

The Global Spread of English and the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language: Perspectives from Western Muslim Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The global spread of English and the role played by TEFL in this phenomenon is a subject of debate among EFL educators and researchers; this study provides new insights into this complex situation in relation to the Islamic faith in a way that has not yet been addressed in the literature. There has been an increased interest among researchers concerning the relationship between faith and ELT; however, to this date, no empirical studies have been conducted with regards TEFL and Islam. The study is, therefore, providing rich insights into this area. In doing so, in light of the wider socio-political, ideological or religious issues connected to the spread of English, the study draws on the experiences of nine Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA by qualitatively investigating their views on TEFL and the global spread of English in the KSA with particular reference to their Islamic faith and its relationship with their profession

The study also addresses how Islam relates to the perception of these processes and how it affects their professional practice. The study is, therefore, particularly significant as it can play a role in encouraging Muslim EFL teachers to relate the macro-level theoretical discourses and educational policies to the micro-level of classroom practice and contribute to the ongoing debate concerning the role played by TEFL in the KSA. The study also has the potential to raise awareness among Muslim educators in the KSA and other Muslim countries of the wider complex processes intertwined with the global spread of English and its impact on EFL education. This investigation also shed light on a number of ethical questions in relation to how Western Muslims who have travelled to the KSA perceive the relationship between their faith and their role as EFL, which may open new ways for Muslim professionals to combine their faith with their profession.

In-depth interviews were conducted with the participants and the data provided new insights into the perceptions of TEFL and the global spread of English. The participants not only described the global spread of English and TEFL as value-laden, politically and ideologically driven, but also as a facilitator in terms of communication and cross-cultural understanding and as a necessary tool to acquire in today's world. The data collected also showed that the relationship between Islam and TEFL was not described in dichotomous terms, which meant that this conception was the result of the participants' personal understandings of their faith. The findings also emphasised on the preponderant role of the participants' Islamic faith on their personal and professional lives. The study's main contribution relates to two essential notions that have been debated among applied linguists: ownership and appropriation of the English language. The research showed that Western Muslim EFL teachers appropriate and claim ownership of the English language in a way that has not yet been addressed in the literature. Finally, the study shows that language teaching issues are inextricably intertwined with broader issues such as religion, culture or politics and suggests that the links between Islam, politics and language need to be explicitly addressed within the ELT arena.

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Preface

Through this research, I embarked on a journey of discovery hoping to find answers to some of the questions I often raised regarding my role as a Muslim EFL teacher. I felt that our position as Western Muslim EFL teachers can become problematic and that our situation can be perceived somewhat paradoxical. I also believe Muslim EFL teachers ought to question their role in the wider process of ELT in the Muslim world in general and in the KSA in particular given the context of globalisation and westernisation that can potentially impact on the Arabic language and Islamic identity. Furthermore, a number of personal experiences influenced the way I viewed my profession in light of my Islamic faith. I was employed in the KSA as an EFL teacher for a certain number of years and, like my participants, I have lived as a Muslim in the West and at some point travelled to the KSA to teach EFL; therefore, I share many characteristics with my participants and possess a certain understanding and knowledge of the context of the study. Although this may appear anecdotal, when I first visited the KSA, which is considered as the cradle of Islam and Divine revelation, I was also very enthusiast about practising my Arabic language skills for the first time. I had studied Arabic for some time but never had the opportunity to practise it in a real authentic context. One of my first encounters was with a non-Arab resident with whom I was doing my best to communicate in Arabic but soon realised that if I wanted to reasonably communicate with him, I had no other option but to use English. This anecdote may seem anodyne, but I believe it reveals some of the wider problems surrounding the global spread of English in general and in the KSA in particular. Why did I have to use English in an Arabic country? This prompted me to reflect, on a more practical level, on the impact of the global spread of English on the lives of many people around the world in general, but most particularly on the impact of TEFL on the Arabic language –a language with a particular significance for Islam and Muslims– and in turn on the relationship between TEFL and Islam. Therefore, as an EFL teacher, I felt it was valuable to question the role played by TEFL in this wider process and how it relates to wider socio-political, ideological, religious and also practical issues.

1. Introduction

It is fair to say that the English language has become an extremely important tool in today's life, but for many, it cannot be solely described as value-free. As result of a growing awareness among researchers of the various societal and ideological implications of the global spread of English, English Language Teaching (ELT) has been examined from a variety of perspectives. In spite of this, ELT professionalism seems to remain disconnected from wider issues and uninterested in the socio-cultural or ideological implications of the profession although values and ideology are closely connected with the global spread of English and the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Also, the nature of their profession exposes English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to value conflicts and it is very likely that, as educators, most of us have experienced value conflicts in one way or another because as humans, our actions are rooted in values and beliefs (Bergem, 2006; Edge, 1996; Johnston, Juhász, Marken, & Ruiz, 1998). Nonetheless, the values that inform language teaching have hardly been thoroughly investigated by research. Likewise, values may often be inspired by religions but there has been very little interest among researchers in the issue of faith and language teaching (Bradley, 2011). Research mainly focused on evangelical Christians and TEFL (ELT and Christian Faith, 2012; Edge, 2003a; Johnston 1999; Lessard-Clouston, 2008; Mair, 2003; Pennycook 2005; Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Varghese & Johnston, 2007; Wang, 2009; Wicking, 2012; Wong & Canagarajah, 2009) and the topic of ELT and Islam have seldom been investigated. Furthermore, the spread of English in Muslim countries is intertwined with wider complex processes that have a significant impact on education, culture and identity. As a result, for some Muslim EFL teachers, TEFL may be the source of ethical questions. More specifically, in Muslim countries, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), many Western Muslim teachers of EFL are present in the profession and may be confronted to problematic situations with regards the spread of English in a Muslim country, hence, their need to reflect on their position and find ways to combine their Islamic values with their profession. Based on these premises, as an introduction to the whole thesis, the chapter first sheds light on essential contextual issues by briefly presenting the phenomenon of the global spread of English and its main factors. In addition, this part of the thesis highlights how religion relates to language by specifically focusing on English and Christianity and Arabic and Islam. Then, the focus of the study is narrowed down and a brief overview of the local context is presented. Next, in light of this contextual information, the statement of the research problem is explained followed by the significance and purpose of the study. Finally, the questions that this study investigates are enumerated at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Background and Context

