed is that students who said that their language has been almost the same were not aware of their lost abilities in academic Arabic until they were interviewed and were asked to talk or write about their majors in Arabic. Only then, they felt that their Arabic, which they thought was fine, was not really good. Samia is one of these students who said that she didn't realize that her Arabic was fading until

now. She said, "I did not feel it maybe until now. I didn't feel that it was fading until recently. I knew that I knew words in English that I didn't know in Arabic, but I thought it is momentarily; just in that moment I am not getting the word." Similarly, Aziza didn't realize before the interview her inability to describe her major in Arabic. She discovered that when she was asked in the interview and said, "While talking to you right now, I feel I am dead, destroyed." Also, these students who believed their Arabic has been almost the same might have not taken elective courses in Arabic, like Samia, who suggested that she cannot assess this loss because she is not using the language because she took all electives in English. She says, "I cannot assess my Arabic now because I don't have instances when I have to use it that much. I did not encounter any incident when I had to use academic Arabic." In the interviews, almost all students stated that their Arabic declined. After studying in EMI university for three, four or five years, 19 of the 20 interviewed students believe that their Arabic competence has declined even though this decline differed from one interviewee to another. Marah, who is year three in chemical engineering says, "At many times, I feel like writing diaries, but I feel I have now weakness in Arabic, so I stop. But my English vocabulary are entering ... 'Ya Allah' I am losing my Arabic." Hadeel compares her Arabic at first semester and in her last semester at university. She says, "I took Arabic heritage in the first semester while I took the language of the Quran in year four." She realized the huge difference in her competence in Arabic in the two courses. She starts with the course she took in the first semester saying, "When I took Arabic heritage in my first semester, I felt happy, it was the easiest course; very easily memorized; the professor considered me the best in class. I got full marks on all assessments." This changed when she took another course in Arabic in her last semester in the university and made her realize that she lost her abilities in Arabic. She said,

Then, when I took 'the language of the Quran' in the fourth year, I was shocked. When I wanted to answer the questions, and to put down the idea I have in mind on paper, I was not able to, unable to order it quickly in a sentence even though I had the idea in mind. I was used to writing quickly. Sometimes, I would write the sentence and then look at it and say, 'what is this that I am writing?' I felt I was writing like those who never read Arabic in their whole lives. I don't know why.

Thaer also feels that he is forgetting how to read in Arabic. he said, "After studying in English for five years, I feel that I am in a way forgetting how to read SA perfectly or

fast. When I read in SA, I am kind of slow in the beginning, then I get faster.” He added that he noticed his declining Arabic with his increased codeswitching to English. He said, “Every now and then, I notice that my Arabic is getting weaker, not stronger, especially when I use English words in the middle of my sentence or to finish my sentences or when I am confused about how to spell something.” Lara also believes that her Arabic declined. She said, “My Arabic got weakened. It really got weakened. I see it every day because I now think in English and speak in Arabic. I sometimes laugh at myself, ‘what is the hell?’[laughing].” This emphasis on improving her skills in English made her stop thinking about her Arabic. She said replying to a question about whether she feels English has affected her Arabic and in what areas,

Everything because the emphasis over the years was on me improving my English which made me lack Arabic. My attention... everything... let me improve my English because no more people making fun of my English. I had an accent. They used to come to me and ask, are you French! My English was weird. Imagine! My English is from movies, and every movie people talk differently. All my focus was on me improving my English skills.

Faten, who is in her fourth year in Industrial engineering in the university, feels that her brain now functions in English which makes her Arabic weaker. She says, “I feel now that my brain has been programmed over these last four years having everything in English with the English writing courses and the research.... I feel my Arabic has declined.” Imad feels that his Arabic vocabulary got simpler which makes him angry. He says, “When I write, I have difficulty. I use simple terms. My vocabulary was deep and complex but now I use simple words. I cannot use the proper word to express what I want to say.... My Arabic has weakened.”

What students have revealed in the interviews and reported in the questionnaires might indicate that students’ competence in Arabic changed after studying in the EMI university, which made speaking about their majors in Arabic very hard for them. The ultimate exposure to sciences in English and being exposed to their major courses in English only seems to have made it the language they are more comfortable in.

5.2.2. Elective courses in Arabic and English- “There are no requirements of Arabic”

45.7% (n= 123) of the questionnaire participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the Arabic courses offered at university help them improve their

Arabic language, while 27.2% (n=73) were neutral and 27.6% (n=74) disagreed or strongly disagreed. These findings explain the findings that suggest that almost half of the surveyed students wish to have more Arabic courses at university with 55.5% (n=149) of the participants agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement while 18.1% (n=49) disagreed and 26.4% (n=71) were neutral. This percentage may help policy makers at university recognize that students want more elective courses to be offered in Arabic. However, some students' preference for taking electives in Arabic might be driven by their weakness in English. Some interviewed students pointed out that their grades were very high in the elective Arabic classes. For other students, they seemed to find connection with Arabic through taking elective courses in Arabic. 16 of the 20 interviewed students took their electives in Arabic, while 4 of them preferred to take electives in English. For Marah, taking the elective course in Arabic in the first semester was a catharsis and a reconnect with the Arabic she hugely missed. She says,

In the first semester, I took five courses; English writing course, three major courses and Arabic Heritage course in Arabic. I remember I would start at 8am with English writing course, then immediately I had at 9 my Arabic class. I remember when I would enter the Arabic class and sit down, and the doctor would start explaining and talking in Arabic, I remember that I would cry, and I would feel very happy [tears in her glittering, crying eyes] and would think how beautiful it would be to leave this place to go and study Arabic, something I belong to, something I really love.

Marah's thirst for Arabic made her take all her elective courses in Arabic. She says, "I took 'Arabic Heritage' in Arabic, 'Language of Quran' in Arabic and now I am taking 'Arabic poetry.' Whatever elective I can take in Arabic, I am taking. Unfortunately, this course is the last course I am taking in Arabic. If I can, I will take more." For Marah, taking Arabic courses is a source of enjoyment and satisfaction. She said,

I would never find that enjoyment in English. If I read English, it is because I have to, not because I am enjoying it. That is why I am enjoying my Arabic courses. For me, the Arabic course is for enjoyment and pleasure. They are for my free time. I have four major courses. The Arabic course is an addition to me.

Hadeel sadly illustrates that "at university, there are no requirements of Arabic." She explains, "You are not required to know anything in Arabic, but there are some electives offered in Arabic and English." Rotana finds elective courses in Arabic richer. She says, "I took all electives in Arabic. I felt that I am studying all my subjects in English, so I thought that it is interesting to study also in Arabic, especially the

courses that are about history and Islamic religion, they are better if taken in Arabic.” She added, “In English, they will not be as deep.” This described richness of Arabic courses made Sharifa prefer to take the elective courses in English, not in Arabic. She said, “I don’t like to take them in Arabic. ‘Islamic civilization’ I took in English, not Arabic. I feel the courses in Arabic are very detailed and teachers make them difficult.” Many Arab students, according to Ayat, believe electives are easier in English “because the information is simpler and summarized while in Arabic the information is more detailed.” What students pointed out regarding taking electives in English is easier because the content is simpler is in line with what King (2014) clarified when he found out in his study that “if courses were taught in Arabic, it might be possible to cover more content and get students to write more” (p. 190). King stresses that studying through English forces teachers to lessen the cognitive load for students which compromises the quality of education.

The marginalization of Arabic in the higher education system is very clear. While students have no choice but to study their majors in English, they are given the choice to study the few elective courses in English or Arabic. This sounds like a shy invitation on the part of the administration for the students to take the courses in English, while Arabic might have made its way out of courtesy or to show that Arabic is not completely absent from the academic scene at higher education. This comparison between the marginalized Arabic and the powerful English sends a very clear message to the students of the status of the two languages; an untold message that English is the superior language, the medium of instruction, while Arabic is just an option for some elective courses that can be taken in English. Moreover, most of the electives are in the humanities which emphasizes the connection of Arabic to literature, religion, while English is associated with sciences, and engineering.

5.2.3. Attempts to improve SA outside University- “Could not have the inspiration”

Findings reveal that 51% (n=137) of the questionnaire participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they try to develop their academic Arabic on their own, while 27.2% (n=73) were neutral and 22.6% (n=60) disagreed or strongly agreed. Trying here does not mean actually being able to improve. The interviewed students tried to read and write in Arabic on their own but failed to continue. Many of

these students' attempts to improve their Arabic were not successful due to the estrangement they felt from Arabic and being busy with their studies. Marah still enjoys reading in Arabic, something she does not find in English. She says, "I stopped writing Arabic diaries. However, until now I read in Arabic. I read novels in Arabic. I enjoy reading them." She does not enjoy reading English in the same way she does in Arabic. She said, "I brought some novels in English to improve my language, I understand but I don't enjoy reading them. I have them since I was Freshman." Then, she decided to dedicate her free time to Arabic saying, "I told myself, [Marah], your major is hard, and this is your free time. If you want to improve your English, do that in your major. In your free time, read something you like." However, Hadeel, despite her previous fondness of Arabic in schooldays, said that she tried to write but failed. She said, "After high school, the connection with Arabic started to deteriorate. I can't hide that I never tried to hold a pen and paper to write. I tried but could not have the inspiration.... Something I lost. It was there and is gone and will never be back." She even tried to read and also found it hard even though she was an excellent reader in school. She says, "The four years was a complete disconnect from Arabic." She explains further saying, "During these years I stopped reading in Arabic. I tried in year three. I bought an Arabic novel for an author I used to read for during school days. I would open the novel and read the page once, twice but couldn't understand it. I don't know why." She feels strange because she "used to read novels for the same author at schooldays and used to understand them." She concludes saying with remorse and pain,

I couldn't understand what was happening to me. I read the page and tried until I got bored and gave up. I put the novel aside and couldn't complete it. I was shocked at myself and my declined abilities in Arabic. Arabic needs practice especially that we use the dialect in communication. We are more disconnected from the language.

Ayat also stopped writing in Arabic. She said, "No, I stopped writing. If I want to write, I can. I don't have a reason to write. I also don't have the time to. I have one million other things to be busy with." Regarding reading, she says, "I read in Arabic still but not as much as I used to. I still don't read in English because I have the English I need for my studies, the academic English." The findings suggest that students' attempts to improve their academic Arabic on their own were generally unsuccessful in the light of lacking the incentive to improve it.

5.2.4. English after studying in the university- “I lost Arabic, but still not competent in English”

Some of the interviewed students stated that they suffered with English in the first semester which forced them to translate into Arabic to understand, which was a very hard, added burden. With time, they mentioned that their English got better but they had different views on their English now after studying in EMI universities. Almost half of the interviewed students pointed out that they have not become competent in English despite studying in it, while the other half stated that their English now is better than their Arabic. Hadeel feels that her declining abilities in Arabic were not combined by attaining proficiency in English. She said,

English distracts me. Sometimes I feel distracted because of it. I lost Arabic, but still not competent in English 100%. English still distracts me. Until now, I may read a text in English and feel distracted even though I improved a lot but still there is a barrier.

Imad shares Hadeel the same concern. He said, “The mix I have now makes me feel I am not good in both. My Arabic has weakened. My English is not like others. It is improving but it is not like the other students here. I don’t know where I am! both languages need to be developed. The mix is the reason.” This perception of losing Arabic but being not fully proficient in English reflects the sad fact that the aim to improve English was not achieved even at the price of declining students’ abilities in their first language.

Other students felt that their English became much better than their Arabic that they now see as a hard language. Abdulrahim compares his use of Arabic and English now and then and says, “In the past if I wanted to watch YouTube videos, I would do that only in Arabic. now, it is the opposite. I watch them in English. I read in English and write on WhatsApp in English and sometimes talk with people in English. Now, I use English more than Arabic.” Rotana said that now English is easier than Arabic. she said,

If I try now to memorize something in Arabic, I find difficulty. The scientific words we study are originally English, such as the word ‘mitochondrion.’ When you see it in Arabic, it is hard. Reading it in English is easier. The names of bacteria are easier in English because these words are originally Latin.

Samia perceives Arabic as a hard language. She says, “Arabic is really a hard language. It is even harder than English, that is for sure.” Students’ perceptions of

their English after studying in it varies between those who still believe that they are not competent in it despite losing Arabic, and those who feel that it is now easier than Arabic for them. Both scenarios seem frustrating. For the former students, English is still a second language that may not be mastered. This means that the goal of using English may have not been accomplished. For the latter group of students, feeling more comfortable with the second language may indicate that the first language has been compromised and lost and is looked down upon by these students as a result of studying in English.

5.3. Symptoms of Academic Arabic Attrition

19 out of the 20 interviewed students expressed their inability to talk about their major in Arabic and that if they do, it will be with difficulty, and suffering and it will require longer time. It is very important to keep in mind that “language attrition is a complex and dynamic process of change, development and cross-linguistic interaction” (Schmid, Kopke, & de bot, 2012, p. 680). However, the attempt here is to see how the decline in the proficiency in academic Arabic is seen by the Arab students who believed that they were experiencing language attrition due to their declining abilities. de Leeuw, Opitz, and Lubin’ska (2013) argue that “lowered proficiency in the L1, or linguistic behavior that differs from ‘typical speakers’ of the L1, are generally considered to be symptomatic of L1 attrition” (p. 668). Another thing is that for the participants, Arabic is only an academic language and not purely a native language. This distinction is important.

5.3.1. Difficulty recalling Arabic vocabulary - “I know this word but can’t remember it”

In the questionnaire, in response to the question of whether students find difficulty recalling Arabic words in writing or speaking, 51.8 (n=139) said that they never find difficulty recalling Arabic words in speaking or writing, while 48% (n=129) said that they ‘always’ or ‘sometimes’ find difficulty recalling Arabic vocabulary, which means that almost half of the surveyed students in the three universities cannot retrieve Arabic words from memory instantly all the time or at sometimes. 10.4% said that they always had difficulty recalling Arabic words, and 37.6% ‘sometimes’ find difficulty recalling Arabic words in speaking or writing.

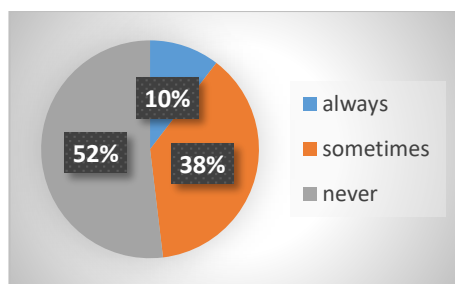


Figure 5: recalling Arabic vocabulary

Interviewed students also showed that recalling vocabulary they used to know before was not easy. Imad said, “I used to know many terms that now I cannot remember.” Hadeel also felt that she forgot words she used to know before. She says,

Sometimes, the doctor [of the language of Quran] would ask about a meaning of a word that I used to know, and I previously encountered more than once but was unable to recall it anymore. I would sometimes sit in class reading and trying to remember, ‘Ya Allah [Oh God], I know this word but can’t remember it.’ The idea is in my head. I got confused.

Lara says, “I find difficulty expressing what was very easily expressed back then in Arabic, I find it hard to express it now.” Lara says the reason is the lack of enough exposure to Arabic. She said, at school “I was exposed every day to around three hundred words in Arabic, minimum. Now, I am exposed to way less. This exposure affects me on a daily basis. In terms of writing, competency is still there but it is performance that is affected.” Lara said that she saw that when she tried to present in Arabic what she presented in English, saying: “I had to think twice before saying any sentence because I kind of how to say this in Arabic? It is hard. You know, ‘objectives, and goals.... Insights’ ... These terms are hard now.” The declining abilities in Arabic which is mostly shown in forgetting vocabulary previously learnt is reported in literature. Previous research studies have mentioned that “lexical-semantic knowledge is the most vulnerable part of the linguistic repertoire, deteriorating first, fastest and more dramatically as compared to ... grammar or phonetics” (Schmid, & Jarvis, 2014, p. 729). These difficulties are mostly reported in contact situations, where borrowings and transfer from L2 result in “lexical retrieval difficulties and diminished verbal fluency” (Schmidt, 2007, p. 136).

5.3.2. Translation in the Other Direction- “I need some time to translate”

Even though interviewed students suffered in their first semester in translating the lectures from English to Arabic in order to understand, after studying their majors in English for three, four or five years in EMI universities, they feel now they are translating from English to Arabic if they want to talk about their majors in Arabic, which may mean that English is their first language in their academic contexts. Sharifa describes the stages she went through that made her unable to use academic Arabic to talk about her major saying,

In the beginning I would read the English and didn't care to memorize the terms in English because I knew the words already in Arabic. Then, I started to translate, so I knew the words in Arabic and English. After that, I thought it was not necessary to know them in Arabic. so, I knew them in English and that was enough.

What Sharifa said is very alarming because it shows that academic Arabic is threatened, and the concepts students learned at school in their different courses are now attrited and forgotten. Rotana feels that she needs time to 'translate.' She says, “Maybe, if I sit with myself for some time and *translate*, I can explain in Arabic” (Italics added). It is now a reverse translation. While she used to translate in her first semester from English to Arabic, after three years of studying in the university, she is translating from English to Arabic to be able to talk in Arabic about her major. Sama said, “My mother sometimes asks me about the courses, but I stop for a minute. I need some time to *translate* and then say it to her. It is hard for me.” Sally also feels that she needs more time if she has to explain her major in Arabic. She says:

I can talk about my major in Arabic but of course I need some time to *translate* the words I took in English to Arabic to be able to explain it. Spontaneously I cannot. It takes more time to retrieve the scientific words in Arabic.

The new knowledge that students acquired at university in English only seems to be hard to be translated to Arabic. Students have not been taught the equivalent vocabulary or expressions in academic Arabic, so they feel that it is very hard to know or find the equivalent in Arabic.

5.3.3. Difficulty to Explain in Arabic- “I was stuttering in Arabic”

Students did not only feel they were translating but they also faced difficulty in doing this translation. They felt they couldn't retrieve the Arabic equivalent words because

they learned them in English. Rotana, who is year four in biotechnology, finds it hard to speak about her major in Arabic. She does find it difficult because she studied the terms in English. She said,

When talking about my major, I can only use Arabic to talk about general things in my major. However, more specific terms and mechanisms, I studied them in English, so I cannot explain them in Arabic. Only the general things about my major, I can explain in Arabic, but the specific terms, I can't. I studied them in English." Faten said that when she was explaining to her dad what she was studying, she told him that her field is "to 'optimize.' What does optimize mean in Arabic!" she said that she "hesitated and was stuck for a while" and then continued telling him that they take 'quality assurance' which also made her stop for some time and wonder what it means in Arabic. She finds the reason is that she studied everything in English which makes it hard to transfer. She said, "In the industrial engineering, all the terms ... are new terms that I have not taken at school. So, they are all new terms and I have got to know them only here in the university for the first time and I knew them in English. So, they stuck in my mind in English." Sharifa, majoring in nutrition, said, "If I want to explain something for my mother about a certain diet, and would talk about the components, I would find difficulty explaining them in Arabic." Also, Samia says that she cannot find the equivalent terms in Arabic because she studied them all in English. She said, "It wasn't put in my brain in Arabic. So, I don't think I will be able to do that. It will be very hard." Hadeel went through an incident that made her realize that it is very hard to talk about the major in Arabic. She said,

Students from my old school came to the university and I knew that if I explained to them in English, they would not understand. I found myself unable to explain. I mixed up everything. I would start in English and then think of its equivalent in Arabic and trying to remember what was its name in Arabic?? They tried to help me. It was very hard. I don't know what you call it in Arabic. It was so funny. When they left, I felt oh no. what happened? It was very, very hard to me to explain the experiment for them in Arabic. I got used to explaining in English. I was stuttering in Arabic. The words I studied in chemistry at school, I couldn't remember.

Ayat said that she finds it difficult to describe something specific in Arabic "especially that the scientific terminologies would still be in English." She feels that if she wants to explain something to her mother, she needs more time saying,

I have to squeeze my mind a little bit and then I find the words in Arabic to explain to my mom. I need to squeeze my mind especially that there are some

words that we always use in English. So, they stick in our mind in English and you forget their equivalent in Arabic but if I try, I will remember it eventually.

Hatim also finds it very hard to explain his major in Arabic saying, “Scientific Arabic declined because at university we learned new things and we learnt them in English and also, at some stage, one would feel it is not necessary to know what they mean in the mother tongue.” Hatim feels that it will be very difficult to use academic Arabic to talk about his major saying, “The things that I took in Arabic at school and then took the same but in English, I would know them in Arabic, but the new words that I took in English at university, I cannot translate all to Arabic.”

Shocking views about Arabic came from Marah and Mahmoud who believed that Arabic lacks the scientific words. Marah, despite her huge love for Arabic, feels that Arabic does not have the words she needs in her chemical engineering major. She said,

I can talk about my major in Arabic, but I reach a point where I cannot name the equipment. The problem is that not all the words I got in my major are in Arabic or can be in Arabic. I can talk about my major in Arabic but to a certain level. You reach an area where I cannot find the words in Arabic like compressor. This is the problem, not all the words can be used in Arabic. I can explain the steps but not the words.

Marah concludes saying, “The words I learned here, the advanced vocabulary of chemical engineering, I have them in English, not in Arabic. I lost the chance of knowing these words in Arabic.” Mahmoud also expressed his doubt that English scientific words can be translated to Arabic. He said,

Probably, I can talk about my major in Arabic, but people will not understand me. The idea will not get across because the terms will be strange. In Arabic it sounds different and strange. Literal translation seems very silly. The English scientific words cannot be translated because they will sound strange. People will understand them better in English. The meaning will be superficial in Arabic while in English it is easier.

Abdulrahim, who is the only interviewed student who said that he can explain his major in Arabic with ease. He said it is because even in his third year in engineering, he translates things in his mind to Arabic in order to understand it. He said, “I still can explain my major in Arabic because in order for me to understand it, I translate it first into Arabic, understand it and then understand it in English.” Previously acquired terminologies and vocabulary in the different subjects seem to experience attrition.

Schmid, Kopke and de bot (2012) point out that speakers, who have not used the language for a long time, encounter difficulties. Also, students acquired new knowledge in English only.

5.4. The transition from Arabic school to EMI university

The transition from AMI schools to EMI university was embroiled with difficulties at all levels; psychological, academic, social and cultural. It was like migrating from one environment to another. It is not just the language that was changed but the whole culture that impacted their lives and experiences, especially in their first semester when they were trying to adjust and get used to the new academic experience.

5.4.1. Psychological effect - “I was horrified... I was scared”

All the interviewed students expressed their shock, despair and disappointment upon encountering the new environment in and outside classes. The whole campus experience was new for them, which made them feel excluded, and inferior to the other students. The words students used to describe their emotions in the first semester at university shows their depression and disappointment. Using words such as, “felt so bad,” “shocked,” “confusion” “the transition was really hard,” and “painful” shows the psychological suffering they went through. When students do not feel comfortable, they will not do well academically or socially.

Marah was one of the students who was a little angry when she was arguing how this leap is happening saying, “First semester in the university, we had the first course in Chemistry. From grade seven, I am studying these terms in Arabic. You can’t come in one semester and tell me, know them in English! The transition was so painful.” Realizing how the whole campus is functioning in English only troubled her. She said, “My shock was that ‘oh my God. English is that important.’” It also confused Hadeel who said commenting on how the transition was when she joined the university saying, “Confusion. Everything was in Arabic and suddenly it was all in English... First year was very bad. I knew all the materials but in Arabic.” She described this painful transition using the word ‘phobia’ saying, “There is fear of English. You should study it from young age to get over that *phobia* or fear of the language.” Hadeel said, “If I studied in Arabic, I would be less successful because I would not have to go through the transition that made me feel lost and distracted.”

Lara was shocked and horrified. She also felt that she was not ready for the demands of studying via English. She said,

I was horrified... I was scared. I knew [the university] is American, so everything is going to be taught in English. ... I was horrified. When I came to uni, first week, I was shocked. There was an instructor who was only speaking in English. I was still shocked. I was still not ready or prepared.

The transition from school to university is usually demanding and stressful for all students. As Ofte (2014) says, “For students, entering the territory of higher education involves acculturation into a discourse characterized by new and unfamiliar social, cultural, and academic conventions” (p. 1). However, for Arab students coming from Arabic school, the transition seems to be harder and more frustrating. They have to meet the different demands associated with the change of the medium of instruction in and outside the classroom.

5.4.2. Academic effect

The transition did not just render psychological pain and suffering, but there was also an academic price that many students had to pay. Moving from AMI schools to EMI universities had its consequences on students’ academic life, either by delaying them from entering the university, or by affecting their grades in the university courses, or by forcing some to take interruption after the first semester.

5.4.2.1. Prewriting English Courses- “I was surprised that I was placed in prewriting course”

One of the biggest hurdles that students face, as some interviewed students suggested, was taking the prewriting English courses which were non-credit courses and made students feel that they are weak in English and different from the other students who immediately took regular courses without having the pre-writing courses. The grades of IELTS and the placement test were the identifying tools that forced some students to take writing courses.

One of these students who had to take pre-writing English course was Faten. Because she didn’t take a high grade in the placement test, she had to take this course. Faten, year 4 industrial engineering student, remembers the pain when was placed in pre-writing non-credit course which made her feel bad. She said,

Frankly the first semester was a shock to me. Even though it was only the

prewriting course 001, which was not that difficult, but I felt that my English is not good and that is why I am in this course. So, I felt that my writing was not good, and I need to improve it, and that I left the school weak in English. ... I used to have lots of errors. I was slow because I would form the sentence in my head and then say it.

Hadeel said, "I hated English when I took the Writing course at university. I never wrote in English in high school; just some very simple paragraphs. At [university,] I cried to the professor." Hatim's excitement to go to university faded away with taking the prewriting non-credit English writing course. He said,

I was so excited to go the university. The facilities, the doctors... Then, in the first semester, they gave us placement test to evaluate us; one writing test... I felt I did well. I wrote a paragraph and expressed all the thoughts in organized way. But I was surprised that I was placed in prewriting course which is 001. This made me disappointed.

He was disappointed again when he tried to skip that level to go to the first writing course with the help of the instructor but couldn't do that. He said,

First day of prewriting course, the instructor wanted to give us another chance to go to 101. Four students went to 101. But I was not among them. This made me more depressed. I focused a lot during the writing courses. On developing my writing. I saw these courses as the gate that would transition me from Arabic language to English language.

These students felt that having to take these pre-writing courses was an added burden. They had to take courses that have no credit hours to improve their language.

5.4.2.2. Suffering with the Content Matter- "the information is not absorbed quickly"

Some of the interviewed students suggested that they also suffered academically in their major courses. They believed that the use of English was an obstacle that stood between them and the content of their major courses. Even though they resorted to many techniques and strategies to overcome the language barrier, English still affected their understanding of the courses. Interviewed students reported their suffering with understanding the content matter of their major courses. Abdulrahim suffered because he didn't understand the lectures. He said, "I had a problem in understanding the lectures. The teacher used to speak fast and would say terms that I didn't know at all in English." He said that he never approached the instructor

because he felt that he was not good like the others. He said, “I felt that everyone was good and following the teacher, so I felt shy to go and tell him I didn’t understand so *I swallowed it*. And then Alhamdulillah I improved” [italics added]. Aziza said, “I suffered in the first semester in all the courses; chemistry, physics, and Math. They were all in English and I understood nothing.” She even had difficulty understanding what some of her instructors were saying in class. Aziza said, “Another thing was the professors. Those who were fluent and spoke quickly, I would not understand them. No! the suffering was huge!” Aziza says that her understanding in Arabic is better than in English until now where she is year three chemical engineering student. She said,

My comprehension is better in Arabic than it is in English until now. In Arabic, I absorb the information quickly but in English it needs time. The information is not absorbed quickly. Retention is better in Arabic. When someone says something in Arabic, I immediately understand it but in English it takes time to get it inside. In English until now, I read the sentence more than once to understand it.

Findings here show that the use of English as a language of instruction put an extra challenging burden on the Arab students. Adding to the burden of the difficult scientific field is the language that these students need to study in.

5.4.2.3. Lower Grades in Major Courses- “English affected my grades in the first semester”

As a result of having problems with understanding the content matter because of English, students reported having lower grades because of it. One of the students who reported this problem was Faten. She got a low grade in Physics even though she was excellent in it and was translating a lot. However, her English affected her grade. She said,

In physics, I got B. It was the shock of my life because I didn’t get it because I was a failure in physics but because I was unable to understand what the professor was saying. He used to explain the terms in English which I couldn’t understand. The language affected my understanding. Even though I used to translate at home, we would have a term in the exam that I was not familiar with.

Sama, year three in biotechnology, also said that English affected her grades in the first semester even though she was translating everything. She said that English affected her grades in the first semester. She said, “The course was very easy, but

my grade was very bad. If the doctor changed one word in the exam, I would not understand the question. I would get lost. Using synonyms caused this confusion.” Students believe that using EMI has resulted in lowering their grades and affecting their academic results. It is very sad that these students know the information but lose grades because of the medium.

5.4.2.4. Delayed in Joining the University- “I took the IELTS exam three or four times”

9 interviewed students had to improve their English before joining the university. They took an obligatory gap after school to obtain the required score in TOEFL or IELTS for their institutions. Abdulrahim is one of these students. He was delayed for six months. He says, “To be able to join university, I had to get IELTS. I knew that I could not get it. So, I was late for six months. I stayed at home for these six months to study IELTS. So, after six months I did the IELTS and got 5.” Thaer also couldn’t start studying at the university because of his English, so he had to go to the Bridge program. He said, “At university, in the beginning I suffered a little because I went to the bridge program for a semester. I was short of few points. I wanted to improve my language for other courses that required projects in English.”

Many Arab students who come from AMI schools are mostly forced to take a semester or a year gap to study English to meet the entry requirements of the university. This delay is not the result of failing to meet the academic demand of their major courses but just to get ready for the language of instruction.

5.4.2.5. Taking Interruption- “I interrupted to see if I would continue”

Taking one semester gap before joining the university seems easier than having to interrupt after one semester because of English. The pain and suffering Rama, with her crying face and shivering lips told and unfolded, were beyond description. Rama, who is year 3 biotechnology student, recalls very bitter moments in her life when she had to interrupt after her first semester because she got ‘D’ in all of her courses because of English. This shock forced her to stop for one semester to see if she would be able to continue in her major or transfer to another major that had easier English or would change the whole major to something in Arabic medium. She said, “When I started the university, I had to interrupt after one semester because of

English. I always loved biology and I chose biotechnology because of that. Since grade 9, I decided to study that” However, she had a big obstacle in her way which was English. She described that saying:

My English was not that bad. I got 5.5 in IELTS, but I failed in reading. When I started university, they gave me one reading course and I passed it. However, when I studied bio 1, I got D because I was not able to understand the course in English. I didn’t know the vocabulary in English. I used to translate using google translate. Google translate is so bad. I used to copy and paste the whole text and translate it to understand it. Then, I would go to the exam and would not be able to answer anything. The words were in English.

She said justifying her decision to interrupt for one semester,

I interrupted because all my study will be in English and I cannot survive like this and continue like this. So, I didn’t know what to do. If your reading is wrong and you don’t know how to read, how can you study? So, I interrupted to see if I would continue in my major or if I would change it.

She says, “In the semester I interrupted, I didn’t study English, but I was thinking of what I should do. I even tried to look for majors in Arabic.” Eventually, she decided to continue in her major. She said, “My mother told me to take bio 2 and try. Here, I forced myself to read in English instead of translating everything using google translate. I started translating only the difficult words. Then, I got A in that course. Since then, I learned to study and memorize in English.”

The academic price that Rama had to pay seems tremendous. This is in line with a study conducted by Al-Qurashi in Saudi Arabia which showed that the students perceive the use of a foreign language as a medium of instruction as a major obstacle for their success and contributed it to a high drop-out rate (Ellili-Cherif and Alkhateeb, 2015, p. 208). Marsh (2006) claims that adopting English as a medium of instruction in some contexts might be destructive where it acts more as a barrier, a challenge, and is responsible for students’ educational exclusion and failure, and is directly linked to their confusion, despair, and high dropout rates.

5.4.2.6. The Role of English at School in Increasing the Suffering

All the interviewed students felt that their schools did not help them gain the required level in English at university. They were disappointed at the schools’ marginalization of English and superficiality of curriculum that made some of them believe back in

school that their English is good. All of them were not happy with teaching English at school. Thaer blames his high school English teacher for not teaching English well, and for giving them wrong idea about writing. Thaer said,

Our English teacher taught us nothing. He used to speak about his life. We all memorized his life story by heart. He used to tell us that you are either born with it or not. If you don't know how to write, you will never be able to write.

Thaer was shocked with his level in English because he used to think that his English was good. He said, "When I graduated and went to the university, I found out that I was not able to write an essay, not even the format of the essay because he never trained us." Hatim had the same problem at school. He said, "English language at school was very weak to the extent that what we were studying in Grade 12 complex and compound sentences. When I came to university, I knew that my friends in English curriculum schools study them in grade 1." Hatim said that "English was just learning names of objects, nothing deep. Paragraph of half a page." He felt that he was better than his colleagues. He said, "I was excellent at school compared to my classmates. I felt my English was good. Once I started university, I discovered my English was weak." Lara described teaching English at school as "horrible." She said that she still remembers that in grade 12, "the teacher was still giving [them] that 'he,' and 'she' go with 'is.'"

However, those students whose English was good attributed that for personal or family effort. Marah said that her family helped her improve her English at school days saying, "My mother studied English Literature. So, whenever I had assignment, my mother would help me. But if I compare my competence in English to other students in English schools, it was nothing. Compared to my school, I was ok." Lara also clarified that her English was mainly from movies and music. She said, "I was obsessed with watching Hollywood movies without subtitles. This is the only mean I learned English, not from my school. So, the school was really, really weak in English."

Faten also had passion for Western movies which made her English good. She said,

This is what made my English good, not from the school. In the school, I didn't feel teaching English was good. I hated when the teacher would open the book and ask us to translate word by word in Arabic.... So, I used to use the Utube where there was a program called 'fallemlha' which used to show us how to use words in different contexts and how native speakers use these words.

What students described is confirmed in the study that Masri (2014) did when she reported English teachers saying in reference to the proficient students in English in their schools saying, "Those students who are proficient in English are not so because of school but because of their personal effort" (p. 45). She suggested that because of surfing the internet in English, watching English channels, and reading in English, their English improved, away from the educational context (Ibid).

5.4.2.7. Coping Strategies

Faced with a whole new system, a new medium of instruction, a new environment and culture, students created their own coping strategies to succeed and to redeem the gap so that they can overcome the academic challenges.

5.4.2.7.1. Translation

The first coping strategy that all interviewed students used was translation. All of the interviewed students resorted to translation in their first semester to understand the lectures and to follow up with the instructors. Later on, they stopped translation and tried to understand the words from the context. Hadeel said, "I remember in the first year, I used to translate holding dictionaries all the time. Then, I took an oath that I would just understand the words from the context." Lara also used translation in a very long and tiring process that she described saying:

I was still not ready or prepared. So, what I used to do, I used to be just like the wall in the class for the first two weeks. Then go back home, open the slides and translate everything. Translate, memorize and understand in English. You know what I mean. So, I have the slides, translate it into Arabic, understand it in Arabic and again understand it in English.

Marwan believes that translation helped him a lot. He said, "Translation also helped me. In chemistry I suffered a lot and had a lot to translate. Many terminologies were hard, and I had to translate." Bassem had a very peculiar way of translation. He said, "Frankly, it was like doing translation in your brain. You were like translating your brain from Arabic to English. As if you bring a notebook and you translate. The sentence is in your brain in Arabic, then you translate it to English." Rama used Google translate which was disastrous for her. She said, "Google translate is so bad. I used to copy and paste the whole text and translate it to understand it. Then, I would go to the exam and would not be able to answer anything." She got D in the

first semester because her translation using Google translate was all wrong and she suffered tremendously because of that.

5.4.2.8. Other strategies- “I used to go to people ... Please can you help me?”

Some students preferred to seek help from instructors during office hours or from other colleagues. Marah sought help from her professors. She said that she even sought help from her lab teacher who was teaching lab, which was supposed to be very easy,

I knew I had weakness. So, I would spend the weekends reading and would go to the instructors' office hours while other students would not go because it is lab. I would tell him I read this paragraph, and this is what I understood. Is it correct? I read this paragraph and I summarized it.

She said talking about her English writing instructor, “With the professor, I had a great communication. I would send the doctor emails to ask questions. My professor was amazing. She would reply and would exchange emails.” She said talking about all of her professors in her major, “If my teacher has office hours, I would go every office hour, even if he gets bored of me.” She added, “I would go to the doctor's office to ask but I would be more confident because I would not be afraid if I made a mistake in grammar. If he was an Arab, I would give him the word in Arabic and ask him to translate it for me. In class, I would not be able to ask him.” Marah would also go to the writing center to improve her English. She said, “We have two hours access to the writing center. I would never lose them.” She added, “I borrowed the writing center hours from my friends. I would ask them to register their names and give me their hours because I wanted more people to review my paper.” Ayat also chose to ask her instructor for advice. She said, “So I told my instructor that I know everything you are saying but unable to discuss with you because of the language.” Another technique that Lara used beside translation was seeking help but from her colleagues. She said,

I am very social. So, I used to go to people ... ‘Please can you help me? Can you translate this for me?’ Especially math ... I took it in Arabic. So, even the simple terms like ‘subtract,’ ‘add’, I was not aware.

Lara would also tell her instructors that she came from Arabic school. She said, “I used to go to the professors and tell them, by the way, I come from Arabic school. So, I need you to help me.” Mohammad chose to record the instructors and then go

home and transcribe the lectures, a process that he described as “very tiring and exhausting because if, for example, he talked for one hour, I needed four hours to listen and write the lecture.” The same technique was used by Abdulrahim who recorded the lectures and said about that, “So, I used to record [the instructor] and then write these words. I had no choice. I would either do this to fix the situation or I would leave.”

5.4.3. Social Effect

The social impact was huge because the interviewed students felt they were different coming from Arabic schools and that their English is not like the other students who come from American and British schools. This social impact was seen in and outside class, with their colleagues and instructors.

5.4.3.1. Participating in Class- “What if I say something wrong! What if they laughed at me!”

Their English stopped them from participating in class fearing that they may make a mistake in speaking. Sharifa said, “I suffered in English in the first semester. I knew what they were talking about, but I had no courage to raise my voice and speak in front of them.” The same thing happened with Marah, who finished high school with 99% but still felt that she couldn’t speak in class. Marah said, “I suffered because I couldn’t participate in class or to share my opinion. I didn’t have that confidence... what if I say something wrong! What if they laughed at me!” She said that Arab students who come from Arabic school were silenced in class saying, “Arab students were not known in class but only when the grades are out there while excellent students from English schools would be seen very obviously.” Sama also didn’t participate because she didn’t understand. She said, “In the first year, I would not speak or ask because if you understand what the teacher is saying, you can ask.” Not knowing the terms in English caused Marah social embarrassment in front of her classmates. She said,

I remember in the first classes of the lab, the instruments used had names like ‘round flask,’ so the doctor once asked me, ‘get bottom round flask.’ I did not know what he meant. I went and brought him something else. He said, ‘no not this one.’ It was so embarrassing.

What students said about their fear of participation in class shows that English is not giving them access but is rather marginalizing them and minimizing their chances to be active participants in the classroom.

5.4.3.2. Socializing outside the classroom “People like us would be talking in Arabic”

Interviewed students divided students at university to two groups; Arab students who come from Arabic schools and they referred to them as “we” and Arab students who come from British or American schools and they referred to them as “they.” All of them saw themselves and others in this dichotomy. This feeling of being different from others affected their social life and made them feel isolated and inferior. All of them used this way of referring to themselves and other students. For instance, Hadeel said, “People like *us* ...” and in other place said, “*Their* whole life is in English” while Aziza said, “*They* say: ‘Arabic school’” and Bassem said, “I would not be offended if *they* correct my English.” In all of their description of the social communication between them and the other students from British or American schools, we see this dichotomy of two different cultures and two worlds. This dichotomy indicates that they feel they belong to two different cultures.

Having social exchange with the ‘other’ students had to be done in English. Hadeel said that English was important for her social life at the university. She said, “Even though English didn’t affect my academic life, it was necessary for social life at [university] to go through the four years with ease and try to communicate with everyone and to be able to present in English.” She described how awkward it will be to talk in Arabic on campus saying, “People like *us* would be talking in Arabic on campus. Any simple conversation with any of your colleagues is in English. If it was in Arabic, it would be strange; you feel strange.” Moments of social exchange made her feel different. She explained saying, “If you respond back in Arabic, they continue in English, so it becomes awkward. So, you feel like, what are you doing? You cannot speak in English.” Hadeel says, “When you study in English, it is not that you are studying subjects in English, but you are communicating with a whole environment that considers English everything.” She said that during these social conversations and because all the messages she got forced her to talk in English. Socializing outside the classroom in English resulted in getting comments on these students’ pronunciation. Hadeel said,

Students used to comment on my pronunciation. Words should be pronounced in a certain way. I met many, many people who would make fun of my pronunciation. I would say a word and he would say it after me

correcting it for me. I used to be *sensitive* at the beginning but then I got used to it and I would thank those who corrected me.

Aziza also faced the same comments. She said, “Until now I get comments on my pronunciation and make fun of me and they say Arabic school [laughing]. I don’t feel offended.” Bassem also got comments on his pronunciation from his classmates. He said,

I would not be offended if they correct my English because I am learning a new thing. In physics lab, I worked in a team with two other friends; one from American school and the other was from British school. So, the first knew British and the second knew American English but I didn’t have any. So, I learned a lot of vocabulary from them. They helped me and advised me on my pronunciation in a nice way.

This feeling of discomfort made some of the interviewed students surround themselves with students like them; from Arabic schools. Marah surrounded herself with students like her. She said,

I had friends and are mostly Arabs because we have things to share; they understand me not in terms of language but in terms of culture. Then, I had friends from other nationalities but no, I feel more comfortable with Arab persons. My ability to express and communicate with Arabs is stronger.