1.1.1 English as a Global Language

The English language can be described as a global language because it has spread around the world to such an extent that there is now an estimated total of eight hundred million to one billion people in the world who speak it (Kachru & Smith, 2008; Pennycook, 2014)¹. Although this figure is by no means an accurate picture of the use of English in the world and that it is merely indicative of the estimated number of speakers around the globe (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997; Graddol & Meinhof, 1999)², the English language is now used by millions of people for whom it is not their first language. Actually, communication occurs on a very wide scale between people for whom it is an additional language so that it has now become a facilitator of communication for millions of individuals around the world from various cultures and nationalities. As a result, millions of individuals are concerned with the teaching or the learning of English in one way or another and it is now commonly admitted that this language has acquired an undeniable international status.

Never before has a language acquired such a tremendous status, influence and power, which has significant implications and repercussions in many aspects of our lives. More precisely, it has acquired such a status that it has direct implications for at least twelve major domains including, international organisations, scientific publication, international banking, advertising, audio-visual cultural production, international tourism, tertiary education, international safety, international law, interpretation and translation, technology transfer and finally internet communication (Graddol, 1997). English has now become the international language for science and technology and is preponderant in the dissemination of thought and knowledge; most book publications occur in the medium of English and over sixty countries publish titles in English. In fact, to this date, Great Britain alone has had more book publications than any other country in the world for many years (Association, 2014; Graddol, 1997). This fact corroborates the idea that the English language has now become a major catalyst of intellectual, scientific and technological progress. English language spread has also facilitated the access to scientific knowledge and technological advances; in the field

¹ The total number of speakers can be divided into three groups: (1) those who use English as their first language (i.e. native speakers) who represent around three hundred million individuals, (2) speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL) and finally, (3) speakers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Pennycook, 2014).

² For the last two groups (EFL and ESL), it is even more complex to provide accurate figures since they often depend on how good their command of English is in order to be identified as a 'speakers of English' (Crystal, 2003; Pennycook, 1994)

of science for instance, knowledge of English can “serve as a liaison between scientists and the lay public” (Master 1998, p. 722) by, so to speak, democratising scientific knowledge and granting access to science and technology to a wider audience. Furthermore, over 85% of international organisations use English as a working language (Crystal, 2003). In addition, although the United Nations use six official languages¹, translation remains a major challenge to effective international communication. Indeed, within a linguistically diverse community, communication between individuals can be tedious. In international bodies such as the European Union, the United Nations or even in international conferences, adopting a single lingua franca can facilitate communication instead of resorting to “expensive and impracticable multi-way translation facilities” (Crystal, 2003, p. 12).

What seems particularly striking about this phenomenon is that the language itself has been able to evolve, change and adapt across space and time so that it has secured a position of global language, thus reflecting the language’s “propensity to change and be changed [in] a diversity of cultural contexts within which English is used in daily life” (Graddol, 1997, p. 5). English is now used and spoken in a wide variety of forms due to the diversity of its speakers; as a result, new varieties of English have emerged, in regard to usage or pronunciation for instance, which necessitated the conceptualisation of new forms of English, such as the notion of ‘world Englishes’ (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1994; Kachru & Smith, 2008; Mair, 2003; Rajagopalan, 2004) or ‘English as a lingua franca’ (Graddol, 1997; Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2005). This also suggests that the English language has been able to evolve in contact with other languages. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that these above-mentioned ‘varieties’ seem to be embedded in ideological elements since they have emerged as the result of a greater awareness of the global, as well as the local, implications of the spread of English onto the lives of millions of individuals through, notably, a better recognition of the diversity of the language and a sort of rejection of the representation of English in terms of belonging solely to the traditional dominant Anglo Saxon nations.

The above has briefly presented the global spread of English and some of its implications. In order to gain a greater understanding of the preponderance of English as a major language, the following section examines the main factors that can be attributed to this phenomenon.

1.1.2 The Global Spread of English: from Colonisation to Globalisation

¹ Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish

The actual preponderance of English in the world is mainly due to historical, economic and socio-cultural factors. More specifically, it can be explained by the expansion of the British Colonial Empire, the emergence of the USA as a global superpower and also by the phenomenon of globalisation. First, the growth of Great Britain as a major colonial power significantly contributed to the global spread of the English language; from the first voyages of English settlers to America in the 17th century and throughout the 19th century colonial movements in Africa, Asia and Australia, the use of English grew significantly until the mid-20th century (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997). It can also be argued that, paradoxically, the decolonisation process contributed to today's English global status whereby its adoption as an official language by newly independent nations granted the English language an even greater status (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 2007). During the colonial period, access to the English language by the indigenous population was seen by the British as a threat to their hegemony and, therefore, encouraged education in local languages. As a result, English education remained restricted to an elite for whom the English language conferred a certain status that could potentially threaten the colonial rule; therefore, it remained a symbol of power – particularly colonial power – and also contributed to granting English a certain superiority over local languages. The introduction of the English language in the colonies had far reaching consequences; for example, a closer look at the 19th century colonial discourse indicates that the language gradually acquired a powerful status, which also partly explains its current position in academic circles and education at large¹.

The main aim of the British colonial power was to impose Western worldviews to the colonised masses and encourage “loyalty to British rule” (Cutts 1953, p. 825) based on their conviction of the superiority of the English language and their firm desire that it should be introduced into education “for the learned elites, who would then act as cultural intermediaries between the British and the masses” (Evans, 2002, p. 262). Such colonial attitude to language policy had tremendous consequences; in education, for instance, the over-emphasis on English led to “the neglect of the vernacular languages”. In addition, the spread of English into the colonies facilitated the decolonisation process. Drawing on the

¹ The following quote from the “Macaulay’s Minute on education”, dated 1835, is an excellent illustration of the colonial authorities’ conception of colonial education when English was officially introduced into education in India: “I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed, both here and at home, with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalist themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia” (Dissanayake, 1993, p. 339).

experience of India, the introduction of English into education led to two major problems that had direct repercussions on the decolonisation process. First, this educated Indian elite became alienated from their cultural heritage and second, because the British colonial rule excluded them from occupying positions of power, they gradually became discontent of this unequal situation, which soon became a serious source of concern to the British who saw in this new Anglicised intelligentsia a potential threat to their undisputed power rather than an educated elite and no longer “a class of cultural intermediaries between [them] and the Indian masses” (Evans, 2002, p. 278). As a result, one of the unexpected outcomes of this language policy was that the English language became a potential source of political empowerment and a means of increased political consciousness. This also partly explains why the decolonisation process throughout the 20th century granted the English language an even greater international status as many multi-ethnic and multilingual decolonised countries sought to achieve a sense of national unity around English as a national language (Pennycook, 1994).

The second major factor that contributed to the global spread of English and its actual status of world language is the rise of the United States as a major super power (Crystal, 2003; Neilsen, 2009; Zughoul, 2003). More specifically, the role played by the USA in the global arena became increasingly important since World War II with their military and political involvement in the war, which granted them a much greater influence around the globe and particularly in Europe. As a result, their economic influence over Europe rapidly grew with, for instance, the Marshall Plan or the establishment of the IMF and the World Bank¹ (Graddol, 1997).

In addition to the British colonial expansion and the rise of the USA as a global superpower, the phenomenon of globalisation can be counted as the third significant factor and facilitator to the global spread of English. Globalisation is a major phenomenon and the TEFL industry has greatly benefited from the rapid global economic changes that are taking place. A ‘world without borders’ may have eased the cross-cultural relationship, but it is also the source of much anxiety and fear. The multifaceted notion of globalisation is sometimes perceived as a semantic trick to mean nothing else than the over dominance of the Western political, economic and cultural model over the world (Neilsen, 2009) and is sometimes flatly referred to as Americanisation or “coca-colonisation” (Flusty, 2004, p. 2; Mooney & Evans, 2007, p.

¹ Two major financial institutions created after the Bretton woods agreements in 1944.

29). It is beyond the scope of the study to discuss the different theories of globalisation; however, beyond the multifaceted nature of the term¹, the English language has been a preponderant actor in this phenomenon as it has “served as the language of globalization” since it “does not only serve as a medium of globalization” but also as “as a tool that facilitates and finally brings about more facets of globalization” (Zughoul, 2003, p. 18). This suggests that the English language has not only been a mere facilitator of this phenomenon, but also at the forefront of the globalisation process, hence, an active agent and a vector of globalisation.

So far the thesis explored the spread of English as a global language and the main factors that contributed to this phenomenon. This, therefore, strongly suggests that the global spread of English, and TEFL, cannot be separated from certain complex historical, socio-cultural and ideological issues. Thus, it seems pertinent to focus on how language issues also relate to religion by specifically focusing on the relationship between Islam and Arabic and Christianity and English.

1.1.3 Language and Religion

Ethnic and religious identities often play a very crucial role in peoples’ lives as they “are bound up with our deepest beliefs about life, the universe and everything” (Joseph, 2004, p. 172). According to Johnston (2003, p. 89) “beliefs about religion are among the most profoundly significant parts of identity” because they stem from what touches the “foundation” or the deepest insights of oneself. Furthermore, religion has historically been closely related to language to the extent that both aspects seem to be intertwined (Sawyer, Simpson, & Asher, 2001; Spolsky, 2003). Moreover, religion and language often act as a catalyst of unity and popular cohesion and sometimes transcend national identities, but paradoxically, they can also be a source of division (Joseph, 2004). In former European

¹ Because globalisation is a field of study that is not confined to one particular discipline, there is much debate as to what the term really means. In the popular discourse, the term is often perceived in economic terms as the over-dominance in our lives of big global multinational firms (Mooney, 2007) while others understand the phenomenon as the expansion of the neo-liberal free market economy along with the immense technological advances that have recently taken place. According to Couture (2005, p. 1), globalisation is a concept that “transcends border, removes territories”; it relates to a worldview that conceives the world as a “unique place, thanks to the modernisation of the means of circulations of wealth, goods, ideas and people”. For Giddens (1990, p. 64), the term refers to “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa”. All these conceptions are by no means contradictory; rather, they all participate in constructing a meaningful representation of this phenomenon, which suggests that the concept of globalisation should not be narrowed down to one particular approach, worldview or conception. Instead, it appears that this phenomenon should be considered as multifaceted and multidimensional insofar as it is closely tied to a number of economic, sociological and political implications.

colonies, the movements of independence and the rejection of the language of the coloniser often went hand in hand with a strong desire to promote the local language and revive religious values. For example, in the case of Algeria, a former French colony, the use of the French language was imposed by the French authorities who kept a tight control over the teaching of Arabic and Islamic studies. Arabic language and Islamic values then served as a major catalyst to the emergence of independence movements and the rise of national identity (Mostari, 2005). Similarly, with reference to another Muslim country, Malaysia, the Islamic revival movement was also accentuated by a linguistic revival characterised by the rejection of the English Language and the affirmation of a distinctive Malay linguistic identity (Pennycook, 1994; Ozog, 1989). Nevertheless, it is worth emphasising that one of the features of language movements is that they have traditionally been associated with various ‘symbolic’ elements that carry this identity uplift, which means that the intrinsic features of a language cannot be attributed to language or religious revival movements (Edwards, 2009). Historically, there have been strong connections between particular languages and religions, such as, for example, English and Christianity or Arabic and Islam; the following sections shed light on these two religions/languages and examine the extent to which they are bound to each other.