Hatim said, “When I started university, most of the time, I used to walk with my friends who came with me from my school.” Aziza tried to be friend with students she knew in high school. She said, “I became friend with students who were with me in my school. At school, they were not my friends but no, now they are my friends. They understand me... Arabic school like me...[laughing]... Same atmosphere.” She also tried to distance herself from the other students and said, “Those who speak English, I was shy to sit beside them or talk to them. I felt I was inferior to them, not able to express myself. I was afraid... what if I would say would be right or wrong.” Faten also said, “When I started university, most of the time, I used to walk with my friends who came with me from school.” For Bassem, having Arab students who came from Arabic schools gave him a feeling of safety in comparison to the other students who ‘shine’ very quickly as he says:

All the students who came from Arabic schools were facing the same struggles which made it easier for me. Students who came from English schools shined very quickly from the way of talking and their repertoire of vocabulary. You ask him about the word’s meaning and he knows it. Then he says, ‘I am from British or American school.’ I would say to myself, ‘it would have been better if I studied in English.’

Language cannot be disconnected from its social context. Language is a system of social symbols and acts that are always interpreted by the participants as a signal of social positioning (Bull, 2013, p. 36). Social life at university is very important for students since they stay on campus more than they do at their own homes. Students feel that they are socially outcast due to their different social norms that included their accent, conversational styles and fluency.

5.4.4. Cultural Effect

5.4.4.1. Pressure to speak in English- “the culture ... forces us to speak in English”

Findings suggest that 60.7% (n=163) of the surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the university culture dictates speaking in English, not Arabic, while only 11.9% (n=32) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and 27.6% (n=74) were neutral. 19 out of the 20 interviewed students talked about the pressure to speak in English at university. Ayat said, “The culture of the university not only stimulates students to speak English, but it forces us to speak in English. Sometimes we find ourselves forced to speak in English.” Similarly, Sharifa feels the same. She says, “The culture of the university enforces us to speak in English.” However, she ignores that and speaks in Arabic. She says,

Even when they ask me in English, I respond in Arabic because they are Arabs. They understand me, and I understand them but each one speaks the language he wants. I feel it doesn't make sense to speak in English. It is just showing off.

Hadeel talked about one incident that shows how much distanced her other friends were from Arabic. She said that she wanted to give her friend a gift and while she was writing on the card, her friends asked her to write in English. She said, “This is exaggeration. I wanted to give my friend a gift and my other friend told me, ‘write in English! It would be very bizarre in Arabic.’”

Mahmoud finds himself obliged to speak in English even though he hates it because the general perception among students is that speaking English is cool and modern. He says,

In my university, an Arab with an Arab speak in English and it is funny even on WhatsApp or over the phone, they speak in English. It makes me laugh. We are Arabs. I respond to him in English. Even if I speak in Arabic, he will

respond in English, so I cut the story short and respond in English. where is the logic?

Imad is angry with the Arab students' attitude to speak in English saying, "Now, what I see in university is very annoying. Two Arabs talk in English! I don't know why even though they are both Arabs! If an Arab speaks in English with me, I will respond in Arabic. They think it is prestige." Imad concluded saying,

Frankly, people should know that it is fine to speak in Arabic. I don't know how to communicate that to them, but they should know it is not embarrassing to speak in Arabic. I am happy that I speak in Arabic... I am proud that I speak in Arabic.... I feel I don't belong here to these people here. I like to play football without shoes. I like arbitrary things. The environment is changed. I try to adopt but I cannot.

5.4.4.2. Different Ethics and Mentality- "Their whole life is in English"

Arab students who come from Arabic schools generally seem more conservative and more preserving of the Arabic and Islamic values than their counterparts who come from American and British schools who seem more open-minded and more westernized, as suggested by the interviews. For many students, coming from Arabic medium school made them different from other students in terms of ethics and mentality. Hadeel said that the students who come from American and British schools are different. She said,

Their whole life is in English. At [university], students believe they live in the USA. They watch American news and are interested in what is going on in the States. *They* stalk the news of pop stars. 90% of the times I would be sitting with *them* not understanding what they are talking about until now.

Hadeel said that she tried to be like them but couldn't. She said,

There are some things I tried to have interest in them but couldn't. They watch series like 'Games of Thrones,' 'Suites,' and 'House'. They are seasons and I tried to watch but felt they are useless.... Sometimes they speak slang that I never understood.

She said they were culturally different in everything even in the cartoon they watched. She said,

Even cartoon... [laughing] If I said I watched Spacetoon [Arabic satellite channel for Arab children] in childhood, *they* don't know it exists [laughing]. *They* watched 'Disney.' Cartoon network! I never knew it existed. I would see the same cartoon, but I saw the Arabic version and they saw it in the English version. I used to be shocked that even cartoon! [laughing].

These students are also different in the way they dress. Students who came from Arabic schools seemed more conservative, even in the way they dress. Faten said, “Coming from Arabic school, I found it strange how students would wear off shoulders and I felt that I was strange and awkward being Hijabi girl. Then I surrounded myself with girls like me.” Also, the students who came from Arabic schools were in segregated schools in which boys and girls have completely different premises. This made socializing with the other gender hard, which was in contrast easy for students who come from English medium schools since most of these schools are not segregated. Aziza said,

Different ethics and mentality... It was completely different. When I first entered the university, I was shocked. When I was in Arabic school, I never talked to a guy. Even at home, I don't meet guys. In the beginning, I would not go to talk to guys. But we had group work and I gradually was able to communicate with the guys.

Imad faced the same problem coming from segregated school to co-educational institution. He said, “The culture was completely different; 360 degrees. So different. I was in segregated school. So, it was the first time I deal and communicate with girls. So, I had to learn how to deal with them.” This shows that language is not just a medium of teaching, but it is an embodiment of a whole culture. It proves that language and culture are inseparable. The students who were in English schools held within them many aspects of western culture in the way they dress, the shows they watch, the language they speak and the way they think. In contrast, coming from Arabic schools also shaped students' culture.

Even though for many students, the university culture was shocking and different, it was an enlightenment for others. For Lara and Samia, the culture of the university affected them positively. Lara found that this cultural diversity helped widen her cultural perspective. She said, “Of course, I got a cultural shock” because “I used to think that Islam is the best religion and anyone who is not a Muslim will go to hell. I also thought that we as Arabs are the best. I was so close minded.” However, after studying in the university and meeting people from different nationalities, mentalities and religions, she “became very open minded... open minded in a good way. Not to go out at night but open minded in accepting.” This open-mindedness was proved by having “friends who are Christians, atheist, very conservative,” and by learning “how to become flexible with everyone and that no nationality or culture is superior to

others.” Similarly, studying at university affected Samia and her cultural understanding. She said, “Personally, we changed a lot. At university, we always thought of questions of life. All of these questions, I approached through English, not Arabic. I believe language does affect personality a lot.” She said that because of studying in American university, her beliefs are now different from the Arabic culture. She said,

My thinking is different from what society here thinks. I don’t think I can fit in in this society. But that is why when it came to friends of high school or university, they are not these people who are so much into the Arabic culture; that we do not stick to something illogically just because it is heritage or that is how we learned it. They were aware of themselves.

She says that this difference resulted from the atmosphere of the university. She said, “Definitely, the professors, the topics I took, the friends I had, the environment I was in, they all made me shift in that direction than I already was.”

5.5. Students’ Views on Arabic and English

5.5.1. Future of Academic Arabic- “Arabic has no future in academia”

All interviewed students feel that Academic Arabic has no future. They are all so pessimistic about it. Marah said, “Arabic has no future in academia. English is the lingua franca for education.” Lara is also pessimistic. She said, “it is going so bad. The prestige language in the UAE is English.” Sharifa said, “The future of the academic Arabic is declining especially in the university.” Ayat said, “Arabic does not have future in higher education academically. I don’t think there will be anyone studying in Arabic. Everything will be in English.” Sanaa said, “The future of Arabic is lost. It is almost extinct. They say they are taking care of Arabic but in reality, it has no place.” She feels that using English as medium of instruction is responsible for the decline of Arabic. She said, “Even parents prefer to send their children to foreign schools. Nobody now wants to send them to Arabic schools because eventually they will study in English.” Hatim also was very pessimistic about the future of Arabic in the UAE that he described as “vague” because of the use of English as MI. All students agreed that academic Arabic has no future in academia in the light of the current language policies that have sidelined Arabic and prioritized English in academia. However, the students seem so powerless and seem to take it as a destiny that cannot be changed. Their pessimistic attitude is intertwined with hopelessness because it is now engrained in their consciousness that Arabic is weak

and cannot be the language of instruction. They accept the powerlessness and the marginalization of their language that is marginalizing them too.

5.5.2. Suggestions to Save Arabic- “More electives in Arabic”

Despite the interviewed students' awareness of the dim future of Academic Arabic, most of their suggestions to save Arabic did not have any mentioning of using Arabic as a language of instruction or co-language of instruction in academia. One of the students' suggestions to save Arabic was having more electives in Arabic and offering electives only in Arabic for Arab students. Imad said, “The students here are mostly graduates of English schools. They should have some courses in Arabic at university. Why do they have options to take courses in Arabic or English? They should be forced to take them only in Arabic.” However, Rotana does not believe that the university has any duty in promoting Arabic and considers that it is the duty of the student to improve his or her Arabic. She said, “I don't know how to improve the Arabic status in higher education. Maybe the person himself can do extra effort to work on his Arabic.” She added, “At university, we have electives in Arabic. So, my university is taking care of Arabic through offering electives in Arabic.” Mahmoud said, “We need to have centers for Arabic. Raising awareness among people; mosques can have a vital role. it should be easy, simple. Media plays a vital role too.” Thaer, however, felt that universities can save Arabic and Arab students. He said, “Universities should focus on Arabic as much as they do in English; have more courses in Arabic. At least there should be one class in Arabic that gives us the business vocabulary that we need in our majors. They should teach us in Arabic how to use them.” Similarly, Abdulrahim said,

Something should happen, or this situation will continue. I think we need to promote Arabic and write the terminologies in Arabic and English. There should be some courses in Arabic We need to write books in Arabic. we need to have Arab scientists so that we produce science and write science books in Arabic.

Lara blames the society for the degradation of Academic Arabic. She says, “If people start talking about why loss of Arabic is so bad, something good can happen but people now are sleeping. They don't care.”

Two out of the 20 interviewed students suggested having some form of bilingual

education in higher education while the 18 students suggested solutions that cannot help Arabic gain an academic status in the university. Their suggestions, if applied, do not save Arabic from being sidelined from the academic scene in academia.

5.5.3. Arabic in Future Job- “I don’t think Arabic has any weight in our jobs”

Findings suggest that 51.8% (n=139) agree or strongly agree that academic Arabic is important for their future careers, 29% (n=78) were neutral and 19.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This might show an awareness among the surveyed students towards the importance of Arabic in future job, which is not what the university is helping them be ready for. However, it is very surprising that most of the interviewed students believed that Arabic has no place in their future job that is dominated by the international language; English. Even though it is the same sample, students during the interviews mostly showed that they strongly believe that only English will help them in the workplace. It might be due to their opening up more in the interviews and being more consistent with their positions that Arabic is marginalized and is not playing a huge role in their academic life. It might be due to their responding to the questionnaires in a more nationalistic way towards their language, which changed later on during the interviews where they revealed the truth and their real thoughts. Rotana strongly believes that Arabic will have no place in her future job in biotechnology. She thinks that science is equal to English and that Arabs and Arabic have no place in the new sciences. She says,

Frankly, academic Arabic language will not be needed in my future job because biotechnology is a new major that started in the west and they control it like Pharma companies. Even the hereditary diseases are studied in English. Arabs have no idea about this major. So, our academic Arabic will not benefit us here. It also depends on the major. Nuclear energy is the same.

What Rotana says reflects her total lack of confidence in Arabic to the extent that she feels Arabs have no idea about her major which is epidemic. This shows that using English as language of instruction has made students like Rotana lose their trust in their native academic language even though she studied in Arabic for twelve years. Starting a new major does not mean that Arabic cannot be used for teaching it even if Arabs did not produce the new knowledge. However, Lara strongly believes that she will need Arabic in her future job in media. The major here plays a role in

shaping students' perceptions of the importance of Arabic in future career. Lara said, "Definitely I am going to need it in my future job. We live in an Emirati culture and many Emirati people speak in Arabic and I will be talking to them in Arabic. It is important for work."

5.5.4. The Language of Instruction- "I have not seen a single science book in Arabic"

Findings suggest that 72% (n=193) suggested that their competence would have been better if they were studying in Arabic, while 27.7% (n=69) said it would have been the same and 2.2% (n=6) said it would have been worse.

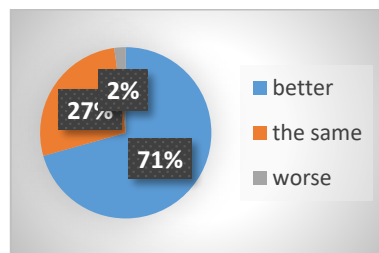


Figure 6: Competence in Arabic if MI was Arabic

This shows that almost two thirds of the questionnaire participants believed that studying via Arabic can improve their Academic proficiency in Arabic. Also, interviewed students pointed out that if they were studying their majors in Arabic at university, their academic Arabic would have been better. Hadeel said, "I feel if I studied in Arabic, I would be more successful at university if I continued my higher education in Arabic. English distracts me." Marah said, "If the study was in Arabic, I would work harder but my distinction would be greater. I would participate more. I would answer questions in class, I would save time for translation." She also pointed out, "If my study was in Arabic, I would have added more words in Arabic. My scientific words would be much more. The scientific words I had in school, I know now their equivalents in English. This is addition."

However, even though 72% (n=193) of the questionnaire participants said that their competence in Arabic would have been better if they were studying in Arabic, in response to a question of which language they prefer to study in at university, only 20% (n=54) chose 'Arabic,' while 44.7% (n=120) chose 'English,' and 35% (n=94) chose 'both.'

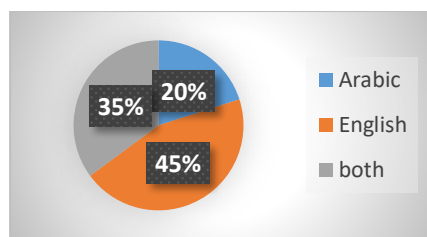


Figure 7: Preference of MI

Students' choice of language reflects their perception of the utility of each language. Only 20% prefer to study in Arabic while double this number prefer to study in English. 35% prefer to study in both, which is a good percentage that shows that students want bilingual programs to be implemented, but in the interviews, the students showed that they wanted more electives in Arabic while they wanted their majors to be in English. In the interviews, 16 of the 20 participants suggested that English should be the language of instruction, while four students suggested that Arabic can be a medium of instruction. Despite her huge love of Arabic, Marah, driven by pragmatic reasons, suggests that English should continue being the language of instruction. Justifying her preference for using English as the language of instruction, Marah said,

Regardless, our life is not only academic. Arabic will be there. We need in the UAE to have English as an academic language because of the different nationalities in this country. I want to write my research in English and directly spread it to the world.

She added, "Academically, it is better if we have one language, which is now English. English is the language of science because we need an international language whether it is English or not; a language that all scientists use and write in." Rotana shares Marah her views that English should continue being the language of instruction. However, she thinks that Arabic should be the language of instruction at school. She said,

But I think that students should study for twelve years in Arabic so that they have the base in Arabic and then study at university in English because it is the language of science. I don't think that four years of studying via English will wipe out the twelve years of studying via Arabic.

Abdulrahim feels that English should continue being the language of instruction because all scientific books are in English. He said, "I think we need to consider this point. Most of the books or actually all the books I have seen are in English. I have

not seen a single science book in Arabic. Science is now in English.” Ayat also prefers to study in English because she feels that if she studied in Arabic, it would be harder. She says, “If I studied in Arabic, it would also be hard because everybody uses English and it is easier in English. The words are harder in Arabic because most of the words are translated from English. So, it is more of English in Arabic alphabets.” She also believes that learning in English improves her English language. She says, “Also, I want to learn English. When I take my courses in English, I learn English beside the content.” Faten said referring to Arabic, “It is not the only language that is marginalized in academia. English language is the international language and all other languages are marginalized and excluded.” On the other hand, four students believed that Arabic can be a medium of instruction. Aziza says, “Yes, Arabic language can be a medium of instruction but there will be literal translation a lot.” Sama is also an advocate of using Arabic as medium of instruction. She said, “Being in an Arab country, I am against teaching in English. It can be in Arabic. Biotechnology is taught in Syria in Arabic. It is easier to understand the information in Arabic.”

What students have said shows that they have mostly lost their faith in Arabic as the language of academia and sciences. Being exposed to sciences in English only made most of them believe that Arabic cannot be the language of sciences, which is an alarming perception that is completely untrue. Even though most of them suggested that studying their major in Arabic would improve their competence in Arabic, they still prefer to study in English driven by pragmatic justifications and the assumed benefits for studying in English. The overwhelming power of English and the absence of Arabic from the academic scene or restricting it to humanities and some electives has shaped students’ perceptions of the two languages.

5.5.5. Arab Identity and EMI- “Arabic language is my identity like my name”

In regard to the centrality of Arabic language in the surveyed students’ identity, the response to the statement of “Arabic is important for my identity as an Arab” showed that almost all the surveyed students consider Arabic important for their identity as Arabs. The findings show that the agreement was massive with 92.9% of the surveyed students who strongly agreed or agreed with the statement; 63.8% (n=171) strongly agreed and 29.1% (n=78) agreed with the statement, while only 1.8% (n=5) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 5.9% (n=16) were neutral. This shows that

almost all surveyed students still feel that Arabic is important for their being Arabs. This finding contradicts the findings that Badry (2011) concluded when she found out that Arab students in a private university in the UAE did not consider Arabic language as an essential component of their identity and that they can be Arabs without speaking Arabic. She suggested, using Hofstede's 'onion metaphor,' that Arabic "language has moved away from the center of the onion to become one of the intermediate layers that can be peeled off" (p. 106) and that "the influence of a second language on native culture and identity must be interpreted outside of the earlier paradigms which placed language at the core of cultural identification" (Ibid). In the interviews, 19 of the 20 interviewed students had Arabic language as a component of their identity. Marah said, "Arabic language is our culture, identity and expression." She added,

As a language, three years would never be able to change the 16 or 17 years of my life in Arabic. This is my life and my culture in Arabic. Whatever these four years added to me, I will return to Arabic. Arabic is my life. AUS added me things but would never wipe out my Arabic.

Lara feels that Arabic is central to her identity that cannot be complete without Arabic. She said,

I feel like people are not aware how bad it is to lose Arabic language because Arabic language is our identity. I mean, we are known as Arabs and it is so important for us. We will not be as Arabs.

Hatim said, "Arabic language is my identity like my name." For Fadi, "Arabic language is the most important thing that unifies Arabs." Aziza feels that "Arabic is the origin of the person. It is also the religion; the Quran was revealed in Arabic." That is why she sees that it is the Standard Arabic rather than the colloquial Arabic that "connects us together as Arabs." For Imad, "The components of Arabic identity are Arabic language, civilization, traditions, religion." Ayat also said, "Arabic is important because I am an Arab and my language is Arabic." For Faten also, "Arabic is very important to my identity." Thaer is very emotional about his Arabic language and identity. He says,

A person who rejects his roots, his language, or his identity, or who does not have an identity is in a crisis; his life is going to be in crisis. He is never going to be secure. He will follow people blindly. He is going to fall for anything. It is like somebody treating his parents in bad manners. Then, you know this person will be doomed in the end.

Mahmoud said, "Arabic is the language of Quran and it is the language of communication. It is our language and we are Arabs. It is so embarrassing if someone cannot speak his own language." Abdulrahim said, "I feel I am pure Arab. Arabic is part of my identity." In all of the students' descriptions of the components of their identity, they didn't mention English or include it as one of the components that identify them. They had Arabic language, culture, history, and some included religion but none mentioned English as a component of his or her identity, even though it might be a part of their identity but they either want to deny it or are not aware of it. Also, findings suggest that mastery of Academic Arabic is not important for being an Arab for half of the surveyed students. For the statement of "I can be an Arab without mastering Academic Arabic," almost half of the surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed to the statement with 48.8% (n=131), while 25% (n=67) were neutral and 26.8% (n=72) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that students do not see that they have to be very proficient in Arabic to be Arabs, which is what they are now. Their academic Arabic has mostly declined and most of them do not seem any more interested in improving it. So, from their perspective, it is not affecting their identity because full mastery of Arabic is not important for being an Arab, as half of the surveyed students believed.

Academic Arabic is an essential part of the surveyed and interviewed students' identity, but this Arabic should not be the language of instruction and is inferior to English, according to these students. So, how do students see themselves? Will that affect their perception of their cultural and linguistic identity? They are marginalized because of English at university and they suffer academically, socially, culturally and psychologically but they still feel that it should be the language of instruction. Students are driven by pragmatic and economic motives. They feel that despite all the marginalization and suffering, English is the language that will help them in their future.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter reported the findings that showed students' awareness of their declining proficiency in academic Arabic after studying in EMI university and their recognition of the limited role of academic Arabic in their academic lives due to the use of English as a language of instruction and limiting Arabic to few electives in the

humanities that can be also taken in English. Findings also showed that students had difficulty with academic Arabic vocabulary that are specific to their majors in the university. They seem to have difficulty finding the equivalent words in Arabic. Findings also showed that the transition from AMI schools to EMI university rendered academic, psychological, social and cultural problems. The findings also showed that students believe that studying their majors in Arabic can improve their academic Arabic but in the same time they reported their preference to study in English for pragmatic reasons and misconceptions about Arabic inability to be the language of science. Students also expressed their pessimistic views on the future of academic Arabic that they considered to be central to their identity as Arabs, but still did not consider mastering Arabic essential for being Arabs.