1.1.3.1 English and Christianity

The Gospels were initially written in Greek but when Christianity rapidly spread throughout the Roman Empire and became its official religion, Latin became the only liturgical language for Christians in Western Europe until the reformation. The Roman Catholic Church later encouraged the use of vernaculars but Latin was still used for liturgy (Sawyer et al., 2001), which therefore suggests no intrinsic connection between English and Christianity. It was not until the sixteenth century and the expansion of the British colonial Empire coupled with the work of English-speaking Christian missionaries, who considered the preaching of Christianity and spreading the ‘Word of God’ across the globe as an obligation, that the first connection between English and Christianity can be established (Pennycook, 2005; Sawyer et al., 2001). In addition, colonial education played a decisive role in strengthening the ties between English and Christianity. According to Pennycook (2005, p. 140), certain learned clerics from the Church considered spreading the English language along with Christianity throughout the world as a religious duty and that “English and Christianity were indelibly linked”. This may explain why English was often perceived as the language of Christianity by local indigenous populations in former British colonies since the first contacts with the

English language were through Christian missionaries or the English translation of the Bible. More recently, there has been growing interest among certain Christians¹ to use TEFL as a platform for missionary work. The increasing demand for EFL teachers coupled with the growing global status of English have greatly strengthened the involvement of Christian missionaries who see TEFL as an opportunity to attract new converts to their faith (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Robison, 2006; Varghese & Johnston, 2007). Using ELT to covertly –or overtly– spread Christianity has raised ethical concerns (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Varghese & Johnston, 2007) as the very nature of this ethical dilemma questions fundamental values (Varghese, 2007). Moreover, another concern is more of an ideological nature; since the events of 9/11, missionary work has been increasingly tied with broader political and ideological aims. As a matter of example, the ‘war on terror’ launched by the United States administration and the consequent military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan seemed to have strengthened the ties between the Christian right wing and the State. At the level of discourse, the religious connotation of the ‘war on terror’ has given missionary work a greater political and ideological dimension. Thus, the current political context and the focus of missionary work on Muslim countries is certainly not neutral, but on the contrary, ideologically and politically supported by an American Christian expansionist worldview (Pennycook, 2005; Pennycook and Coutand-Marin, 2003).

The above has argued that whilst no intrinsic connection can be established between English and Christianity, it appears that this relationship can possibly be the source of certain tensions. With respect to the Arabic language and Islam, it has been argued that the two languages entertain a particular relationship which partly explains why, as mentioned later in the thesis, concerns have been voiced with regards the threat posed by the spread of the English language to Arabic and Islamic values and identity. This is an issue particularly relevant to the study as briefly explained the section below.

¹ Especially evangelical Christians

1.1.3.2 Arabic and Islam¹

Although translations of the Quran and the Hadith are now available in many languages, there is almost a sacred relationship between the Islamic religion and the Arabic language for three main reasons. First, the Quran granted Arabic language a prestigious status since its revelation: “Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran in order that you may understand” (Holy Quran, 12:2). Arabic is also described as a “perspicuous Arabic tongue” (Holy Quran 26:195). In other words, for Muslims, Arabic has been “favoured” by God Himself for His revelation (Ahmed 1975; Suleiman, 2003). Second, most ritual acts of worship such as the five daily prayers, supplications and incantations are performed in Arabic; therefore, it is a unique liturgical language for Muslims around the world regardless of their nationalities, cultures and languages. As a result, learning the Arabic language is considered as a religious duty by many classical as well as modern Islamic scholars² such as, for example, Ibn Taymīyah (n.d.)³ who insisted on the role of Arabic in preserving the Islamic faith: “one of the only ways to preserve this religion [i.e. Islam] and its knowledge is by preserving the [Arabic] speech, so [speech] became part of the religion⁴”. Third, based on a number of reported narrations⁵, the importance of Arabic in the Islamic faith has also been stressed by Prophet Muhammad himself.

Based on the above, there seems to be an interconnection and interdependence between these two elements, the Quran and the Arabic language: without the Quran, the Arabic language would not have gained this status in the Arab world and throughout the Muslim

¹ Islam originated from the Arabian Peninsula more than fourteen centuries ago, in the seventh century in the wealthy commercial city of Makkah. This religion started with the revelation of the Quran, the Islamic Holy book, to Prophet Muhammad, a local Arab man from the city of Makkah. According to historical accounts, the Quran was revealed to Muhammad in Arabic over a period of twenty-three years (Hussain & El-Alami, 2005 n.d.). By 750 CE, Islam had conquered vast territories from Spain to the Indian subcontinent (Coulson, 1964; Robinson, 2010). The Quran was revealed in Arabic and Prophet Muhammad spoke Arabic; the reports and narrations of Prophet Muhammad, his acts and sayings –Hadith– were originally written in Arabic following his death (Hussain & El-Alami, 2005 n.d.). The rapid Arab expansion meant that the Islamic realm had within its borders a great variety of languages, cultures and religions (Coulson, 1964), which accentuated the need to teach and learn Arabic.

² According to Al ‘Ayid (n.d), the status of Arabic has been granted by the Islamic religion and Muslims need to learn Arabic in order to acquire basic Islamic principles: “Had the Muslims not been in need of learning Arabic in order to understand the Prophetic traditions and the Quran, the language would have been forgotten, [...] and since Islam spread in many parts of the world most of which populated by non-Arabs, it became a necessity for these populations to learn the Arabic language for the principles of their religion and the prophetic traditions are in explained in Arabic” (p. 170). [trans.]

³ A medieval Islamic scholar

⁴ My translation

⁵ Despite the doubts that can be cast on some of these narrations in terms of authenticity and reliability (Ibn Taymīyah n.d.), there is a consensus among the Islamic religious scholars of the Sunni tradition that learning the Arabic language is a collective duty for the community but it is also considered as an individual obligation for the one who wishes to specialise in Islamic theology and law (Ahmed 1975; Al ‘Ayid n.d.; Ibn Taymīyah n.d.; Suleiman 2003).

world.

Having briefly presented broad issues pertaining to the global spread of English and the relationship between English and Christianity and Arabic and Islamic, the thesis narrows the focus from the global dimension to the local perspective by focusing on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) which represents the context where the above issues were explored.

1.1.4 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is often called in Arabic Bilad Al Haramain, the land of the two Sacred Mosques, in reference to the two holiest religious sites in Islam, the grand Mosque of Makkah and Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in the city of Madinah. According to the Saudi Government official website (Saudi National E-Government Portal n.d.), Saudi Arabia is a large country that covers most of the Arabian Peninsula with a population of more than twenty-seven million inhabitants amongst which eighteen million are Saudi nationals¹. The country is an oil-rich monarchy² where around 98% of the population are Arabs and 99% are Muslims. Despite the country's increasing exposure to foreign culture, in particular to Western culture, the influence of Arab Bedouin traditions remains strong and Islam governs almost every aspect of life (Aldosari 1992; Elyas 2011).

As a result of the economic growth of the KSA and the huge income generated by the petrochemical industry over the past three or four decades, all aspects of society have been affected by the socio-economic and political changes that occurred in the country (Al-Rasheed 2002; Yamani 2000). Since its beginning, the KSA education system³ has witnessed extremely radical changes and more than thirty years ago, the various educational changes and reforms that took place were already described by Saleh (1986, p. 17) as "almost unparalleled in history". The higher education sector grew, for instance, from only one university in 1957 to thirty-three in 2012 among which 24 are public (Ministry of Higher Education n.d.).

Furthermore, the English language is increasingly playing a central role in the education system especially at university whereby all universities have recently adopted English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) for scientific subjects, engineering and medicine, which can

¹ The rest of the population is made of foreign expatriates than count for about 25% of the overall population.

² This monarchy is governed by the Al Saud family, from which the name of the country is also derived, all of whom are descendants of the founder of the country in its modern form, King Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud (1876-1953).

³ The establishment of the KSA modern education system dates back from the beginning of the 20th Century when King Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud formed the Directorate of Education and the Educational Policy in 1926 (Elyas 2011).

be considered as an example of the ever growing importance of the English language in the KSA. As a result, the demand for EFL teachers in the KSA has dramatically increased. Although there is much debate around this issue, research suggests that the implementation of EMI can pose a threat to the local language and values (Abu Zayd 2000; Al-Jarf 2008; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2001; Troudi 2009) and may have a negative impact on students' achievements (Brock-Utne 2007; Marsh 2006) especially if this particular language policy is implemented without considering the future impact and implications on professionals and students (Nunan 2003). Nevertheless, despite the implementation of EMI and although English is widely spoken in the KSA, it has not reached the status of a second language and remains a foreign language for all Saudi students for whom the first and official language is Arabic.

Bearing in mind the above contextual issues, the next section moves on to clarify the focus of the study by articulating the nature of the research problem and how it relates to the current body of knowledge.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As explained earlier, the English language has now acquired a global status and there is a growing awareness among researchers and practitioners of the socio-political and ideological implications of this phenomenon. A number of scholars have argued that ELT around the globe is not a merely neutral activity but it has negative impacts on various aspects of society including education, language and culture (Canagarajah, 1999; Karmani, 2010; Kazmi, 1997; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992b, 2008, 2009; Troudi, 2007, 2009). Nevertheless, knowledge of the English language has now become an essential tool to access knowledge, which is particularly vital in academic and business circles (Crystal, 2003; McLaren, 2011). Nowadays, the need for English is so great that it is "sought as a talisman of success and an entry ticket to the good life" (Holly, 1990, p. 16). As far as the KSA is concerned, it has been argued that the spread of English has not always been perceived by the local populations as a tool of westernisation (Al-Abed, 1996; Elyas 2008, 2011; Elyas & Picard, 2010). Furthermore, the mere denunciation of the global spread of English as a new form of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), has been criticised for its deterministic nature (Canagarajah, 2000) and the current discourses around ELT and the global spread of English can sometimes be perceived as remote from the lived realities of the teachers because they address issues at the macro level while most teachers in their day to day practice live with practical, micro level issues and may sometimes act by mere pragmatism regardless of the

wider political or ideological issues relating to TEFL. Likewise, simply praising global English and ignoring its value-laden aspect seems disconnected from the reality of the lives of many individuals for whom English can also be a barrier, acting as a gatekeeper to jobs and education.

Although it can be argued that Robert Phillipson's linguistic imperialism paradigm reflects a somewhat deterministic vision of hegemony, it cannot always be described as remote from teachers' realities. The fact is that, for Phillipson, most voices that oppose this vision are actually from within the profession and actively involved in hegemony; therefore, "it is within the context of hegemony –where the hegemonic beliefs and values are 'under continuous contestation'–that we may see the possibility of change" (Phillipson, 1992a, p. 76). In other words, Phillipson seems to encourage ELT professionals to reconnect with the wider issues and understand that their profession is closely tied with ideological issues that reproduce a hegemonic situation.

Another problem inherent to the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) arena, relates to the relative lack of awareness among many professionals in regard to the wider sociological and political contexts in which they teach, which seems to limit the boundaries of the profession within purely technical, instructional considerations. As a result, ELT professionalism is commonly understood as a non-political, non-religious concept which seems disconnected from wider issues. The dominant conceptions of ELT are still, for the most part, unconcerned with the ideological, societal and cultural implications of TEFL and the global spread of English (Karmani 2005f).