CHAPTER SIX-DISCUSSION

6.1. Language Policy and its Repercussions

6.1.1. Marginalization of Arabic and English

While the Arabic schools teach via Arabic and marginalize English, universities marginalize Arabic and use English as a language of instruction. Both policies need to be revisited and need to be in harmony because they seem to be at war with each other. Both languages are needed for success, either at school or at university level. Dual language programs, in which L2 does not replace the L1 but is developed alongside it, enable all students “to develop bilingual literacy, learn from each other, and learn academic content in a cooperative, academically rigorous setting” (Murphy, 2016, p. 46). These programs can positively contribute to the students’ overall academic development (Ibid). However, what the two language policies are doing is misleading students. Students upon leaving school felt shocked because they felt that English was insignificant subject at school but is now everything at university while Arabic was everything at school but is now completely marginalized at university. These conflicting messages have resulted in frustration, suffering, academic language attrition and academic challenges for students. Language policies should be enacted in harmony, not in conflict. Students should not be the victims for the discrepancies, differences and conflicts in the language policies. Also, the shift in the language of instruction is violating linguistic human rights. As Shohamy (2006) said, when linguistic rights are granted at one point but taken away at another, in such cases it is severe human rights violation. The participants were granted linguistic rights at school that were then denied at university which made their academic life harder than if they were deprived of that right at school too. This shift would result in discrimination and inequality between “those for whom proficiency in English opens doors and those for whom lack of proficiency in English closes doors” (Piller, & Cho, 2013, p. 29).

6.1.2. Students’ Perceptions of Speaking in Standard Arabic

What students said about how funny and strange speaking in SA reflects the awkwardness of using standard Arabic among Arab students. Questioning “who

would speak SA?” suggests that students might not see SA as a living language that can be used in educational contexts. Also, the attitude of the students plays a very important role in using Standard Arabic. It seems that Standard Arabic is not perceived as a prestigious variety among students, which is the case with Arabs in general who feel more comfortable conversing in colloquial Arabic. Unlike the common perception of the standard variety of languages which is usually considered prestigious by its speakers, Arabs ironically “seem to find ‘prestige’ in avoiding standard and feel proud of using the local variety” (Bani-Khaled, 2014, p. 184). This does not only apply to UAE but elsewhere in the region. The findings are in line with previous studies that showed students’ discomfort speaking in SA (Abouzahr, 2018), refraining from conversing in SA and feeling of awkwardness speaking in it (Masri, 2014), and their preference for English rather than SA in showing sophistication and modernity (Albirini, 2016). Bani-Khaled (2014b) in his study of the attitudes of Jordanian undergraduate students found out that they were generally apathetic towards SA and they saw it rather dying out language but in the same time seemed to be accepting which the author analyzed as boycotting their original language due to “feelings of inferiority and submission to foreign cultures” (p. 170). Students do not see that Arabic has any future in academia because “the message sent to the students is that of the implicit, if not explicit, inferiority of Arabic when compared to English” (Troudi & Al Hafidh, 2017, p. 104).

6.1.3. Language Skills at school

The participants pointed out that their reading and writing skills were more developed than their listening and speaking skills due to the scarcity of using spoken academic Arabic in Arabic classes by students and some instructors. The assumption that the shift from colloquial Arabic to Standard Arabic in teaching Arabic is automatic has to be challenged. Badry (2012) argued that educationalists assume that “the transition from the dialect to MSA in school is automatic” while it is not. Academic Arabic needs to be viewed differently in the educational system that assumes that only the standard Arabic is used, while in reality it might be used mainly for reading and writing (Bani-Khaled, 2014). Thus, “students are therefore faced with the problems of receiving their instruction in one form and reading and writing in the other” (Ibid, p. 183). The diglossic nature of Arabic does not seem to be taken into consideration.

Students do not use academic language at home and it is not used extensively at school which raises concerns about its survival as a spoken language. Students are not used to converse in Standard Arabic. They don't use it at home and is not perceived as a prestigious variety in informal contexts. Badry and Willoughby (2016) argued that SA is considered the official standard variety, but it is in reality nobody's mother tongue. Decision makers at schools need to consider the students' home language in teaching Arabic. Speaking in SA needs to be given more emphasis at school while allowing the use of dialect at earlier stages. Listening and understanding MSA is easier since students are exposed to SA informally through watching cartoons and news, radio, religious speeches and sermons, books, prayers and Qur'anic recitations (Albirini, 2016). This exposure allowed them to develop at least receptive skills in SA (Ibid). However, the chances for speaking in SA should be considered when planning the Arabic courses at schools.

6.1.4. Hidden Messages about English and Arabic in Higher Education

Using English as language of instruction and relegating Arabic to few electives offered in parallel with English has created unhealthy, unbalanced diglossia in higher education. The weight of the two languages has been assigned through the language policy in which Arabic seemed as an addition that can be taken or left without affecting the academic performance, while English decides the future of the students academically being the gatekeeper and the medium of instruction. It is the language that they need to improve in order to succeed. Most of the participants pointed out the amount of work and effort they had to put to excel in English to be able to do well in their studies. Thus, students cannot be blamed for their attitude vis-à-vis Arabic and English. The hidden messages conveyed to them make them feel that their language is just an option, especially that Arabic is not valued at society at large. Bull (2013) contends that "the position a given language ... has on the linguistic market has nothing to do with language, and all to do with something else" (p. 35) which is mostly decided by the language policy and its agendas. Troudi and Al Hafidh (2017) warned of this when they said that "the real problem lies in the official educational position of Arabic when compared to English and the unwritten messages that the current language of instruction policy sends out about Arabic" (p. 104). Using English to teach science courses promotes the hegemony of

English among Arab students who “may fail to appreciate their mother language, concluding that it is not good enough to be used as a medium of instruction in higher education” (Alhamami, 2015, p. 114).

This policy has sent wrong messages to the students about their academic language. Many participants believe that it is incapable of being the language of science; therefore, cannot be a medium of instruction. They were shockingly expressing their views on the lack of equivalent scientific words in academic Arabic and that science is originated in the west in English not in Arabic. The ‘academic diglossia’ has made students feel the supremacy of English in academia and sciences while they can graduate without taking a single course in Arabic as some of the participants did. It is argued that when English has a higher status than the first language, English-medium instruction might not be an appropriate choice as the students may lose interest in maintaining a mother tongue with lower status (Airey, 2009). Skutnab-Kangas (2008) contends that when ‘an alien’ language is used in teaching, and students are deprived of their right to learn and use their language, the language will not survive. Therefore, an unconditional right to mother tongue medium education is central for the maintenance of languages and for the prevention of linguistic and cultural genocide (Ibid).

6.1.5. Psychological, Academic, Cultural and Social Challenges

6.1.5.1. Psychological

The students in this study, upon stepping in the EMI university, experienced fear, distress and anxiety. As Troudi and AlHafidh (2017) argue, “On top of the linguistic burden, students in the Gulf need to be able to manage the psychological pressure and anxiety of having to do well in English” (p. 106). This psychological pressure affected them at all academic, social and cultural levels.

6.1.5.2. Academic

Many studies have shown that using English as a language of instruction negatively affects students’ academic performance. Troudi and AlHafidh (2017) pointed out that “Arab university students have to grapple with additional difficulties associated with the nature of English, such as vocabulary, grammatical structures, rhetorical and cohesive devices, and phraseological patterning” (p. 106). Therefore, “what needs to

be debated and evaluated is the educational and linguistic double burden an Arab student bears when forced to study in a foreign language” who does not necessarily benefit from it (Troudi, & AlHafidh, 2017, p. 106). Students are also deprived of first language instruction that has been proved to facilitate the learning of the content matter (Ibid). Alhamami (2015) pointed out that teaching in English increases the difficulty of the subject matter for students and creates educational barriers which is attributed to the students’ low proficiency in English. He reported Arab university scientists saying that they prefer to teach in Arabic because when teaching in English they find themselves doing dual jobs; being “science teacher and translator” (p. 111).

The findings are in line with McLaren’s study (2011) which found out that the use of English as MI was viewed by students and teachers as “detrimental to the students’ understanding of their major subjects” (p. 175), which is also in line with Troudi (2009) who asserted that “many tertiary-level students who studied in state secondary schools where Arabic is the medium of instruction are intimidated by the idea of studying their special fields in English” (p. 208). Alhamami (2015) did a mixed-methods study in which he explored the perspectives of 27 Arab university scientists towards teaching science in English. He reported them saying that teaching science courses in Arabic can improve the success rate of their students because from their experience, “some students failed because of their low proficiency in English rather than inadequate understanding of the subject matter” (p. 112). Another study was carried out in the Islamic Azad University in Iran which reported that there was “a significant relation between English language proficiency and academic achievement (GPA)” (Maleki & Zangani, 2007, p. 91). Morrison and Evans (2018) reported that freshmen in their first year realise that the training they received at school has not effectively prepared them for the academic demands of the university and that they need to bridge the gap between what was expected from them at school and now at university. In a study they conducted in Hong Kong, in which they surveyed 1, 181 first-year students in an EMI university, they found that the biggest challenges in their transition to university study were vocabulary, academic adjustment and writing. Therefore, a very important question will be: To what extent does “the language of instruction, contribute to perpetuating discrimination and underachievement among certain groups of students?” (Cummins, 2000, p. 34).

To overcome the academic difficulty, students resorted to translation, which was not very helpful for many of them. The use of translation as a coping strategy has been also reported in other studies in the Arabian Gulf such as AlBakri's study (2017) where she reported that Arab students in Oman relied heavily on translation to understand the content of the courses they studied. King's UAE-based study (2014) also reported that students relied on "translating at home or via online translators in class, as well as seeking translation from peers or from siblings [as] coping strategies to survive and reduce the anxiety of studying in a language in which they are not fully comfortable" (p. 156). King (2014) considered translation as "an extra effort students have to make when studying in a language they lack proficiency in" (p. 156). That is why Alhamami reported Arab university scientists saying that they prefer to teach in Arabic because students will not have to translate the difficult words to Arabic when Arabic is used as MI.

The educational language policy does not seem to consider the linguistic background of the Arab students as it takes for granted that students should be prepared to meet the demands of English, while many of them are not. That is why they have to suffer, interrupt or even leave their education altogether. Policy makers seem to take it for granted that students can switch easily and automatically from one language to another, but this is untrue. Even after students get the required grade of the general academic entry exams such as TOEFL or IELTS, they still suffer.

6.1.5.3. Social

Also, negotiating the academic performance cannot ignore the social aspect of learning that is very important since "most learning occurs in a social context in which individual actions and understandings are negotiated by the members of a group" (August & Hakuta, 1997, p. 86) because "readiness in the emotional, social, and motivational realms" is important because learning is "a social as well as a cognitive process" influenced by the relationships among students (Ibid). If these relationships are categorized by tension, uneasiness and feelings of inferiority, then the students' academic life and performance will likely to be affected. The findings of this study are in line with Tananuraksakul's study (2012) that aimed to explore "the intercultural communication of 38 undergraduate students majoring in business English who viewed their English ability as inadequate" (p. 94). The majority of the

students in his study felt unconfident and insecure which led them to create “emotional identities: excitement, worry, fear and shyness” while he reported some of them to lack “dignity and security because they additionally lost face” in their communication (p. 95). He pointed out that the more positive attitude one has of his or her English performance, the more one is likely to “immune his or her level of security and dignity, leading to intercultural communication competence” which can help students “restore their threatened face when engaging in conversations” (p. 95). This is very similar to the students in my study who felt ridiculed and belittled when speaking with the students who had better proficiency in English due to having different ‘articulatory style’ which is a manifestation of the socially structured character of the students’ habitus (Bull, 2013).

The conflict over languages reflects social conflicts, and the wars of languages imply and signal an underlying educational or economic war (Hanafi, & Arvanitis, 2014). Students have the right to participate and express their views. It seems very unfair that they are deprived of this right because of the language. This is in line with what Brock-Utne found out after her observation of EMI classrooms where “the students learn to obey, be quiet, to become indifferent and apathetic” (Brock Utne, 2007, p. 498). Falk's longitudinal study brings more clarity to the situation. Falk finds that there is very little interaction when the language of instruction is English (as cited in Airy, p. 23). So, English is not the fabled Aladdin’s lamp that opens linguistic gates (Kachru, as cited in McKay, 2010) but it rather closes these gates and discriminates rather than empowers. Thus, even though English is believed to empower, “it has the capacity to divide” (Mohd-Asraf, 2005, p.103).

6.1.5.4. Cultural

August and Hakuta (1997) argue that “language can be the basis ... for categorization and the formation of ingroups and outgroups, especially within an institutional context in which the languages spoken have unequal status” because “languages are often perceived by students as symbols of group boundaries and are therefore the sources of intergroup conflicts and tensions (p. 93). Rajagopalan (2001) argues that “language is used to ‘flag’ allegiance to one group or another and that a speaker’s choice of language is not a means of negotiation but a means of differentiating from other speakers, i.e., sociological othering or defining one’s identity in contrast to others and actively separating an outgroup as the ‘other’” (ac

cited in Zwisler, 2018, p. 258). This is evident in the social groups students formed in the university outside the classroom where Arab students formed their own groups and felt inferior to the other groups who seemed more at ease with the social context and more confident coming from a similar social setting. This is a tendency among many language learners, according to Higgins (2015), who “develop deep connections with people like themselves ... finding alternative zones or third spaces for identity construction” (p. 379).

Academic language has a major impact on the cultural identity and on one’s sense of who he or she is in the world (Martin, 2010). Using English as a language of instruction goes beyond being a mere language of instruction to be the embodiment of culture in the academic field, which is the university, which defines “the meanings and values associated with language and linguistic capital with respect to their unique contexts. Thus, the linguistic field itself is shaped by the power relations between people and the linguistic capital they wield within and across fields” (Bokhorst-Heng & Silver, 2017, p. 337). So, using English as MI gave primacy to the English culture and those who are encultured in it while marginalizing Arabic and those who are encultured in it through the 12 years of studying in AMI schools. According to Bourdieu, the integration into a single ‘linguistic community’ is the product of the political domination that is endlessly reproduced by institutions capable of imposing universal recognition of the dominant language, which is the condition of the establishment of the relations of linguistic domination (as cited in Bokhorst-Heng & Silver, 2017). Thus, different players compete for the valued capital; the one who defines the field and the forms of capital that are specific to that particular field (Ibid). August and Hakuta (1997) pointed out that the cultural mismatch makes “access to full participation in educational interactions more difficult for the speakers of the less-valued discourse forms” (p. 86). They also contend that “cultural mismatch is one explanation for the relatively poor academic performance of language-minority” students (p. 91) as it is the case with the participants who feel they are minority in the university. They point out that many studies have highlighted the role played by culture and discrimination in the academic experiences of students and have shown how English-speaking students progress through an educational pipeline that is often inaccessible to students who are deemed to have limited English proficiency. Findlow (2006) wonders, “How far a symptom of neo-colonialist power politics in which Arabic is relegated as non-useful, and Arab culture

is cast as 'other'?" (p. 21). Ahmed (2011) argues that today's globalized system of education may be aiding in either erasing weak cultures or blurring and overshadowing stronger ones as a result of the imported education and rampant spread of emphasis on English, which "is beginning to sideline Arabic resulting in the linguistic and cultural loss of those who identify with it" (p. 120). Implementing dual language programs can foster in students positive attitudes towards the two languages they are studying in and ultimately towards their associated cultures (Murphy, 2016).

It has been acknowledged that the spread of and emphasis on English, accompanied by American pop culture, might sideline Arabic which will possibly result in linguistic and cultural loss (Ahmed, 2011) since language and culture are deeply connected to the extent that different languages embody different ways of perceiving the world, "then change in a given language ... produces a corresponding change-loss in the culture it embodies" (Findlow, 2006, p. 20). Teaching in English and excluding Arabic is predicted to have far-reaching social and cultural effects on the Arab societies (Ibid). Language and culture are inseparable as language is considered the vehicle of culture and its embodiment. Thus, teaching in English may not only mean sidelining Arabic language and giving supremacy to English language but sidelining the 'otherised' Arabic culture and giving prominence to English culture. Students are faced with values that are contradictory "which creates a sense of confusion and loss vis-à-vis which values to privilege or adopt" (Belhiah, & Alhussein, 2016, p. 355).

6.1.6. Arabic in Future Career

Conceptualizing the workplace as functioning only in English is echoed in higher education that is believed to be preparing students for the demands of English in the workplace. However, many studies have shown that having Arabic with English in the workplace has become an extra bonus for the employee. An article published in Gulf Business (2014) stated that 'bilingual proficiency' or 'Arabic-speaking required' are "terms that are increasingly being spotted in job adverts in the UAE" which could be a cause for concern for those with limited or no Arabic proficiency. The article reports Suhail Masri, VP, sales at bayt.com saying that "knowledge of Arabic along with English tops the list of skills most coveted by employers in the UAE" which "points out to the fact that having a knowledge of Arabic is important to securing a

job” (“Could learning Arabic boost your UAE job prospects,” 2014). Guy Rickett, CEO of recruitment consultancy Cazar, said that when two candidates have equal calibre, “The one who speaks Arabic would have a definite advantage” to be chosen by the employers in the UAE (Ibid). This very clearly shows that it is not only English that is required in the future job market in the UAE, but it is the knowledge of Arabic that will help graduates secure their future jobs. King (2014) argues that if we accept that “both English and Arabic are needed for students’ futures, one would need to question if EMI is the best way to achieve that” (p. 187). The findings of his research showed that “students appeared to *other* their own mother tongue in favour of English, only to realise on entering the workplace that their professional Arabic was of an insufficient standard” (p. 187, Italics is original).

Students mostly believe that it is only English that is required in the workplace. It has been widely acknowledged that English, not Arabic, as Troudi and AlHafidh (2017) point out, is believed to be the common language that links all employees in the international companies based in the UAE, which made having a good command of English a necessary asset that is linked to employment chances and economic success to the extent that “competency in the English language has become synonymous with career success” (Troudi, & Al Hafidh, 2017, p. 97). Using English in the workplace is the major reason for parents’ and students’ insisting on studying in English.

6.1.7. Acceptance and Submissiveness

The participants in this study have been coerced into EMI by the language policy of higher education that did not give them the choice to study in academic Arabic or in English. The participants had no choice but to study in English. It is either EMI or no education. The language policy seems to be driven by consumerism, globalization and capitalist values that do not seem to consider the consequences of such policies on the participants’ agency, linguistic human rights or freedom of choice. Al-Kahtany, Faruk and Al Zumor (2016) argue that surveyed university students in the study they carried out in Saudi Arabia showed that “they have no choice but to use English as it has been imposed on them” (p. 56). The students in their study do not legitimize English as MOI but rather prefer Arabic since they “have never used English as MOI in their pre-university education and have not received any effective English

language teaching” (Ibid). However, most of the students in this study do not object to studying in EMI because of their false consciousness. The students are not feeling this oppression because the ideologies formed in their minds are “held with a false consciousness” (Shelby, 2003, p. 170). They see EMI as the best choice for studying their majors. This means that EMI and its proponents have so far succeeded in “presenting it as a norm, a requirement, and a fatality, a universal destiny” (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 84), especially in the Arab world. Arabs have mostly endorsed it and accepted it as the normal language of instruction without questioning it because it seems that the whole society believes that “‘Auntie English’ has, in fact, been invited to stay” (Troudi, & Al Hafidh, 2017, p. 94).

The wider societal and educational submissiveness to the hegemony of English has influenced students’ perceptions of English and has made them believe that it is the best and only medium of instruction. In a study that Kuteeva and Airey (2014) carried out, they reported that “in the sciences English use is a pragmatic reality for both lecturers and students” (p. 541). They report one of the survey participants saying, “The use of English and the proficiency of native speakers may seem unfair to many, but this is life—internationalization demands a common language, and English is it, for now at least” (p. 545) which is in line with what interviewed students said in the current study who “*surrendered* to the belief that the world needs English, but without any attempt at protecting their own language from possible extinction” (Al-Issa, 2017, p. 12, Italics added). Tulloch et al. (2017) argued that “many indigenous people have felt silenced by formal education and by the hegemony of English” (p. 449).

From a critical perspective, this acceptance has to do with the oppression that has been practiced on the students that has become normal. This false consciousness has brought these students to powerlessness (Cohen et al., 2011). The exercise of power is done “through the manufacture of consent to or at least acquiescence towards it” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 4). Power, as defined by Engelstad (2010) is “the ability to move people, to impose changes on them, to change people, or the opposite, the ability to keep people in place, to maintain the status quo, to prevent people from moving or changing” (as cited in Bull, 2013, p. 37). The relation between those with power and those without varies from direct pressure to convincing the disempowered through brainwashing, which is more efficient way of communicating power (Bull, 2013). Bull (2013, p. 37) explains how the disempowered habitus is shaped saying:

The disempowered become affected or even brainwashed, thus internalising the hegemonic definitions, linguistic norms, perceptions (including self-perceptions) and attitudes. The disempowered take over the worldview, ways of thinking and attitudes of the powerful, making it all an integrated part of their habitus. In this way, a disempowered habitus is shaped and developed.