Moreover, having been employed as an EFL teacher in different parts of the KSA for several years, I have witnessed a significant number of Western Muslim teachers in the profession working in the Gulf region. In the KSA, the many Western Muslim EFL teachers I have met, either seem attracted by lucrative job opportunities, but also by religious ones such as living in an Islamic country and performing religious duties like the pilgrimage to Makkah, which may appear somehow contradictory i.e. the lucrative and the religious. In addition, although this assumption is not based on any empirical evidence but on personal observations, it seems that a significant number of Western Muslims enrol in TEFL courses attracted by the prospect of getting jobs in Muslim countries. This explains why on the internet, many more 'Islamically-oriented' UK or US-based websites and discussion forums provide help and advice to prospective Muslim EFL teachers willing to work in Muslim countries and very

often advertise TEFL jobs and even TEFL courses¹. Although to my knowledge there is no empirical study stating the main motives of Western Muslim EFL teachers for coming to work in the KSA, for many of them the Islamic faith seems to play a significant role in this phenomenon.

Besides, the presence of Western Muslim EFL Teachers in the KSA represents in itself a phenomenon intertwined with many social, educational and even philosophical issues. Western Muslim EFL teachers seem to belong to two different groups that can sometimes be perceived in the mainstream media or in the folk culture as in opposition or in conflict: the West on the one hand, often associated with the term “Judaeo-Christian” in the Western Media (Hartmann, Zhang, & Wischstadt, 2005), and Islam on the other. The recent tragic events of 9/11 are yet but another example used to portray a supposed opposition between the West and Islam (Saikal, 2003). Moreover, due to their cultural backgrounds, Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA appear even more likely exposed to conflicts and dilemmas as many of them are Native Speakers(NSs) who have been precisely employed for that reason (i.e. portray a certain image of the West and the culture associated with the English language) and could be torn between their belonging to Islam, their professional practice and their cultural identity.

Furthermore, they may have become active agents of the process of spreading English in a Muslim country and at the same time seek through TEFL a way to promote their religious wellbeing by traveling, sometimes emigrating or performing Hijrah, from Western, non-Muslim countries to the Muslim lands and the holy sites. With regard to this situation, Pennycook (2005) discusses with Suhail Karmani how Muslim teachers, students and scholars can address similar potentially problematic situations resulting from the spread of English in Muslim countries and raises a fundamental question:

The hard question, it seems to me, is how Muslim teachers, students, scholars and writers can acknowledge their complicity with English and globalisation and find a way not of simply opposing English but rather of appropriating English for Islamic purposes (p. 163).

By highlighting what could be perceived as a paradoxical situation that may expose some Muslims to value conflicts, Pennycook calls on Muslim ELT professionals, and other stakeholders directly concerned with TEFL, to reflect on their position amidst the socio-political issues connected with the global spread of English. Therefore, more importantly,

¹ Such sites include, for instance, Hijrah to Allah (n.d), Job Opportunities - Hijra.Net Forums (n.d).

Muslim EFL teachers need to address these complex processes and open new ways in which they can combine their Islamic faith with their profession.

Broadly speaking, as teachers, the nature of our profession exposes us to value conflicts and many of us have been in situations where our values and beliefs become questioned or in a situation of conflict (Johnston, 2003). Teachers are first and foremost human beings whose actions are embedded and rooted in values and beliefs (Bergem, 2006; Edge, 1996; Johnston, Juhász, Marken, & Ruiz, 1998) that can be inspired by faith and religion; therefore, investigating this issue would represent a great benefit for the development of teachers and for language practice in general (Johnston, 1998). Also, it is worth emphasising that one of the principles that informs this study is the belief that our decisions as teachers are very often beyond the pure cognitive level and occur at the level of beliefs and values even if most of us are unconscious of it (Bergem, 2006; Campbell, 2003; Johnston, 2003; Johnston et al., 1998); religious faith, as well as other moral systems, constitute powerful sources of conduct for individuals. Islam, for instance, provides its followers with a set of beliefs and principles that act as a guiding framework for their conduct. Within the Islamic tradition, individuals ought to act in adherence to the Divine Law as highlighted in the Quran and the Prophetic traditions and many contend that Islam is said to transcend personal subjectivity (Carney 1983; Coulson 1964; Reinhart 1983). Nevertheless, certain principles may also be interpreted and affected by matters of personal judgements and individual subjectivities, or dependent on socio-cultural conventions.

The study, therefore, raises a fundamental question for many teachers in the profession, particularly those involved in TEFL abroad: considering the complex socio-cultural, ideological and religious issues related to the profession, what are the implications of TEFL and the global spread of English for the role and position of Western Muslim EFL teachers involved in these processes?

1.3 Significance of the Study

In raising the above question, the study has the potential to make a significant contribution to the growing interest among researchers on the relationship between faith and language teaching (Bradley, 2011; *ELT and Christian Faith*, 2012; Edge, 2003a; Johnston, 1999; Lessard-Clouston, 2008; Mair, 2003; Pennycook, 2005; Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Varghese & Johnston, 2007; Wang, 2009; Wicking, 2012). More specifically, Edge (2003a) and Varghese and Johnston (2007) focused on the connections between English teaching, religious beliefs and missionary work and highlighted how this causes a number of moral or

ethical dilemmas that relate to some of the dominant discourses that surround ELT. Furthermore, this problematic relationship has triggered a particularly interesting scholarly work in the form of a dialogue between Christian English teachers and critical educators (Wong & Canagarajah, 2009). Nonetheless, as far as Islam is concerned, very few studies have been carried out; Mogra (2010) qualitatively studied how spirituality was reflected in the lives of Muslim teachers in the UK, while Mansour (2011) explored Egyptian science teachers' views on science and religion within the framework of Islam. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have focused on the relationship between the Islamic faith and language teaching in general and EFL in particular. Also, despite the fact that they have not been studied as a group or as a distinctive entity within TEFL practitioners at large, Western Muslim EFL teachers in general and Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA in particular form a growing community whose values, beliefs and attitudes are potentially a subject of interest for research since the values and beliefs that inform language teaching have seldom been addressed in the literature although they represent a great benefit for the development of teachers and for language practice at large (Johnston et al., 1998).