Students have been sent messages that studying in English, even if it entails suffering and pain, is worth the trouble because of its utility in their future. Students confuse the political agendas with the linguistic ability of Arabic being the language of instruction. Freire explains very precisely the psychological being of the oppressed when he said that oppressed are almost unaware of being downtrodden because their perception of their oppression is “impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression” (p. 45). Freire explains that the oppressed feel an irresistible attraction towards their oppressors and their ways of life because they perceive that sharing this way of life as an overpowering aspiration. Thus, they want at any cost “to resemble the oppressors, to imitate them, to follow them” (Freire, 1972, p. 62). This is how most of the participants see English language. What is needed is ‘linguistic emancipation;’ a concept that refers to “a process that results in a development or a shift upward of a given underprivileged language on an imagined hierarchical scale of languages” (Bull, 2013, p. 34).

6.1.8. Loss of faith in Academic Arabic

A distinction needs to be made here between Arabic as a language of social communication and media that is not in danger and academic Arabic that is affected by the ‘English as a language of instruction’ policy that “will expedite its erosion as a channel for academic and scientific content” (Troudi, & Al Hafidh, 2017, p. 106). While students will continue using the colloquial Arabic for communication, it seems that their academic Arabic might deteriorate due to the use of English as a language of instruction. “Certainly, people will continue to speak Arabic, but fluent classical or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) will become a language of the past” (Al-Issa, 2011, p. 9). Most of the participants have lost their faith in academic Arabic. They believe that Arabic has lost its duet with English in science and technology. Moreover, Arabic is a language of sciences, as reported by Arab university scientists who said that they had supervised masters and doctoral theses in Arabic, which were excellent scientifically and linguistically (Alhamami, 2015). Syria still teaches Science and

medicine in Arabic. Till now, Arabic is used at Damascus university to teach medicine and one of the entry requirements is proficiency in Arabic (Ibid). However, students cannot see this because they have been sent wrong messages that English is equivalent to science, and Arabic is connected to religion, humanities and literature. Also, some of the participants believed that Arabic is a hard language. Bani-Khaled (2014) pointed out, “Many see Arabic as a difficult language, or even the most difficult language on earth! This might be shaped by the students’ attitude towards Arabic because as Richards and Schmidt (2002) argue, “Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of ... degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc.” (p. 286).

6.1.9. EMI and Academic Language Attrition

This shift in the language of instruction has resulted in academic language attrition of Arabic. The participants felt that their proficiency in Arabic declined due to lacking the chances of using academic Arabic and being exposed to English only. The knowledge they previously gained at school is threatened due to the EMI policy. In a similar context, Hill (2016) in his study of the transition from Ma`ori-medium education to English concluded that “leaving Ma`ori-medium education behind meant the students ... were cut off from a significant language maintenance context” (p. 50). Therefore, if academic Arabic language is abandoned and not developed further, students’ abilities in it are expected to decline, especially if we consider the diglossic nature of Arabic and the restrictions of using academic Arabic. It is very important that “the first language should not be abandoned before it is fully developed” (Hornberger, 2003, p. 23). Thus, if a mother tongue is not used in academic writing, research, and university teaching, it will definitely stagnate and then decline. This is in line with what Brock-Utne found out when she reported how some of her Tanzanian colleagues were unable at a certain point in their academic conversation to continue in their mother tongue and how their English words increased with the intensity of the academic conversation till they would switch completely to English because “the vocabulary they need has not been allowed to develop at the highest academic level” (p. 226) as a result of EMI at university level, as it is the case with the participants of this study who reached a level in the interview where they were completely unable to talk about their majors or courses in Arabic because their Arabic academic vocabulary were not developed. Schmid and

Kopke (2009) argue that the process that we refer to as L1 attrition is due to two factors: “the presence, development and (eventually) dominance of the L2 system”, which is probably what all bilinguals experience, while the second and the more important factor is “the dramatic reduction in L1 use and input” which leads to a structural reduction and simplification in the language system” (p. 211). Attrition predominantly affects the less frequent lexical items and the speakers who do not use their L1 on a regular basis (Ibid). Using English in the academic context inhibits Arabic words because the attritional process is dependent on “the presence, use and development of the environmental language” because bilinguals tend to inhibit the language they don’t activate which may lead to word-finding difficulties (Schmid, & Jarvis, 2014, p. 730). Thus, it is very important to take into consideration not only how much each language is used, but also the contexts of using that language, which affects the degree to which the other language is inhibited in these situations (Schmid, 2007). Because of studying in English, students stopped using the words and expressions they previously used in their twelve years of studying via Arabic and they used English vocabulary instead. This has mostly resulted in forgetting the academic Arabic words and in facing difficulty retrieving them from memory. The absence of Arabic from academia is a clear indication of the adoption of the diffusion paradigm by the policy makers in higher education. Elevating English to be the language of instruction while demoting Arabic to few electives offered with English showed students that Arabic has no weight in academia. It is a language that can be taken or left without harming or affecting their studies. Students seemed to be accepting this situation and many of them came to believe that Arabic cannot be the language of instruction due to the scarcity of science production in the Arab world and the supremacy of the West in technology and Sciences. We need to think where this policy is leading us. The use of English as language of instruction is imbedded with great uncertainty about where this project is leading us (Phillipson, 2009). If this situation continues, what will happen to academic Arabic in 50 years? Will future generations continue speaking it? As Al-Issa (2017, p. 12) said,

It makes us wonder what the future holds. If this age group is already in the midst of a loss of Arabic literacy, what does this bode for the next generation? If these young people become parents, who are not fluent in Arabic, what chances will their children have to be competent and literate in Arabic?

6.1.10. Troubled, fractured identity

Students consider Arabic a constituent of their Arab identity. However, they feel that Arabic has no future and cannot help them propel in academia or in their studies. It is a language that they perceive as so weak that should be revived outside the gates of their English medium universities. This raises questions about their perceptions of themselves and explains their social suffering coming from Arabic schools. They feel inferior because their mother tongue is inferior to English and is not a linguistic capital that has any weight in the academic or economic spheres. Bull contends, “As soon as I open my mouth to utter a phrase I am assigned a specific place in a hierarchy; I am ranked linguistically and thus socially, according to the market value of my linguistic variety” (p. 36). Bull (2013) argues that pronunciation, grammar, the way one speaks index one’s positioning in society and reflect the value not only of his or her linguistic capital, but also of his or her social, cultural and economic capital. So, language users choose from “a ‘linguistic market’ where languages have symbolic worth and power” (Bourdieu, as cited in Zwisler, 2018, p. 258). This is expected in the light of the shift in the perception of identity from its “being an essential marker of nation-state and heritage identity to becoming a more dynamic and commodified good in the economic market” due to the prevailing neoliberal market and capitalist economy that perceives linguistic skills and abilities as commodities (Sharma & Phyak, 2017, p. 231). Zwisler (2018) points out that language learners choose from what they see as a ‘marketplace’ of languages what fits and suits their identity needs. The value of the chosen language might be directly tied to the learner’s identity. Bull (2013) contends that “different languages ... carry unequal social weight, depending on the positions in society of the language users” (p. 35). Tulloch et al. (2017, p. 449) argued that:

many young Indigenous people have felt silenced when they try to use what they know of their Indigenous language, teased because of the stigmas attached to the language, or criticized because their language does not meet someone’s standard of how the language should be spoken.

Students’ fractured identities might be a reflection of the wider Arab identity issues. Khashan (2000) argues that Arabs today are at a loss suffering from a severe identity crisis because of intellectual stagnation, blurry vision, escape in past glory, and “a severe political identity in crisis and a society at war with itself” (p. 128). Arabs suffer from “an internal and self-inflicted defeatism” because the Arab world

suffers from psychological defeat and skepticism regarding its language and political institutions (Troudi, & Al Hafidh, 2017). More research is still needed on identity and language in the context of language learning. As Zwisler (2018) pointed out, we currently lack research on the effects of language learning on the national identities of the language learners in the countries of the original national identity.

6.2. Conclusion

The study reported findings that were in line with previous studies regarding the negative impact the use of English as a language of instruction has on indigenous languages. However, the study showed that the impact on academic Arabic is more pervasive because it is restricted to the classroom and academia. The study was in line with previous studies that reported psychological, academic, social and cultural challenges associated with the transition from first language education at school to EMI universities. The study reported contradictions and fracture in the identities of the participants because they see their culture and language as inferior to English.

CHAPTER SEVEN-CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter aims to conclude the thesis. It first provides a summary of the major findings in relation to the research questions. Then, it presents the implications of the study and the recommendations that are based on the findings. I also highlight the theoretical and pedagogical contribution of the study followed by suggestions for further research. The chapter ends with reflections on writing this thesis from personal experience.

7.1. Summary of the main findings

The first research question aimed to examine the perceptions of the Arab tertiary students who studied in AMI schools of their competence in academic Arabic after studying at EMI universities in the UAE. To see the changes that happened to their academic Arabic, the research question started with the students' views vis-à-vis their academic Arabic back at AMI schools where they spent 12 years. The findings showed that students were mostly satisfied with the competence they gained in their schooldays but reported that their reading and writing skills were more developed than their speaking and listening skills due to the scarce chances of speaking in or listening to Academic Arabic in class. Students were divided in their views towards the role of other subjects in improving their academic Arabic with almost half of them suggesting that studying all subjects in school improved their academic Arabic and added to their lexical repertoire, and those who believed that studying science courses in Arabic didn't help their academic Arabic because the words were translated from English. Moving to the main research question here, surveyed students were divided between those who believed that their academic Arabic declined and those who believed that it was the same. The findings of the survey were reported in the light of the interviews. The interviews showed that those who believed their proficiency declined took elective courses at university in Arabic in their third, fourth or fifth year of study, which proved to them that their Arabic declined, or they tried to read or write in their free time and discovered that their skills in Arabic deteriorated and were not as they used to be. The interviews showed that many students who believed it was the same were unaware of their declining abilities in Arabic due to not taking electives in Arabic and not trying to read or write in Arabic or due to their belief that it is their native language and it cannot be wiped away. The findings also revealed that giving students the choice to take electives in

Arabic or English seems to have negatively impacted their academic Arabic as they seemed to be encouraged to take the electives in English that were perceived by some students as easier and less demanding. This shows that the language policy is an accomplice in marginalizing Arabic while promoting English to be the EMI for the major courses.

The second research question aimed to critically examine the impact of the transition from AMI school to EMI university. The findings suggested that students had to grapple with psychological, academic, social and cultural challenges. Students were psychologically disturbed, scared and stressed for being in a new environment in which English is so dominant. This psychological suffering resulted partly from being academically overwhelmed with understanding the language of instruction and content matter in their different courses. It also resulted from feeling different from other students culturally and socially. Students revealed that they had to take prewriting English courses which showed them that they are different from other students, had to take a semester gap to prepare for the entry requirement, or had to lose grades in the courses not because they did not understand the material but because of their English. Interruption was also another very expensive cost for the use of EMI. Socially, students revealed that they suffered in class and outside when socializing with other students. In the classroom, they mentioned that they were reluctant to participate in discussions or questions fearing that they might say something wrong. Outside the classroom, their fluency and pronunciation were sometimes ridiculed by other students which made some of them surround themselves with Arab students like them who come from Arabic schools. They felt that they were socially inferior to the students who come from American or British schools. In terms of culture, students revealed that they felt their Arabic culture was not welcomed and that they had different values and ethics than the other students who seemed more westernized and more open-minded.

The third question aimed to examine the views of Arab students vis-à-vis Arabic language's future and the possibility for academic Arabic to have a role in academia. All the interviewed students agreed on the demise of academic Arabic and its dim future in academia. However, when asking them to give suggestions to save Arabic, most of them offered solutions outside the arena of academia that if taken cannot revive academic Arabic. Also, when asked about their preferred language of instruction, most of the students preferred English to Arabic. They also showed their

loss of faith in Arabic as a language of academia. The hegemony of English has impacted students' perceptions of their native academic Arabic. The last question aimed to shed light on the students' Arab identity and its constituents. Students revealed that academic Arabic and colloquial Arabic are part of their Arab identity. However, this patriotic and nationalistic feelings seemed to contradict with their views about the status of Arabic and its future due to their loss of trust in that language.

7.2. Implications

The study has several implications related to the language policy and its impact on the participants' views and perceptions of their proficiency in academic Arabic, of the status of Arabic in academia and the results of this policy on having academic life embroiled with academic, social, psychological and cultural challenges. These challenges are not temporary, as AlBakri (2017) argues that despite the challenges that students face, they eventually graduate which "suggests that EMI might be an appropriate choice" (p. 197) because their impact will affect students during their university years and may continue affecting them beyond that. The low grades will always affect the students' GPA and the interruption some had to take will also have a psychological impact on their being.

The students in this study seemed to be mostly not ready for EMI linguistically, socially and culturally. Having the required entry grade does not mean students are ready for the challenges of studying in academic English environment. Bailey (2006) suggests that an important assessment gap exists between "the type English an ELL knows and is tested on, and the language critical to academic success" (p. 4).

Moreover, the language is not just a system of words and expressions but a whole cultural and social system embodied in language with which students are not familiar. This shift in the language of instruction didn't only mean changing in language of teaching but changing in the whole cultural and social values students find weird coming from Arabic system that is an embodiment of different cultural and social values and ethics. Students were embarrassed in class for not having the confidence in speaking in English like other students who came from English schools. They felt stigmatized when receiving comments on their pronunciation. They preferred to form in-group to avoid embarrassment from the other students. They felt that their linguistic, social and cultural background was not appreciated but

looked down upon and inferior to the dominant academic, social and cultural English norms and values.

The disconnect between the language policy at schools and at university is so obvious. However, considering that the two tiers fall under the same ministry of education that runs the pre-tertiary and tertiary level, this disconnect is strange because the ministry should be more concerned with the students who were in a school system that is run under its management. While Arabic is emphasized at pre-tertiary level, English is the language of instruction at tertiary level. The ministry needs to rethink of the decisions taken that not only students but also the whole society is affected by its questionable language policy, discrepancies and inconsistencies. Unfortunately, the plans of the ministry are heading more towards introducing more courses in English and teaching science and Math in English, which might help students with the academic challenges but will mark the demise of academic Arabic in the UAE.

Making English the language of instruction at university has associated Arabic with some electives in humanities that can be also taken in English. It seems to mislead students into believing that English is the only valued language of sciences. They seem to be looking at the relation between English and sciences as an organic relation. They cannot see Arabic as a language of science, while it is still used in other parts of the Arab world to teach sciences and medicine. What the language policy has resulted in with this unbalanced diglossia is the false consciousness of the students about Arabic as a language of learning and academia.

It seems that the language policy is responsible for students' declining abilities in the academic Arabic that they previously gained in school. While their colloquial Arabic will not be affected, the academic Arabic that they gained during the twelve years of studying at school would be threatened. Students studied math and sciences in Arabic but then shifted to English at university which means that the language they got in these subjects was not used anymore, which threatens its stability and existence, resulting in academic language attrition. It is also responsible for acquiring new knowledge only in English that made it very hard to translate to Arabic. Even though students suffered from translating from Arabic to English in their first semester, they gained new knowledge in English in their university years that they found very hard to translate to Arabic. They felt that they had the knowledge in English only and cannot be easily translated to Arabic. This is one of the major

repercussions of using English as MI. Students should have a glossary of scientific words in English and Arabic because many studies have shown that learning through native language renders better results in comprehension and intake. Some participants pointed out that their understanding of the subject matter would have been higher if they studied in Arabic.

Students were forced to study in English as it is not possible to be educated in the UAE in any other language. This “choiceless choice” as described by Troudi and Jendli (2011, p. 41) shows that the language policy is driven by political and economic agendas. However, the participants were mostly satisfied with choosing English as a medium of instruction because they were made to believe that it is the only way to achieve success. They tolerated the difficulties and were able to overcome the academic challenges after their first semester because it seems that it is ingrained in their consciousness that English is the language of world sciences and that if they seek to work or do further studies, they should be good in English only, which is not true because after graduation, they have to be proficient in both languages to function well in the UAE (King, 2014; Troudi & Al Hafidh, 2017).

7.3. Recommendations

7.3.1. Revisiting Language Policy

Problematizing the language policy is an important step in making any recommendations. The findings of the current study suggest some gaps and discrepancies within the language educational system that should be thought of and revisited. I agree that “we need to problematize the language policy that puts forward an educational agenda but hides behind it political, social, and economic agendas that often win over the educational one” (Tsui, & Tollefson, 2004, p. 17). As Benkharafa (2013) argued, a glimpse at the Arab world’s current linguistic situation shows the extreme extent to which the colonial power was successful in implementing deleterious policies of imposing English language and undermining the Arabic language. Sabbah (2015) argues that Arabs should stop the deterioration of the language that represents their identity and that the educational systems need to be reformed to make proficiency in Arabic a prerequisite for promoting students for higher classes. Sabbah reports Dr. Al-Omari saying, “A nation that gives up its language or disrespects it, gives up its soul and mind and loses what makes it

different” (p. 60). Any attempt to save academic Arabic cannot be effective if it is absent from academia. If Arabic is not used to teach sciences, the linguistic bilingualism that characterizes the Gulf States including the UAE will remain unequal and unbalanced because “scientific subjects are more likely to have greater academic prestige than non-scientific subjects, and Arabic will become a language that is not perceived as a carrier of science” (Troudi, & Al Hafidh, 2017, p.105). If Arabic is used as a parallel language of instruction in higher education, many things will then change. First, students’ perceptions of the Arabic language as a language that cannot be used to teach sciences will change. Another thing is that the publications in Arabic will increase. One more thing is that schools will stop their mania with English and will have more Arabic courses in their curriculum. Higher education is the starting point, not the end point, as it might be perceived. It filters everything that comes before it. If Arabic is used as a language of science, this will encourage scientific research in Arabic which is likely to contribute to the power of Arabic as an academic language. As Gibran argues, “Language is but one manifestation of the power of invention If this power slumbers, language will stop in its tracks, and to stop is to regress, and regression leads to death and extinction” (as cited in Haydar, 2010). Using academic Arabic to teach scientific subjects at schools proves that Arabic can be used to teach science and math. Why would Arabic be used to teach these subjects at school but fail to do so at universities? This is a question policy makers should think about. If educationalists and material developers can prepare the science books in Arabic at a school level, they can do that at university level. This might imply that the decision to use English at tertiary level is a political rather than a pedagogical decision.

The linguistic conflicts between English and Arabic represents “a fight for symbolic power, a fight about who should be in position to define what are acceptable linguistic norms and acceptable linguistic practices” (Bull, 2013, p. 51). English needs to be seen “as an ally to Arabic, so long as instruction is conducted in an equitable manner and English neither displaces the mother-tongue nor poses a threat to national identity and heritage” (Belhiah, & Elhami, 2015, p. 21). There is a need to revive Arabic and reclaim the legacy of Arabic as a scientific language. They caution that this is happening at the expense of Arabic proficiency and suggest that decision- makers develop a bilingual curriculum “that is clearly designed to foster a sense of additive bilingualism in which English does not eclipse the Arabic language

and marginalize its culture.” (p. 22). I agree with AlBakri that we need to adopt “an additive bilingual approach where Arabic is further developed, and English is added but not at the expense of marginalising Arabic as a language of academia” (AlBakri, 2017, p. 204). Giving more space to academic Arabic will save Arabic and help it regain its position in academia. Instead of giving students the choice to take electives in Arabic and English, students should be given the choice to be educated in English and Arabic. They need to be assured that Arabic is as valuable as English. Why are students given the option in the elective courses to study in English or Arabic while this right does not exist for major courses? If students are given the option to study major courses in English or Arabic especially in the first year, this will help them move smoothly into the university life without facing major hurdles with language, acculturation. Students will feel that their language is valued and that the 12 years of studying in Arabic at school was not in vain. They will also feel that their Arabic language is capable of teaching sciences which can change their perception of Arabic as a language that cannot fit in academia. Al-Issa (2017) argues, “Young UAE nationals are being done a disservice if the country’s educational focus remains on English at the expense of Arabic literacy” (p. 14). This study showed that students mostly did not succeed in their attempts to improve their academic Arabic on their own. They lack the motivation to improve it. Amid the students’ busyness with their academic studies, and their extra efforts to excel in English to do well in their courses, academic Arabic has no place. Therefore, the only place to develop academic Arabic is its existence in academia because students do not have other chances to develop it. As Coleman (2016) argues, “In diglossic societies, the formal and prestigious functions are the first to be lost; hence the importance of higher education” (Coleman, 2006, p. 2).

English at Arabic schools should be improved. Students are suffering at university because of their previous schooling that paid little attention to providing students with proficiency in English that can help them at university. The participants in the study got the required entry grade but still faced difficulty with the requirements of the university courses. So, the solution is not in the bridge program but in improving the quality of education at schools by having a solid English curriculum, “designed with clear and realistic objectives and reflecting a sound knowledge of methodology, language pedagogy, and appropriate materials (Troudi, 2009, p. 210).

We need to embrace Canagarajah’s (2005) call for establishing more inclusive and

egalitarian language policies and practices and call for enriching rather than replacing local languages. Al-Kahtany et al. (2016) argue that we can upgrade the status of Arabic to be the MOI for Sciences while teaching English as an ESP in order to boost the linguistic abilities of the students in the different fields of study. Janks (2010) points out that education has the responsibility to produce students who see linguistic diversity as a resource for creativity and cognition, “who value all languages that they speak and who recognize the paucity of English only” (p. 48). If countries want to have productive forces of the economy who are able think creatively and critically, who can combine old and new knowledge, then the language of instruction should be the native language (Brock-Utne, 2007). Education can never be neutral. It inevitably has a deliberate attempt to influence how and why identities, knowledge, and values are produced (Giroux, 2011). It has a moral purpose, which is to make a difference in the lives of all students regardless of their backgrounds (Giuliano, & Sullivan, 2007, p. 17).

Hoefnagels (2015) warns, “Should no action be taken, then sometime in the very near future the Arabic language may well face the same fate as Latin.” So, some action needs to be taken, and so far, all the attempts to revive academic Arabic outside academia have not been successful. Since 2008 and the initiatives to foster the love for Arabic in the UAE do not seem to render real benefits. If Arabic does not reclaim its status as a language of academia, it is not likely going to be revived or resurrected. As Baker (2011) suggests, “relegating a language to affective, integrative domains is too romantic a notion of the function and value of language in a new century” (p. 86) where education and universities are taking central role in people’s lives. As Badry and Willoughby (2016, p. 185) put it:

Despite all calls and the few initiatives to do something about Arabic, it is likely that these efforts will have limited success, due to a disconnect between policy pronouncements and realities on the ground where employment opportunities in business, technology and science clearly favor the use of English over Arabic and where meta-messages sent throughout society associate English with the future and MSA with the past.

7.3.2. The Discourse of Hope

The discourse of accepting the current situation is very negative. Students seem to have lost hope and have surrendered to the language policies and accepted their powerlessness and their marginalization. As Freire (1972) says, “Hopelessness is a

form of silence” that should be rejected because it is sterile. Instead, we need to embrace hope because the dehumanization that results from an unjust order should not be a cause for despair but for hope (Freire, 1972, p. 91-92). Hope should be at the center of the move towards creating pedagogical conditions that can produce individuals and social agents who can use the freedom they have “to acquire the freedom they are told they have but have not” (Ibid). We also need to be realistic “for hope to be more than an empty abstraction, it must be firmly anchored in the realities and contradictions of everyday life and have some hold on the present” (p. 138). This hope also needs to be intertwined with action. In order to enact any change, we need to “resurrect a language of resistance and possibility,” a language that is attentive to the hidden forces that punish or dismiss the voices of those who dare to look and act beyond the horizon of the given (Giroux, 2011, p. 138).

Qatar has reversed its language of instruction from English to Arabic in 2012 when the Supreme Educational Council announced that English would cease to be the language of instruction while Arabic would become the MI at Qatar university, which was described as “a watershed moment in the history of higher education in the ... GCC countries” (Belhiah, & Elhami, 2014, p. 4). Zayed university is now showing more interest in having some form of bilingualism (Troudi & AlHafidh, 2017). So, there is hope that Arabic will reclaim its legacy in academia in the UAE. This study is not a call for replacing English with Arabic but for emphasizing that bilingualism is needed in all majors and students need to be given the choice to study via Arabic or English.

7.4. Theoretical and pedagogical contribution

My study investigated the impact of the use of EMI in higher education in relation to first language and identity. Its value lies in its being the first study done in the UAE that critically explores the impact of the use of English as MI on academic Arabic language and identity from the perspective of those affected by such policy, the undergraduate Arab students. Even in the Arab world, EMI studies are very scarce. Even though some studies have recently examined EMI in the UAE (Mouhanna, 2016; McLaren, 2011; King, 2014; Solloway, 2016) and in Oman (AlBakri, 2017), none of them examined the impact of EMI on academic Arabic language. So, even if there are some studies on EMI, its impact on Arabic language and identity are scarce, if non-existent. The findings of the study vis-à-vis language attrition are so

significant and important being possibly the first findings that report academic language attrition in the Arab world and raise awareness about it. I hope this study will contribute to the body of knowledge that will help raise awareness to the epidemic marginalization of academic Arabic in higher education. Most importantly, this study gave voice to the marginalized students who felt excluded and stigmatized because of their linguistic background, which is at the heart of the critical applied linguistics that this study sprung from. These muted, silenced voices that were not considered in the language policies were given the chance to share their feelings, fears and ideas in the hope of raising their awareness first to the false messages that are engrained in their consciousness about academic Arabic and English. Students in the interviews came to know that they cannot talk about their majors in Arabic, which was a moment of recognition and shock for many of them; a moment of awareness that their language is in trouble.

7.5. Suggestions for further research

The impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on Arabic language is under-researched. This research aimed to fill this gap, but it is just one step towards an egalitarian education for all students in which no student is marginalized or left behind. More research is needed to shed more light on the marginalization of Arabic in higher education and the Arab students' false consciousness towards their language and identity in higher education. More critical research needs to be conducted to raise awareness towards the linguistic human rights of Arab students to be educated in their native academic Arabic with English and that they should be given the choice to study in Arabic or English. More critical research is needed to highlight the consequences of the use of EMI not only on students' learning experiences but also on their mother tongue that is gradually disappearing from the academic scene because of English. Comparative study between Arab students who come from AMI and Arab students who come from English and American schools can yield results to how these different groups of students perceive themselves and their academic Arabic in the light of their linguistic and educational backgrounds. If students who were in Arabic schools are losing their academic Arabic due to studying via English despite spending 12 years being taught in Arabic, so the situation is expected to be more pervasive and the disconnect with Arabic to be

deeper for students who took Arabic as a minor subject in schools and studied everything in English.

7.6. Personal reflection on my personal journey

Writing this thesis was an unforgettable experience that lasted for almost three years. These years carried with them a lot of joy, tears, pain and awareness. Being interested in Arabic language since my childhood made me feel bad about the hegemony of English even after studying English literature at bachelor level and studying TESOL at master level. My love for my mother tongue and English made me feel that mastering the two languages is the key to success and that acquiring one language should not be at the expense of the other. My passion for Arabic was translated when I wrote my master thesis on the proficiency and identity of Emirati high school students. This passion found a further catharsis with my EDD. In my first assignment, I wrote on identity and Arabic and the impact of the use of English as a medium of instruction. The critical module and the readings we had about EMI crystallized the topic more and more in my mind till I reached the thesis phase to choose it as a topic of my thesis. In the beginning, I faced a major hurdle for not finding enough literature on EMI and first language, and the scarcity of studies on Arabic language attrition, but I found enough research articles written about EMI in Europe.

I shared with the interviewed students their moments of frustration, sadness, and moments of laughs when they reflected on their first semesters and how they were so lost. Some interviews lasted for two or three hours because students wanted to share their experiences, and some were asking me, “will this research make a difference?” “Is it really going to help Arabic language?” I still remember Imad when he first sat for the interview indifferent and after a while and when I explained to him the aims of the research started asking me these questions. Then, he asked me to record him again and started opening his heart and talking more and more about his feelings of marginalization in the university context and his pain for the situation of the Arabic language. His questions and Marah’ tears when she talked about her love for Arabic made me feel that I chose the right topic, that I chose the issue that touched them very deeply and affected them very profoundly. This made me work harder in the hope of contributing with the other voices to the inequality and injustice of elevating a language that is associated with neoliberalism, globalization and

colonialism while marginalizing the native language. I still hope for the best, that one day very soon, things will change for the better. I want to conclude my thesis with Paulo Freire's words (1972): "As long as I fight, I am moved by hope; and if I fight with hope, then I can wait" (p. 92).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

The Study: Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and

Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Dear Student

Please complete the information about yourself

Nationality _____

Gender: Male / Female

Age _____

Major _____

Department _____

Starting Semester at the university _____

Expected graduation semester _____

Year of study now _____

Part 1

Choose a, b or c to respond to the following questions

1. Before joining the university, I went to
 - a. public school
 - b. private Arabic school
 - c. international school
2. My high school was
 - a. In the UAE
 - b. in another Arab country
 - c. in a foreign country
3. My previous high school was in
 - a. Dubai
 - b. Sharjah (other Northern emirates)
 - c. Abu Dhabi
4. The medium of instruction at the school was
 - a. Arabic
 - b. English
 - c. other

5. My Academic Arabic back in school was
 - a. Excellent
 - b. good
 - c. average

6. Teaching Arabic at school was
a. Excellent b. good c. bad
7. My proficiency in Arabic now has ----- since I left high school
a. improved b. declined c. been almost the
same
8. After joining the university, I write in Modern Standard Arabic
a. always b. sometimes c. never
9. I read in Modern Standard Arabic
a. always b. sometimes c. never
10. I converse in Modern Standard Arabic
a. always b. sometimes c. never
11. I listen to Modern Standard Arabic through media and internet.
a. always b. sometimes c. never
12. I find difficulty recalling some Arabic vocabulary in writing or speaking
a. always b. sometimes c, never
13. I feel my competence in Academic Arabic is
a. bad b. good c. average
14. When I am on campus, I communicate in
a. Arabic b. English c. both
15. If I was studying in Arabic, my competence in Arabic would have been
a. better b. worse c. the same
16. I prefer to study my major at university level in
a. Arabic b. English c. both

Part 2

Read the following statements and then see if you strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree.

Statements 1-7	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Teaching Arabic at schools did not help me gain mastery of the language.					
2. Methodologies followed in teaching Arabic at school should be revamped and renovated.					
3. Teaching all subjects in Arabic at school was helpful in acquiring the language and the vocabulary from different subjects.					
4. I prefer to read and write in English rather than Arabic.					
5. Taking Arabic as a subject in school was beneficial in helping me understand the Arabic language.					
6. Studying at university in English has affected my Arabic competence negatively.					
7. The university culture dictates speaking in English, not Arabic.					
Statements 8-21	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
8. Academic Arabic is absent from my life at university.					
9. I prefer to read and write in English rather than Arabic.					
10. I prefer to listen to music in English.					

11. My Academic Arabic is good despite studying in EMI university					
12. I try to develop my academic Arabic on my own.					
13. I read stories and novels in Academic Arabic.					
14. I watch TV and internet programs in Academic Arabic					
15. Academic Arabic is a prestigious variety of Arabic language					
16. Arabic is important for my identity as an Arab.					
17. I can be an Arab without mastering academic Arabic.					
18. The Arabic courses offered at university help me improve my Arabic.					
19. Academic Arabic (reading and writing) is important for my future career.					
20. I wish I had more Arabic classes at university.					
21. Speaking in Academic Arabic is not prestigious in academic contexts.					

Thank you for completing the questionnaire

If you would like to participate in an interview as a further step in this research, please provide your contact details below.

Name: _____

Mobile number: _____

Email: _____

Appendix 2: Questionnaire with the percentages

The study: Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and

Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Dear Student

Please complete the information about yourself

Nationality _____

Gender: Male / Female

Age: _____

Major _____

Department _____

Starting Semester at the university _____

Expected graduation semester _____

Year of study now _____

Part 1

Choose a, b or c to respond to the following questions

17. Before joining the university, I went to

- a. public school (73) b. private Arabic school (195) c. international school

18. My high school was

- a. In the UAE b. in another Arab country c. in a foreign country

19. My previous high school was in

- a. Dubai (106) b. Sharjah (Other Northern Emirate) (122) c. Abu Dhabi (40)

20. The medium of instruction at the school was

- a. Arabic b. English c. other

21. My Academic Arabic back in school was

- a. Excellent (171) 63.80% b. good (71) 26.49% c. average (26)

22. Teaching Arabic at school was
- b. Excellent (153) 57.08% b. good (106) 39.55% c. bad (26) 9.7%
23. My proficiency in Arabic now has ----- since I left high school
- b. Improved (31)11.56% b. declined (105) 39.17% c. been almost (132) 49.2%
24. After joining the university, I write in Modern Standard Arabic
- b. Always (39) 14.5% b. sometimes (141) 52.6% c. never (88) 32.8%
25. I read in Modern Standard Arabic
- b. Always (82) 30.5% b. sometimes (154) 57.4% c. never (32) 11.9%
26. I converse in Modern Standard Arabic
- b. Always (52) 19.4% b. sometimes (129) 48% c. never (87) 32%
27. I listen to Modern Standard Arabic through media and internet.
- b. Always (74) 27.6% b. sometimes (155) 54.1% c. never (39)14.5%
28. I find difficulty recalling some Arabic vocabulary in writing or speaking
- b. Always (28) 10.4% b. sometimes (101) 37.6% c, never (139) 51.8%
29. I feel my competence in Academic Arabic is
- b. Bad (17) 6.3% b. good (184) 68.6% c. average (67) 25%
30. When I am on campus, I communicate in
- b. Arabic (53)19.7% b. English (42) 15.6% c. both (173) 64.5%
31. If I was studying in Arabic, my competence in Arabic would have been
- b. Better (193) 72% b. worse (6) 2.2% c. the same (69) 27.7%
32. I prefer to study my major at university level in
- b. Arabic (54) 20% b. English (120) 44.7% c. both (94) 35%

Part 2

Read the following statements and then see if you strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree.

Statements 1-7	Strongly agree	Agree	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Teaching Arabic at schools did not help me gain mastery of the language.	15 (5.5%)	41 (15.2)	20.7	71 (26.4%)	53.3	80 (29.8%)	63 (23.5%)
2. Methodologies followed in teaching Arabic at school should be revamped and renovated.	46 (17.1%)	87 (32.4%)	49.5	99 (36.9%)	13.8	26 (9.7%)	11 (4.1%)
3. Teaching all subjects in Arabic at school was helpful in acquiring the language and the vocabulary from different subjects.	66 (24.6%)	95 (35.4%)	60	64 (23.8%)	18.2	32 (11.9%)	17 (6.3)
4. Taking Arabic as a subject in school was beneficial in helping me understand the Arabic language.	110 (41%)	114 (42.5%)	83	36 (13.4%)	3.6	5 (1.8%)	5 (1.8%)
5. Studying at university in English has affected my Arabic competence negatively.	44 (16.4%)	86 (32%)	48.4	73 (27.2%)	24.6	52 (19.4%)	14 (5.2%)
6. The university culture dictates speaking in English, not Arabic.	75 (27.9%)	88 (32.8%)	60.7	74 (27.6%)	11.9	21 (7.8%)	11 (4.1%)
Statements 7-20	Strongly agree	Agree	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7. Academic Arabic is absent from my life at university.	59 (22%)	85 (31.7%)	53.7	70 (26.1%)	20.4	43 (16%)	12 (4.4%)
8. I prefer to read and write in English	33 (12.3%)	62 (23.1%)	35.4	72 (26.8%)	37.6	72 (26.8%)	29 (10.8%)

rather than Arabic.							
9.I prefer to listen to music in English.	49 (18.2%)	56 (20.8%)	39	71(26.4 %)	35%	62 (23.1%)	32 (11.9%)
10. My Academic Arabic is good despite studying in EMI university	44 (16.4%)	111 (41.4%)	57.8	98 (36.5%)	6.2	12 (4.4%)	5 (1.8%)
11.I try to develop my academic Arabic on my own.	45 (16.7%)	92 (34.3%)	51	73 (27.2%)	22.6	46 (17.1%)	14 (5.2)
12.I read stories and novels in Academic Arabic.	57 (21.2%)	85 (31.7%)	52.9	65 (24.2%)	23.8	40 (14.9%)	24 (8.9%)
13.I watch TV and internet programs in Academic Arabic	41(15.2%)	91 (33.9%)	49.1	84 (31.3%)	20.5	37 (13.8%)	18 (6.7%)
14.Academic Arabic is a prestigious variety of Arabic language	67(25%)	87 (32.4%)	57.4	105 (39.1%)	4.4	9 (3.3%)	3 (1.1%)
15. Arabic is important for my identity as an Arab.	171(63.8%)	78 (29.1%)	92.9	16 (5.9%)	1.8	3 (1.1%)	2 (0.7%)
16. I can be an Arab without mastering academic Arabic.	44 (16.4%)	87 (32.4%)	48.8	67 (25%)	26.8	40 (14.9%)	32 (11.9%)
17. The Arabic courses offered at university help me improve my Arabic.	41(15.2%)	82 (30.5%)	45.7	73 (27.2%)	27.6	52 (19.4%)	22 (8.2%)
18. Academic Arabic (reading and writing) is important for my future career.	61(22.7%)	78 (29.1%)	51.8	78 (29.1%)	19.7	36 (13.4%)	17 (6.3%)
19. I wish I had more Arabic classes at university.	71(26.4%)	78 (29.1%)	55.5	71 (26.4%)	18.1	30 (11.1%)	19 (7%)
20. Speaking in Academic Arabic is not prestigious in academic contexts.	21(7.8%)	55 (20.5%)	28.3	103 (38.4%)	33.8	46(17.1 %)	45 (16.7%)

If you would like to participate in an interview as a further step in this research, please provide your contact details below.

Name: _____

Mobile number: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for completing the questionnaire

Appendix 3: Sample of the data analysis

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following columns: Sb No, Nationality, Gender, Age, Major, Department, Starting Sem, Expected gr, Year of stud, Part 1_1, Before, Part 1_2, My h, Part 1_3, My p, Part 1_4, The n, Part 1_5, My A, Part 1_6, Teach, Part 1_7, My p, Part 1_8, After, Part 1_9, I read, Part 1_10, I co, Part 1_11, I. The data rows contain information for 269 respondents, including their nationalities (e.g., Syrian, Saudi, UAE, Jordan, Egyptian, Sudanese, Lebanese, Palestinian, Iraqi, Egyptian, Lebanese, Sudanese, Jordanian, UAE, Libyan) and their responses to 11 Likert scale items (e.g., 'seen almost the', 'always', 'sometimes', 'never', 'always').

Appendix 4: Numerical Data conversion sample

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Part 2_1.Teaching Ara	Part 2_3. Teaching all subjects in Ara	Part 2_6.Studying at univer	Part 2_7.The university cul	Part 2_8.Academic Arab	Part 2_9.I prefer to read	Part 2_10.I prefer to	Part 2_11. My Academic A	Part 2_12.I try to develop
2	3	3	4	3	4	1	1	2	
3	5	3	3	4	2	2	2	1	
4	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	
5	3	3	2	4	1	1	1	4	
6	3	5	4	1	3	2	2	2	
7	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	
8	2	4	4	2	1	1	1	3	
9	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	
10	2	2	4	2	4	3	4	2	
11	2	5	4	2	4	4	3	2	
12	2	4	3	1	3	2	4	2	
13	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	4	
14	5	2	4	2	3	2	2	2	
15	5	1	3	3	2	3	1	3	
16	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	
17	3	2	1	3	1	1	1	5	
18	4	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	
19	1	3	2	2	1	4	4	2	
20	5	3	4	1	1	3	3	2	
21	5	1	3	3	1	2	1	3	
22	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
23	3	2	3	2	2	4	2	2	
24	4	1	3	4	3	4	3	3	
25	5	1	5	5	4	5	3	5	
26	1	2	2	4	1	4	5	3	
27	5	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	
28	2	4	4	4	4	2	1	2	
29	4	1	4	2	3	2	2	2	

Appendix 5: Interview Questions

Arabic at School

1. How do you evaluate your Arabic during the school days? (Prompt: Excellent, very good, good, average, or weak).
2. What was the most challenging skill? (reading, writing, speaking or listening)? Why?
3. Describe the teaching of Arabic in school? Prompt: (interesting, student-centered, old-fashioned, modern and engaging).
4. What variety of Arabic did you speak in the Arabic class?
5. Were there other chances of speaking in Standard Arabic in high school other than speaking in the Arabic lesson? If yes, (prompt: in the other classes, in the morning assembly, in the Islamic classes, outside readings and activities)
6. When you left school, did you feel that you still have lacuna in your competence in Arabic, i.e. that your Arabic is not established or stable yet?
7. How do you evaluate your Arabic upon leaving high school? (Excellent,

very good, good, poor)? In what skills? Why?

Arabic at University Level

8. How do you see this transition from AMI schools to EMI university?
(challenging, smooth)
9. Who was your first semester at the university?
10. Did you see that the culture is different from that of the school?
11. How did you see the use of English in classroom? (fine, normal, challenging)
12. If there were any problems, how did you cope these difficulties with language?
13. How do you see your Arabic language proficiency after studying your major in English? What areas have been affected the most: speaking, listening, reading, writing? Explain how/why.
14. When you attend Arabic classes at university, what do you do? What is your role as a student? What does the teacher do? Prompt: Listen/ participate/ present papers/ do in-class writing/ work in groups/ read Arabic texts.
15. How do you find the Arabic class in the university? Prompts (interesting, enjoyable, boring, difficult, easy)
16. Do you find it difficult to remember Arabic words in writing or speaking? If yes, what are the strategies you use when you face such difficulty?
17. Do you try to improve your Arabic outside the university? (Prompts: reading novels or articles in Arabic, participating in activities in Arabic, listening to news in SA).
18. Can you talk about your major in Academic Arabic? Briefly explain to me what you are studying in your major?
19. Do you think studying your major in English has affected your academic Arabic? Explain.