Therefore, it is hoped that this study can shed light on matters of importance to a wide range of TEFL stakeholders, such as EFL teachers, students or administrators. That in mind, the study has the potential to make a significant contribution in four main respects. First, the results of the study can play a role in helping Muslim EFL teachers relate the macro-level theoretical discourses and educational policies to the micro level of classroom practice. By connecting the theoretical perspectives on ELT in the world in general, and particularly in the KSA, the study attempts to contribute to the ongoing debate concerning the role played by TEFL in that region. In addition, the study hopes to raise awareness among Muslim educators in the KSA and other Muslim countries of the wider complex processes intertwined with the global spread of English and its impact on education with particular reference to EFL education. Third, the study seeks to shed light on a number of ethical questions in relation to how Western Muslims who have travelled to Muslim countries perceive the relationship between their faith and their role as EFL teachers in light of the implications of TEFL and the global spread of English. Finally, by providing new insights into the field of religion and language teaching in general and Islam in particular, the study seeks to open new horizons and ways in which Muslim professionals can combine their faith with their profession.

1.4 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Based on the above premises, since our actions as teachers are largely informed by beliefs and values (Bergem, 2006; Campbell, 2003; Johnston, 2003; Johnston et al., 1998), it seems important to understand how Islamic beliefs inform, shape or influence EFL teachers' professional practice. Therefore, the study seeks to highlight how these principles, beliefs and values impact on the life of Muslim teachers by investigating the relationship between their Islamic faith and their role as EFL teachers in light of the current critical discourses on ELT and the global spread of English. It seems essential to uncover or discover the values behind their choices, actions and behaviour as Muslim teachers from the West.

The current study also seeks to delve into the issues present at the micro level of the professional practice by investigating how some discourses on ELT are perceived by those who are directly concerned with this issue at the level of the classroom realities: EFL teachers. The idea of a perceived gap between theoretical discourse and the world of the teachers is examined from an Islamic perspective; therefore, the study investigates whether Muslim EFL teachers associate the global spread of English and TEFL in the KSA with certain values and ideologies and how, in light of their Islamic faith, they perceive the relationship between Islam and TEFL. Thus, it is hoped that the study will achieve the following purposes:

- (1) to relate some of the ELT discourses to the realities of TEFL professionals who are directly concerned with this issue
- (2) to examine the views of Muslim EFL teachers with regards the values underpinning ELT and the global spread of English with particular reference to the KSA
- (3) to explore possible ways for Muslim TEFL professionals to use –or appropriate– ELT in accordance with Islamic values and ethics
- (4) to shed light on how Muslim EFL teachers deal with possible value conflicts within their professional practice and provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own practice in dealing with value conflicts
- (5) to investigate the influence of the Islamic faith on various aspects of TEFL professional practice

In order to fulfil these purposes, the study aims to investigate two main areas: (1) the relationship between Islam and TEFL, and (2) the perception of the global spread of English and the role of TEFL in this phenomenon from the perspective of Western Muslim EFL teachers. With this in mind, the following research questions have been formulated:

- (1) How do Western Muslim EFL teachers view the global spread of English in general and in the KSA in particular, and why?
- (2) How do Western Muslim EFL teachers view the role that TEFL plays within these processes, and why?
- (3) How do Western Muslim EFL teachers view the relationship between TEFL and Islam, and why?
- (4) How do Western Muslim EFL teachers manage the relationship between TEFL and Islam, and why do they manage it in this way?

The above chapter introduced the thesis by providing contextual information in relation to the main issues of concern for the study. The spread of English as a global phenomenon was briefly highlighted as well as its main factors. In addition, the relationship between language and religion was examined with specific reference to Arabic and Islam and English and Christianity. What is particularly important to bear in mind is that the global spread of English cannot be detached from complex socio-political and ideological issues, which suggests that TEFL may have a significant impact in terms of ideology, religion, culture or identity. As a result, it seems hard to ignore the possible negative impact of the spread of English in terms of local culture, language and identity. With respect to the KSA, where Arabic and Islam are essential components of society, English seems to be playing an ever growing importance, especially in education, which may pose a number of problems in terms of Arabic and Islamic identity. What is particularly interesting is that, based on a critical perspective, as EFL teachers, many Western Muslims may be actively taking part in the spread of English, which may confront them to a problematic situation as active agents of westernisation and hegemony. Based on the above background information, it seems particularly relevant to critically examine the wider implications of the global spread of English and TEFL and the relationship with the Islamic faith. Therefore, the study's conceptual framework is built around fundamental notions that are discussed through reviewing the relevant literature in the following chapter.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The writing of this thesis was partly inspired by prominent ELT figures in ELT and applied linguists, such as Phillipson and Pennycook to cite but a few, whose work contributed to raising the awareness of educators regarding the implications of the global spread of English and TEFL. As explained earlier¹, the factors that contributed to the global spread of English strongly suggest that the English language has neither become a global language because of any particular intrinsic features nor due to the number of its speakers, but mainly because of the power held by its speakers. As pointed out by Crystal (2003, p. 7), the close “links between language dominance and economic, technological, and cultural power” are essential criteria to determine what a global language is, which he defines as a language that “develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (p. 3). Therefore, the link between power and language should not be looked at from a purely linguistic perspective, but it is essential to take into consideration various socio-cultural, economic and ideological aspects. It is also fair to say that there is amongst researchers and ELT practitioners a greater awareness of the implications of the global spread of English, which has been the source of diverging positions in the field of applied linguistics in general and TEFL in particular. The global spread of English can be described as a multifaceted phenomenon given the variety of discourses, approaches and paradigms that address this notion.