General Views on the Future of Arabic

20. How do you see the future of academic Arabic if English continues being the language of instruction at higher education?
21. Do you think that English should continue being the language of instruction? Why?
22. Do you think you will need academic Arabic in your future?
23. Do you think Academic Arabic is in danger? If yes, what are the possible ways to save it? (prompts: Using it as ME, having bilingual programs, forcing

people to use it in daily communication)

Language and identity

24. How important is Arabic for being an Arab?

25. What makes you an Arab? How do you define yourself as an Arab?

26. Do you identify yourself more with colloquial Arabic or standard Arabic?
Why?

Appendix 6: Example of an interview Transcription (Marah)

Marah/ chemical engineering conducted in Arabic
Interview no. 7

T. Tell me about your school and how was it?

M. My school followed the Arabic system and everything we took was in Arabic. It was in Abu Dhabi. My family were new in the country and thought that sending their daughter to a government school would be the best option because it was sponsored by the government and followed the ministry curriculum. When they came to the country, they chose this school in Arabic even though both of my parents studied in Lebanon in English.

T. How do you evaluate your Arabic during the school days?

M. I was so distinguished in the school. Since grade four, we had ukaz souk (a traditional Arabic souk that was famous for reciting poetry and literary work) which was for older students to go and listen to poetry. The first time I heard the poem, 'record I am an Arab' was there. So, I fell in love with Arabic poetry, literature and language. With time, I started writing Arabic poetry.

T. Describe the teaching of Arabic in your school?

M. We had an hour class in Arabic that we started in grade four that was called, “free reading.” We had four classes of Arabic to cover the curriculum and this additional free reading class which was on Thursday for students if they wrote poetry, they would read it, or if they wrote short stories, any diary or anything that you want to participate with. I would wait for the whole week for this class to share with the class the things I write. I found a lot of encouragement from my teachers at school. I couldn’t sometimes wait for this class and sometimes would ask the teacher to read something I wrote and would like to share it with the class and was not able to use till Thursday.

What was the most challenging skill?

They were all excellent. My gift in writing developed from grade 4 till grade 10 where I felt my writing was so effective. Sometimes I would write something sad and I would see my colleagues cry. If I wrote something funny, they would laugh. So, choosing the names, characters of the story, they would be touched. So, I used to feel this kind of accomplishment that I was able to affect them, and I was able to translate my ideas and put them on paper and then these ideas could touch the heart of the people. So, in Arabic language I reached that level where I can influence the people who read my stories. I used to read a lot. I and my friend were called the writers. We would buy books and sit in the school break; one of us will read the book and the other would eat her sandwich and then we switch roles in order to make use of the time of the break in reading. Some novels became TV series like “the traitor” and “The Famous” by Noor Abdulmajeed. When I saw it becoming a series, I went to my friend and told her, do you remember when we used to read it in the break? More than once, I would see books that I already read in the school break. I loved Arabic language so much. My school and my teachers helped me with Arabic.

T. Did studying the other subjects in Arabic improve your Arabic?

M. All other courses I took added something to my Arabic competence and skills. I remember once in geology, we took a lesson about stars and sun and meteors and such vocabulary. I noticed after some time that I used these words in my writing. This is the special thing we students who come from Arabic schools have. Other

students in the International schools may love Arabic and want to learn it but their only source is the Arabic class. While for us, everything and every class adds something to our Arabic.

T. How was the teaching of English at school?

M. However, in contrast was the weakness in English. I am blessed compared to my friends in the school that my mother studied English Literature. So, whenever I had assignment, my mother would help me while for my friends, most of them had mothers who knew no English; one of the reasons why they registered their children in Arabic school was that they didn't speak English. So, they couldn't teach them in English. My mother would check my essays or my uncles. The school English was weak. Every day we had one class of English except for Thursday we had two. One is library. They used to focus on grammar. So, our grammar was good; but vocabulary was nothing. Our teacher was Indian, but she knew Arabic. My English was good because of my family. But if I compare my level and competence in English to other students in English schools, it was nothing. Compared to my school, I was ok. However, I as a person liked to improve myself. If I had reading, I would practice and read so in class, I would read well and not stutter. I wanted to be fluent. Because as a person I always wanted to be distinguished.

I wanted to study Arabic literature in university, but my mother said 'no.' She said you will not find a job after university. So, I said I would study law in Arabic, my mother said, no. I wanted to go for the Arts section, but my mother put me in the science section. My grades were 99.5 in all the course. So, she wanted me to study Scientific thing. So, she registered me in chemical engineering at AUS. In grade 11, I got 6 in IELTS and in grade 12, I got 7 in IELTS. However, my friends stopped studying for one semester or a whole year. Their level in English was between 4 and 4.5. Nobody from my group studied at AUS. When we compare them to English school students, not many of them can get the required grade in IELTS to study in such universities.

T. How was the first semester at university?

M. First semester in the university, we had the first course in Chemistry. From grade seven, I am studying these terms in Arabic. you can't come in one semester and tell

me know them in English. The transition was so painful. My shock was that 'oh my God. English is that important.'

T. How do you see this transition from AMI schools to EMI university? (challenging, smooth)

M. I took five courses; English writing, three major courses and Arabic heritage course in Arabic. I remember I start at 8am with English writing, then immediately I had at 9 my Arabic class. I remember when I would enter the Arabic class and sit down, and the doctor would start explaining and talking in Arabic, I remember that I would cry, and I would feel very happy (eyes in tears) and would think how beautiful it would be to leave this place to go and study Arabic, something I belong to, something I really love. I would interact and read.

T. How do you see this transition from AMI schools to EMI university? (challenging, smooth)

M. In writing, I am a person who wants to be distinguished, who can never be satisfied to be less than others, I suffered because I couldn't participate in class or to share my opinion. I didn't have that confidence... what if I say something wrong! What if they laughed at me! But with the professor, I had a great communication. I would send the doctor emails to ask questions. My professor was amazing. She would reply and would exchange emails. I was good in school but not to write critique. We took summary but not that professional. At AUS they are very precise.

T. So, what did you do? What strategies did you use?

So, I was always in contact with the professor, and the writing center. We have two hours access to the writing center. I would never lose them. My cousins graduated from AUS. I used to write and send them to check my writing. English 101 I got B+, English 102 I got A-, English 204, I got A. now, I am taking 207. In the proposal submission, we got the highest grade, 96.5. I borrowed the writing center hours from my friends. I would ask them to register their names and give me their hours because I want more people to review my paper. If my teacher has office hours, I would go every office hours; even if he gets bored of me. I wanted my writing to be distinctive. Yesterday, we had a presentation, the professor asked the students which presentation they think was the best, they said my name in 207 (oral progress

report presentation) but I needed to practice in front of the mirror and with others. I was tired, but I got rewarded for my hard work.

T. Did you face any difficulty due to the transition in your academic major?

At the lab, experiments in chemistry. But I knew nothing of the vocabulary like 'reverse osmosis.' I would read over the weekend to translate and understand and read several times until I find the connection and the word in Arabic and suddenly I would remember everything I learned in school. I suffered a lot and went through a lot of struggle. The thing that others might need for one hour, I need three hours for it. But I wanted to master it. At the end,

I remember in the first classes of the lab, the instruments used had names like round flask, so the doctor would ask me get bottom round flask, I did not know what he meant. I would go to bring him something else. He would say, no not this one. So, I knew I had weakness, so I would spend the weekends reading and would go to the instructors' office hours (while other students would not go because it is lab). I would tell him I read this paragraph, and this is what I understood. Is it correct? I read this paragraph and I summarized it. At the end he would give us the grades for all the sections in that course and my grade would be the highest. The other students would be shocked. They would say that I came from Arabic school and whenever we asked her, she would explain to us in Arabic. So, she got higher than us.

In chemistry, I was very good in it in school. In our first quiz, I got the full mark. They would come to me to explain to them before the second quiz and they would be shocked that I would explain in Arabic. I had the scientific knowledge so even if I cannot write in full paragraphs, I can put them in points. English is never an obstacle for success and distinction. Language comes by time.

T. If you studied in Arabic at university, how would that impact your Arabic?

M. If the study was in Arabic, I would work harder but my distinction would be greater, I would participate more. I would answer questions in class, I would save time for translation. Students who come from international schools had no difficulty with English but if they don't study the scientific content, English would not help them. Arab students were not known in class but only when the grades are out there while excellent students from English schools would be seen very obviously. I would go to the doctor's office to ask but I would be more confident because I would not be

afraid if I made a mistake in grammar. If he was an Arab, I would give him the word in Arabic and ask him to translate it for me. In class, I would not be able to ask him. I was shocked that I left my family in Abu Dhabi and stayed with my aunt in the first year. At the level of school, other systems American or British didn't mean a lot to me. However, here they are the majority and we students from Arabic schools are the minority. For example, during my breaks I would go to my friends in Sharjah university. Knowledge is in English, so I came all the way from Abu Dhabi. I chose AUS to study in a strong university.

Then, I had friends and are mostly Arabs because we have things to share; they understand me not in terms of language but in terms of culture. Then, I had friends from other nationalities but no, I feel more comfortable with Arab persons more. My ability to express and communicate with Arabs is stronger.

T. Do you do any readings or writings in Arabic beyond university studies?

M. I feel so sorry that I stopped writing diaries in Arabic after I started university. Many times, I feel like writing diaries, but I feel I have now weakness in Arabic, so I stop. but my English vocabulary are entering ... Ya Allah I am losing my Arabic. When I write now in Arabic, I can still write but it takes longer time. I took Arabic heritage in Arabic, language of Quran in Arabic and now I am taking Arabic poetry. Whatever elective I can take in Arabic, I am taking. Unfortunately, this course is the last course I am taking in Arabic. If I can, I will take more.

To reach the level of creativity, it takes me longer time.

Last week, we had an assignment for Arabic which was summary. Ok, I wrote summary for English writing. Arabic summary took me five hours to finish because I enjoyed doing it. I liked the vocabulary. I wanted to give it this time. To take care of the text's overall quality. I wanted to do it with care. I told myself, 'Mona this is your chance! Be creative! Take your time writing it! It is your chance to preserve your Arabic. Assume you will give it to a competition.'

As a language, three years would never be able to change the 16 or 17 years of my life in Arabic. This is my life and my culture in Arabic. Whatever these four years added to me, I will return to Arabic. Arabic is my life. AUS added me things but would never wipe my Arabic.

T. Can you talk about your major in Arabic or describe to me now one experiment you did recently?

M. I can talk about my major in Arabic, but I reach a point where I cannot name the equipment. The problem is that not all the words I got in my major are in Arabic or can be in Arabic. I can talk about my major in Arabic but to a certain level. you reach an area where I cannot find the words in Arabic like compressor. This is the problem, not all the words can be used in Arabic. I can explain the steps but the words. To reach the level of creativity that I had before in school, it takes me time. If my professor of Arabic gave me more assignments of summary every week, I can go back to the level I used to have before.

T. How is your contact with Arabic now?

I stopped writing Arabic diaries. Until now I read in Arabic. I read novels in Arabic. I enjoy reading them. I brought some novels in English to improve my language, I understand but I don't enjoy reading them. I have them since I was a freshman. Then, I told myself, 'Mona,' your major is hard, and this is your free time. If you want to improve your English, do that in your major. In your free time, read something you like. Sometimes I would open my mobile, I remember a poem in Arabic and read it aloud for myself. I enjoy it. I like that. I would never find that enjoyment in English. If I read English, it is because I have to, not because I am enjoying it. That is why I am enjoying my Arabic course. For me, the Arabic course is for enjoyment and pleasure. They are for my free time. I have four major courses. The Arabic course is an addition to me.

T. Who are your friends at university?

M. My friends mostly speak in English. Now, my language has some English words. Codeswitching. I ask them if I have any problem in my pronunciation, correct me. I will not be upset. Correct me is better than leaving me saying something wrong.

T. How do you see your Arabic language after three years of studying via English?

If my study was in Arabic, I would have added more words in Arabic. My scientific words would be much more. The scientific words I had in school, I know now their equivalents in English. This is addition. However, the words I learned here the advanced vocabulary of chemical engineering or advanced terms, I have them in

English, not in Arabic. I lost the chance of knowing these words in Arabic. However, I am so proud that I studied in Arabic system school even though I was tired in these four years. I will graduate, and I can teach in English or Arabic. If I become a teacher, I would tell my students that iron is 'hadeed' in Arabic.

T. How do you find the Arabic class here at university?

Classes in university are very interesting. In school, we had more freedom to participate our own poetry and stories. Here, we have limitations and syllabus and specific topics. However, I have the same enjoyment. I participate and share my thoughts. In Arabic heritage 1, I shared because I had things to share. The professor explained something about one of the Caliphs, I would raise my hand and tell that he did so and so because of my love to this. If I compare to the English courses, I have nothing to share, you give me what you need to give me and that's it.

T. how do you see the future of Arabic?

Arabic has no future academically. English is the lingua franca for education. Academically, it is better if we have one language, which is now English. English is the language of science because we need an international language whether it is English or not; a language that all scientists use and write in. Regardless, our life is not only academic. Arabic will be there. We need in the UAE to have English as an academic language because of the different nationalities in this country. I want to write my research in English and directly spread it to the world. However, I think Arabic courses should be taught at university. More electives in Arabic. Arabic was the language of instruction at school and I got the knowledge through it. The language is not a barrier.

T. Do you think you will need Arabic in your future career?

If the workers are Arabs, we will communicate in Arabic. However, if they are all non-Arabs, we will communicate in English.

T. How do you define your Arabic identity?

Arabic language is our culture, identity and expression. Speaking in your tongue.

Appendix 7: Interview Coding Example

Interview Questions:
Haya (Choose a pseudonym)
Interview no. 2
Haya

Arabic at School

My academic Arabic was excellent. We never had speaking test in Arabic. Reading and writing were excellent. Speaking because there was no focus on it. It is the most skill ignored and not developed. Teaching Arabic was excellent. We didn't memorize. We used to understand grammar, figures of speech, and then we used them in tests. We had the ability to be creative. It was not based on memorization and dictating. It was more of understanding and then applying the skills to new texts, reading them and analyzing them, understanding meaning from context. We used the dialect. Mix of dialect and MSA. They used to try to make us speak standard Arabic. They used sometimes to tell us, we will not accept any answers if they were not in Standard Arabic. We would look at each other and laugh. Who would speak MSA? The exposure to Arabic at school was not only during the Arabic classes. I used to read Arabic novels at home and write journals in Arabic. We also took all other subjects in Arabic but that didn't help me improve my Arabic because all scientific concepts are either written in poor translation from English or they are English written in Arabic. 90% of the concepts are English written in Arabic, like in biology. Names of medicines, chemical components, some concepts have no translation. Even the translated ones, how can they improve our MSA. In daily life, we don't read scientific articles in Arabic. The first names given to new inventions are English. Then they are translated or taken as they are but written in Arabic. In the past, Arabic was fine. There were terms for everything. We started medicine, math but these terms went with time. No, it was not. It is sea of vocabulary that we cannot stop learning. We did not have listening and speaking. It was a missing skill. Listening was not there. Confusion. Everything was in Arabic and suddenly it was all in English. At the beginning, I couldn't memorize the information in English. I saw that it was a lot of information. In the beginning, I used to translate holding dictionaries all the time. Then, I took an oath that I would just understand the words from the context. First year was very bad. I knew all the materials but in Arabic. One student wrote on the social website, in the first year, the teacher asked her about triangle and she was confused.

Theme #1:
 Arabic at school.
 Excellent skills

Comment [TM29]:
 Comment [TM30R29]: Arabic at school

quotation
 Comment [TM31]: Perception of SA

Comment [TM32]: Exposure to Arabic at school

Comment [TM33]: Other subjects in Arabic

Theme #3: Transition
 Comment [TM34]: Incomplete learning of Arabic

Comment [TM35]: The transition
 Coping strategy

Comment [TM36]: Translation as a strategy

After high school, the connection with Arabic started to deteriorate. I can't hide that I never tried to hold a pen and paper to write. I tried but could not have the inspiration. I went once with my friend who writes in English and we agreed that she write in English and I write in Arabic. I sat and tried and she said today we will help you get the inspiration back. But I felt *khallas* I don't want to write. Something I lost. It was there and is gone and will never be back. When you study in English, it is not that you are studying subjects in English, but you are communicating with a whole environment that considers English everything.

attempt to improve Arabic

Arabic after University

Theme # 4

Attrition

Recognition

Comment [TM37]: Disconnect from Arabic, a result of EMI

cultural impact

Arabic at University Level

At university, there are no requirements of Arabic (You are not required to know anything in Arabic) but there are some electives: Cultural and critical perspectives and history of the Arab world. You have Arabic heritage offered in Arabic and English and the language of the Quran offered only in Arabic. I took Arabic heritage in the first semester while I took the language of the Quran in year four. When I took Arabic heritage in my first semester, I felt happy, it was the easiest course; very easily memorized the professor considered me the best in class. I got full marks on all assessments. Then, when I took 'the language of the Quran' in the fourth year, I was shocked. When I wanted to answer the questions, and to put down the idea I have in mind on paper, I was not able to put it down in words as I used to do, unable to order it quickly in a sentence even though I had the idea in mind. I used to write quickly and was very satisfied with what I was writing. Sometimes, I would write the sentence and then look at it and say, "what is this that I am writing?" I felt I was writing like those who never read Arabic in their whole lives. I don't know why. Even my handwriting became bad. The construction of the sentence was wrong. And it took time. I also felt shocked in exams. Memorization became hard. I faced difficulty in memorizing the meanings and interpretations of the Quran. I would sit for hours and hours trying to memorize and repeat. I got used to reading in English.

Comment [TM38]: Marginalization of Arabic

quote
Symptoms of attrition and declining proficiency

Comment [TM39]: Comparison between Arabic in the first and last semester of studying at EMI

declining proficiency

Comment [TM40]: Memorization was affected

declining prof. forgetting words

Comment [TM41]: Symptom of language attrition (forgetting vocabulary learnt before)

I felt very sad when I felt that I lost my abilities in Arabic. Language of the Quran was the best course I took at AUS. I enjoyed it because I felt I went backward in time to my school days. The course also made me feel better than other students. There is a connection with Arabic that I got

Comment [TM42]: Recognition of the loss of Arabic

Recognition of losing Arabic

back in this course. I reconnected.

I feel if I studied in Arabic, I would be more successful at university. If I continued my higher

Comment [TM43]: Better academically if studied in Arabic

I would be more successful because I would not have to go through the transition that made me feel lost and distracted. Until now, I may read a text in English and feel distracted even though I improved a lot but still there is a barrier.

losing Arabic but not loy. confident in Eng.

Comment [TM44]: Still English is a barrier.

I remember in the first year, I used dictionaries to understand the vocabulary of the courses. Once, I knew the meanings, I realized that I took the same thing in high school but in Arabic.

There is fear of English. You should study it from young age to get over that (phobia) or fear of the language.

coping strategy
psychological

Comment [TM45]: Same info but different language

I don't regret studying in Arabic, schools because of educational and religious reasons and because I discovered the level of Arabic schools in science and math is a way better than British and American schools. But if they put the same materials I had in Arabic school in English, definitely I would like to study in English.

Now compare with them

Never use MSA because when I what's up I use dialect. At high school, I used to write journals and diaries in Arabic and used to write MSA in classes.

Comment [TM46]: Using 'us'

Comment [TM47]: Dominance of English

People like I would be talking in Arabic on campus. Any simple conversation with any of your colleagues is in English. If it was in Arabic, it would be strange; you feel strange.

forced to use Eng.

us v. they
Arabic schools vs. EM1 schools

If you respond back in Arabic they continue in English so it becomes awkward. So you feel like, what are you doing? You cannot speak in English. Their whole life is in English. At AUS, students believe they live in the USA. They watch American news and are interested in what is going on in the States. They stalk the news of pop stars. 90% of the times I would be sitting with them not understanding what they are talking about until now. There are some things I tried to have interest in them but couldn't, they watch series like games of thrones, suites, house. They are seasons and tried to watch but felt they are useless. The English used in these TV shows is not academic English. When you are at school used to watch these series without subtitles, without translation, speaking and fluency will be marvelous. Sometimes they speak slang that I never understood.

Other students' culture considered "weird"

Comment [TM48]: Different culture (other students endorse the western culture)

I started hearing Western music at university that I did a little at school. At AUS, who listens to Arabic music? Since I started AUS till I am graduating now, I met only two who listen to Arabic music. Nobody listens to Arabic music, they consider it silly. They hate Arabic language. They are weak in it. How can they like it and they are very weak in it. They make fun of Arabic.

changes

even music is absent in Arabic

part of Arabic culture is "silly"

stigmatized Arabic
other students who studied in English

grammar when they sit and mention Arabic. It is the same feeling I had to English when I started university because I felt the same weakness in it. However, their environment helps them use English so they feel distinguished. I used to tell them it is our religion in Arabic, the Quran, how can't we have the connection to Arabic.

I cannot relate to them. Even cartoon, if I said I watched Spacetoon in childhood, they don't know it exists. They watched cartoon network, Disney. Cartoon network, I never knew it existed. I would see the same cartoon but I saw the Arabic version and they saw it in the English version. I used to be shocked that even cartoon.

Cultural difference

Comment [TM49]: Different culture

They didn't benefit from this English in academic life. I had one biology teacher who taught me two courses, biology and biochemistry. In biology, I took it in school but all my knowledge should be changed to English. and he asked us to write the name of our high school on the final exam paper, he sked me 'you are from Shola' 'you know since I started the university, I do this and I found out that the excellent students come from Arabic schools. He was also in Arabic school.

I hated English when I took the writing course. I never wrote in English in high school; Just some very simple paragraphs. At AUS, I cried to the professor.

→ lack of preparation at school.

Comment [TM50]: Bad English at school as very advanced English at university

Even though English didn't affect my academic life, it was necessary for social life at AUS to go through the four years with ease and try to communicate with everyone and to be able to present in English. how many presentations did we do? At school, maybe I presented once for two minutes.

The transition is very bad. In the beginning it was very hard but with time it became easier.

→ psychological impact

Comment [TM51]: The transition

Sometimes I would force my friends to speak in Arabic. Or I speak in Arabic and let them speak in English. Some people would respond and talk in Arabic but their Arabic is broken. They get confused. We codeswitch a lot. It is very sad. In the past I used to criticize these people. How would they do that. What is this stupidity? Then I felt that they are not showing off but because they are used to speaking English and this mix because subconscious. Sometimes I speak in Arabic and they ask me to translate, very ordinary Arabic words, like 'entemaa' loyalty she asked me what is it? I didn't know how to translate it? It was so bad → again using (bad)

change
1. music
2. codeswitching

This is exaggeration. I wanted to give my friend a gift and my friend told me write in English it would be very bizarre.

→ writing in Arabic is considered 'bizarre'

Students used to comment on my pronunciation. Words should be pronounced in a certain way. I met many many people who would make fun of my pronunciation. I would say a word and he would say it after me correcting it for me. I used to be sensitive at the beginning but then I got

Comment [TM52]: Comments on pronunciation from the other students

→ The transition social impact.

← humiliation and stigmatization
↓ upset!

used to it and I would thank those who corrected me. I was fighting and trying.

I still can read and write but I feel my abilities declined. I can get it back I describe it as language attrition because we have more problems. You lose it because we don't use MSA in communication. I cannot write reports now in Arabic. I wrote them all at university in English. If I studied in Arabic at university, I would be able to write reports in Arabic. I cannot fight the place where I live. I was a fighter at university, I was stable and consistent in my position that Arabic is important. For Muslim Arabs, Arabic is important for religiosity. For Arabs who are not religious, Arabic is not that important.

Theme #2 Declining Abilities
→ Ling. attrition

Taking electives showed the supremacy of the American culture. For example, I took a course in which we were supposed to watch movies and discuss them. We would watch the whole movies with the sexual scenes and comment on them.

Comment (TM53): Awareness of the supremacy of English at university

The professor used to ask us to read and it was my pleasure to read because I was one of the few students who read well. We had a presentation in MSA. We have written exams. He used to highlight the parts of the exam that irritated him. Both professors of Arabic Heritage and Language of Quran spoke in MSA in class and out of class.

The Arabic classes were very good and enjoyable. I also got easy A in the two Arabic courses. I was hesitant to take Arabic poetry class. I was afraid I would not be able to memorize poetry and I would have liked to take it instead of the film course I took. I used to write the scientific words in Arabic and their translation in English. This made the transition easier. I knew that I would study in EMU university.

Easy A!!

I did a volunteering in the chemistry club and we were supposed to do experiments in front of the students. Students from my old school came to the university and I knew that if I explained to them in English, they would not understand. I found myself unable to explain. I mixed up everything. I would start in English and then think of its equivalent in Arabic and trying to remember what was its name in Arabic?? They tried to help me. It was very hard. I don't know what you call it in Arabic. It was so funny. When they left, I felt oh no, what happened? It was very, very hard to me to explain the experiment for them in Arabic. I got used to explaining in English. I was stuttering in Arabic. The words I studied in chemistry at school, I couldn't remember. I preferred to have students from English schools to explain for them as I am used to do.

the incident of the recognition of Declining abilities

The Arabic During these years I stopped reading in

Comment (TM54): The incident that made her aware of her declining proficiency in Arabic

Comment (TM55): Disconnect from Arabic.

Theme #2

Appendix 8: Background information of the interview participants

No.	Participant Pseudonym	Faculty	Gender	Age	Year of study
1	Hadeel	Chemical Engineering	Female	22	4
2	Marah	Chemical Engineering	Female	21	3
3	Lara	Media	Female	21	3
4	Faten	Industrial Engineering	Female	22	4
5	Aziza	Chemical Engineering	Female	21	3
6	Sally	Pharmacy	Female	20	3
7	Ayat	Lab	Female	21	3
8	AbdulRahim	Electrical Engineering	Male	21	3
9	Marwan	Electrical Engineering	Male	21	3
10	Mahmoud	Electrical Engineering	Male	21	3
11	Sharifa	Nutrition	Female	21	3
12	Rama	Biotechnology	Female	21	3
13	Rotana	Biotechnology	Female	21	3
14	Thaer	Business	Male	25	5
15	Hatim	Chemical Engineering	Male	21	3
16	Samia	Chemical Engineering	Female	22	4
17	Fadi	Chemical Engineering	Male	21	3
18	Imad	Civil Engineering	Male	21	3
19	Bassem	Nuclear Engineering	Male	21	3
20	Sama	Biotechnology	Female	21	3

First University	Second university	Third university
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Appendix 9: Consent Forms- Students' Consent Form

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
.....
(Signature of participant)

(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:
Taghreed Ibrahim Masri email: tim201@exeter.ac.uk

OR

Dr. Salah Troudi S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....

.....
(Signature of participant)

(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Taghreed Ibrahim Masri email: ttim201@exeter.ac.uk

OR

Dr. Salah Troudi S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix 10: Information sheet for the surveyed students



Graduate School of Education

Title of Research Project

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Details of Project

This project is intended to examine the Arab students' proficiency in Arabic and critically assess their perceptions of their identity and Arabic language competence after studying in medium of instruction university. The research does not have any commercial interests. It aims to problematize and raise awareness towards the importance of using the first language in education at higher education along with English. The data of the research will be presented in conferences and published as book chapters. It aims to close a gap in literature that very clearly exists as research on the effect of using English as MI on first language is scarce in the Arab world.

Contact Details

For further information about the research /interview data (amend as appropriate), please contact:

Name: *Taghreed Ibrahim Masri.*
Postal address: *Sharjah, UAE.*
Telephone: 00971 50 7370510.
Email: *ttim201@exeter.ac.uk*

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact:

Dr. Salah Troudi
Email: *S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk*

Confidentiality

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Data Protection Notice

Data Protection Notice - The information you provide will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University of Exeter's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form."

Anonymity

Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name.

Appendix 11: Information sheet for the teachers



Title of Research Project

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Details of Project

This project is intended to examine the Arab students' proficiency in Arabic and critically assess their perceptions of their identity and Arabic language competence after studying in medium of instruction university. The research does not have any commercial interests. It aims to problematize and raise awareness towards the importance of using the first language in education at higher education along with English. The data of the research will be presented in conferences and published as book chapters. It aims to close a gap in literature that very clearly exists as research on the effect of using English as MI on first language is scarce in the Arab world.

Contact Details

For further information about the research /interview data (amend as appropriate), please contact:

Name: *Taghreed Ibrahim Masri.*

Postal address: *Sharjah, UAE.*

Telephone: 00971 50 7370510.

Email: *ttim201@exeter.ac.uk*

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact:

Dr. Salah Troudi

Email: S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk

Confidentiality

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Data Protection Notice

Data Protection Notice - The information you provide will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University of Exeter's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form."

Anonymity

Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name.

Appendix 12: Ethics Form

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

When completing this form please remember that the purpose of the document is to clearly explain the ethical considerations of the research being undertaken. As a generic form it has been constructed to cover a wide-range of different projects so some sections may not seem relevant to you. Please include the information which addresses any ethical considerations for your particular project which will be needed by the SSIS Ethics Committee to approve your proposal.

Guidance on all aspects of the SSIS Ethics application process can be found on the SSIS intranet:

Staff:

<https://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/staff/research/researchenvironmentandpolicies/ethics/>

Students:<http://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/student/postgraduateresearch/ethicsapprovalforyourresearch/>

All staff and students within SSIS should use this form to apply for ethical approval and then send it to one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in the Graduate School of Education.

Applicant details	
Name	Taghreed Ibrahim Masri
Department	The Graduate School of Education
UoE email address	Ttim201@exeter.ac.uk

Duration for which permission is required		
You should request approval for the entire period of your research activity. The start date should be at least one month from the date that you submit this form. Students should use the anticipated date of completion of their course as the end date of their work. Please note that <u>retrospective ethical approval will never be given.</u>		
Start date:15/11/2017	End date:15/02/2018	Date submitted:27/09/2017

Students only	
All students must discuss their research intentions with their supervisor/tutor prior to submitting an application for ethical approval. The discussion may be face to face or via email.	
Prior to submitting your application in its final form to the SSIS Ethics Committee it should be approved by your first and second supervisor / dissertation supervisor/tutor. You should submit evidence of their approval with your application, e.g. a copy of their email approval.	
Student number	630062126
Programme of study	Doctor of Education (EdD) module
Name of Supervisor(s)/tutors or Dissertation Tutor	Dr. Salah Troudi

Have you attended any ethics training that is available to students?

No, I have not taken part in ethics training at the University of Exeter
For example: i) the Research Integrity Ethics and Governance workshop:
<http://as.exeter.ac.uk/rdp/postgraduateresearchers> ii) [Ethics training received on Masters courses](#)

Certification for all submissions

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given in this application and that I undertake in my research to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research. I confirm that if my research should change radically I will complete a further ethics proposal form.

Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

Double click this box to confirm certification

Submission of this ethics proposal form confirms your acceptance of the above.

TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

ETHICAL REVIEW BY AN EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.

If you selected yes from the list above, you should apply for ethics approval from the appropriate organisation (the NHS Health Research Authority or the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee). You do not need to complete this form, but you must inform the [Ethics Secretary](#) of your project and your submission to an external committee.

MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005

No, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilities)

If you selected yes from the list above, you should apply for ethics approval from the NHS Health Research Authority. You do not need to complete this form, but you must inform the [Ethics Secretary](#) of your project and your submission to an external committee.

SYNOPSIS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Maximum of 750 words.

Adopting English as a medium of instruction in higher education in the United Arab Emirates is done at the expense of Arabic. Once Arab students step into their university campus, they mostly lose contact with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is the language of literacy and the high variety of the diglossic Arabic language, used in education. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is almost absent from the scene. EMI needs to be problematized. The decision to use a particular language as a medium of instruction is a

very crucial decision because it decides on which language is given prestige, power, resources, and which language is relegated to a secondary position in society (Tsui, & Tollefson, 2004) which is here Arabic. These policies, which are not purely guided by educational agenda but by social, political, and economic agendas, should be questioned (Ibid).

The study is informed by critical approach based on critical applied linguistics, which is a language-related approach that springs from “an assumption that we live amid a world of pain” and that critical applied linguistics can alleviate that pain and create possibility of change (Pennycook, 2001, p. 7). Thus, the study examines the topic from a critical lens. English-medium instruction is one of the areas that has been widely accepted without questioning or problematization. It “has become *the normal* medium of instruction in higher education for many countries – including several where the language has no official status” (Crystal, 2004, p. 37, Italics added). This study aims at problematizing the assumption that using English as a medium of instruction is a normal procedure that is accepted and perpetuated. It aims at problematizing this given assumption and revealing how it negatively affects the first language and students’ identity and proficiency and their right to be educated in their own language.

The study aims to spot light on EMI’s impact on students’ proficiency in Arabic and on their Arab identity. So, if the target of EMI is to improve the students’ English proficiency, it might lead to first language attrition and students might lose their literacy skills in MSA as a result. It is the language of literacy. Therefore, if students do not continue learning it, there is a possibility that they will lose it. L1 attrition is seen as “a by-product of a speaker’s contact with a second language where input and use of L1 diminishes to a critical point” (Sebina, 2014, p. 55).

The study was informed by the following questions:

1. How do Arab students in the UAE perceive their competence in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in the light of studying in EMI universities?
2. Has their competence in MSA been affected after studying in EMI institutions?
3. What are areas in their academic Arabic language that have been the most affected?
4. How does the use of English as MI affect their Arab identity?

The study will take place in one of the higher education institutions in the UAE; in a university in Dubai.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

The research will take place in the UAE, a country that encourages research in education. There are no specific procedures other than seeking the consent of the institution, teachers and students of the university where the study will take place. No other assistants will help me in doing this research, so it is only me. The study will take place in the Canadian university of Dubai, a research-based university that encourages research and studies. The Dean of the school of liberal arts and sciences will be approached for the consent of the university to do the study. Arabic department is one of the departments that fall under the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. I am an instructor in the university which makes my access to the classrooms and other instructors easier. Once I get his written consent, I will approach the teachers and the students.

The following sections require an assessment of possible ethical consideration in your research project. If particular sections do not seem relevant to your project please indicate this and clarify why.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research will use questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and documents. The topic of the research is not sensitive because it examines language proficiency. The sampling is purposive. I will survey all students who will be in the Arabic classes, who take Arabic 1 and 2 as a first language. I will then read the surveys and include in the study only the Arab students who were in Arabic medium schools, and exclude the ones who studied in English or other medium instruction schools, since my study is looking at only the students who went to Arabic medium instruction schools. So, the students who were in international schools will not fulfil the criteria of the study that aims to see the impact of moving from Arabic medium instruction to English medium instruction and how it will affect students' linguistic competence in Arabic language.

I will interview the Arab students who are in their third or fourth year of their study in the university. I will be also observing Arabic classes to see how Arab students communicate in Arabic. I will also ask the Arabic instructors and students to provide me with the students' writings in Arabic. The Arab instructors teach Arabic for Arabs. So, they teach it as a first language. All Arab students have to take Arabic 1 and Arabic 2. These teachers are Arabs and non- Arabs who have studied Arabic language in Western or Arab universities. Their command of English is very good because they teach in English medium instruction university. All of them got 6.5 in IELTS or above. They are not expected to have problems with reading the consent form or information sheet in English. They are proficient in English and fit in an institution in which all communication is done in English. The observation is non-participatory; I will be an outsider who does not involve in the setting. Semi-structured observations will be carried out in the natural learning context. Classroom observations will be done through contacting the heads of the departments and after receiving the written consent of the teachers. I will also inform the teachers about the research and its purposes. I am planning to introduce myself to the class prior to the observation, brief on the research purpose and ask for the students' permission to be observed. All students will be given information sheet and will be informed that their participation in the research is voluntary. Because it is non-participatory observation, I will sit very quietly at the back of the class so that I make sure I don't disturb the students and to minimize "the obtrusive researcher effect" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 190) on how the

class goes. I will thank the teacher and students before leaving the classroom at the end of the class.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants will be adults; university students in their third or fourth years of their study. I will survey about 200 students and will interview 10. Arabic instructors are also participants because I will be observing their classes.

THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

All participants will be given an information sheet about the study and I will seek their consent prior to conducting the data collection whether it is for the questionnaire or the observation. The students have the right not to take the questionnaire if they want. I will inform them that they have the right not to participate in the study and not to do the questionnaire.

All participants will be also informed about the aim of the research. The participants in the interviews are the students in the university who will be contacted through the emails they provide in the questionnaires distributed. If they provide their emails and want to participate in the study, I will email them and agree on a time to do the interview. I will invite them to be interviewed in the library or in my office. I will assure them that the information they will give is completely confidential and that their names will not be used in the research. I will also assure them that they can withdraw from the study if they want, or they can ask me not to use their data in the study. I will also thank them for agreeing to participate in the study and explain to them the purpose of the study. They will also sign the consent form before they are interviewed.

I will also ask the instructors for their permission and consent for attending and observing their classes and will ensure them of their complete freedom to accept or refuse participating in the study. I will thank them for letting me in.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

No special arrangements needed

THE INFORMED NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

I will inform the participants about the objective of doing the research prior to starting the interviews. Teachers will be also informed about the research aims and their consent will be obtained before observing their classes. All students will be informed that participation is voluntary and that they have the right to say 'no.' Teachers also have the same right. They can accept or refuse having me in their classes. They will be assured that participation is voluntary and is free from pressure. All participants will be assured that they can refrain from participating or withdrawing at any stage.

ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE HARM

Because the participants' identities will not be revealed and pseudonyms will be used, no harm will happen. This is for the interviewees. All students' names will be changed immediately during the interviews so that they cannot be traced.

Students in the questionnaire phase will not be required to write their personal details unless they want to be interviewed. In the interviews, I will assign for the students'

pseudonyms to hide their identities and ensure anonymity. I will ask for the students' permission for recording the interviews.
For the observation, I will make sure that my presence in class does not affect the class routine by arriving early and sitting in the back without disturbing the class.

DATA PROTECTION AND STORAGE

Soft data will be stored in my laptop that is completely secured with a password. Recordings will be transferred to my laptop and kept secured. After transcribing the interviews, the recordings will be deleted. I will do that step by step for every interview. Once I am done, I will transcribe it and delete it from the recording device. Other hard copies like the documents, questionnaires and observational notes will be kept under locked storage.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The research is not funded by an organization and is not supporting certain findings. It is a critical research that aims to describe and examine what is happening in relation to authority and its impact on language policies. The participants will be informed of the research purpose through the information sheet which will give them brief summary of the aims of the research. The results of the research will be used to make conclusions about the status of Arabic language in higher education in the light of using English as medium of instruction. Amid the scarcity of research and large scale studies on this topic, it will add to the body of knowledge. Hopefully, the research findings will be disseminated through conferences, seminars and through publishing the thesis in academic journals or as a book chapter because the aim of the research is to raise awareness and draw the attention to the unequal power relations of linguistic choices in the higher education.

USER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

Interviewees' feedback on the research is highly appreciated. They will be invited to review the interview transcription so that they assure me that the transcribed version of the interviews aligns with their intentions and that there is no misunderstanding on the part of the researcher.

INFORMATION SHEET for the students

Title of Research Project

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Details of Project

This project is intended to examine the Arab students' proficiency in Arabic and critically assess their perceptions of their identity and Arabic language competence after studying in medium of instruction university. The research does not have any commercial interests. It aims to problematize and raise awareness towards the importance of using the first language in education at higher education along with English. The data of the research will be presented in conferences and published as book chapters. It aims to close a gap in literature that very clearly exists as research on the effect of using English as MI on first language is scarce in the Arab world.

Contact Details

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Name: *Taghreed Ibrahim Masri.*
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Telephone: 00971 50 7370510.
Email: *ttim201@exeter.ac.uk*

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact:

Dr. Salah Troudi
Email: *S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk*

Confidentiality

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Data Protection Notice

Data Protection Notice - The information you provide will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University of Exeter's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form."

Anonymity

Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name.

Information sheet for the teachers

Title of Research Project

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Details of Project

This project is intended to examine the Arab students' proficiency in Arabic and critically assess their perceptions of their identity and Arabic language competence after studying in medium of instruction university. The research does not have any commercial interests. It aims to problematize and raise awareness towards the importance of using the first language in education at higher education along with English. The data of the research will be presented in conferences and published as book chapters. It aims to close a gap in literature that very clearly exists as research on the effect of using English as MI on first language is scarce in the Arab world.

Contact Details

For further information about the research /interview data (amend as appropriate), please contact:

Name: *Taghreed Ibrahim Masri.*
Postal address: *Sharjah, UAE.*
Telephone: *00971 50 7370510.*
Email: *ttim201@exeter.ac.uk*

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact:

Dr. Salah Troudi

Email: S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk

Confidentiality

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

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Anonymity

Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name.

CONSENT FORM (Students)

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Taghreed Ibrahim Masri email: ttim201@exeter.ac.uk

OR

Dr. Salah Troudi S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

CONSENT FORM (Teachers)

Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Taghreed Ibrahim Masri email: ttim201@exeter.ac.uk

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SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Staff and students should follow the procedure below.

Post Graduate Taught Students (Graduate School of Education): Please submit your completed application to your first supervisor. Please see the submission flowchart for further information on the process.

All other students should discuss their application with their supervisor(s) / dissertation tutor / tutor and gain their approval prior to submission. Students should submit evidence of approval with their application, e.g. a copy of the supervisor's email approval.

All staff should submit their application to the appropriate email address below.

This application form and examples of your consent form, information sheet and translations of any documents which are not written in English should be submitted by email to the SSIS Ethics Secretary via one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in the Graduate School of Education.

Please note that applicants will be required to submit a new application if ethics approval has not been granted within 1 year of first submission.

Appendix 13: Certificate of Ethical Approval



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

St Luke's Campus
Heavitree Road
Exeter UK EX1 2LU

<http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/education/>

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Title of Project: Critical Examination of the impact of the use of English as medium of instruction on the Arabic language and Arab identity of Arab students in UAE higher education

Researcher(s) name: Taghreed Ibrahim Masri

Supervisor(s): Salah Troudi


This project has been approved for the period

From: 15/11/2017

To: 15/02/2018

Ethics Committee approval reference:

D/17/18/13

Signature:  Date: 06/11/2017
(Professor Dongbo Zhang, Graduate School of Education Ethics Officer)