As a result, given the importance of the nature of these discourses for the study, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss some of these discursive approaches from a macro level perspective by focusing on Phillipson’s (1992b) linguistic imperialism paradigm that is probably one of the first attempts within applied linguistic circles to take into account all the historical, socio-political and ideological implications of the global spread of English as well as its implications for TEFL. More specifically, the first two sections of the chapter critically examine Phillipson’s view and presents alternative discourses on the issue. In addition, the chapter discusses the implication of global English for education, with a particular focus on language education policy and EMI. Furthermore, by discussing the relationship between language and culture in EFL settings, the study argues that TEFL and the global spread of English act as vectors of values and beliefs that affect the TEFL profession at its heart, which

¹ See section 1.1.2

may be the source of value conflicts for a number of teachers. Thus, the chapter briefly discusses the pedagogical implications of the global spread of English for ELT with the spread of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach which seems embedded in Western conceptions of education. Finally, the chapter explains how these issues can be problematic for the profession by focusing on the native/non-native divide and the relationship between English and Islam.

2.2 Linguistic Imperialism

Robert Phillipson can be credited for being one of the first to have raised questions regarding the global spread of English, which has triggered great scholarly work in the field of applied linguistics (Abbas, 1993; Bisong, 1995; Canagarajah, 1999, 2000; Macías, 1996; Modiano, 2001; Pennycook, 1994; Zughoul, 2003). Nevertheless, it would be unfair to ignore the valuable contribution of French sociologists and linguists such as Gobard (1976) and Cassen (1978), who well before Phillipson (1992b), critically examined how the English language served as “vehicle of American imperialism” and how the spread of English was the source of “linguistic alienation”. In his book, “Linguistic Imperialism”, Phillipson (1992b, p. 47) puts forward the idea that the global spread of English and TEFL are embedded in a new form of imperialism that he calls ‘linguistic imperialism’ which he defines as “the dominance of English [...] asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstruction of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages”. It should be noted that he actually questions the functions of the English language rather than its nature; he points out how historically, Great Britain and the USA have tried –and managed so to speak– to impose one single language at the expense of others. In a different publication, Phillipson (1992a, p. 53) describes linguistic imperialism as “a distinct type of imperialism” for language is a powerful “medium of transmitting ideas” and, therefore, in his view, a vector of imperialism.

The dominance of the English language over other languages through problematic and unequal power structures has also been labelled by Skutnabb-Gankass (1988, p. 13) as “linguicism” which refers to “ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language”, cited in Phillipson (1996, p. 437). Unlike other forms of discriminatory practices that differentiate on the basis of race for instance, linguicism takes a very different shape since language becomes the criterion for discrimination and the reproduction of unequal power structures

(Phillipson, 1992a).

Phillipson's fundamental argument stems from the idea that the actual global spread of English and ELT cannot be described as purely value-free, neutral activities, but on the contrary, as politically driven, value-laden processes closely tied with "economic and ideological aspects" (1992a, p. 49). In the same way that English provides access, it also denies access and maintains established, unequal power structures (Master, 1998). Even Graddol (1997, p. 38) who does not subscribe to Phillipson's thesis acknowledges that proficiency in English is "too often used as a gatekeeping mechanism" which may also "be used as a screening mechanism for scholars submitting papers to international journals". For Phillipson, the theoretical foundations of ELT are intricately tied up with political and economic aspects mainly serving the interests of the UK and the USA.

According to him, the ELT industry contributes "to the reproduction and distribution of political, economic and cultural power" (Phillipson, 1992b, p. 58), which is based on five unquestioned principles that he calls *fallacies* (1992a, p. 185): (1) the monolingual fallacy: "English is best taught monolingually" (p.185), (2) the native speaker fallacy: "the ideal teacher of English is a NS" (p.193), (3) the early start fallacy: "the earlier English is taught, the better the results" (p.199), (4) the maximum exposure fallacy: "the more English is taught, the better the results" (p.209) and (5), the subtractive fallacy: "if other languages are used much, standards of English will drop" (p.212). All these tenets –or fallacies– are interconnected and embedded in an Anglo-centric worldview that strengthens unequal power relations between the "core English speaking countries" (i.e. Great Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and the "periphery-English countries, mainly composed with former British colonies.

At the level of language policy, Phillipson (1996, p. 429) has also been at the forefront in condemning what he calls "the diffusion-of-English paradigm" as opposed to "the ecology-of-language paradigm". A monolingual English-only policy has been extremely profitable – in capitalistic terms– as the learning and the teaching of English, often at the expense of other languages, is a preponderant economic asset for the British economy at large and particularly for EFL textbooks publishers, language learning centres and TEFL professionals of all kinds given that in the context of globalisation, the current global financial and economic mechanisms welcome the use of a 'common' language.

Based on Phillipson's paradigmatic approach, three arguments have been put forward in support of TEFL around the world: the belief of the linguistic superiority of English, the

great amount of teaching and learning resources available and finally, the fact that English is a useful language that can be used for a wide variety of purposes. Some of these arguments seem justifiable given, for instance, the availability and the worldwide presence of publications and pedagogical and media resources such as English-language channels, websites, radio broadcasts or newspapers. In addition, the demand for English is so intense that, indeed, the functional argument is a reality that cannot be ignored; TEFL is actually fulfilling an existing need in many parts of the world.

Nonetheless, the idea of deliberate involvement of the UK or the USA in promoting the global spread of English as a means to perpetuate imperialism and unequal power structures does not suffice to fully comprehend the situation. Earlier in the thesis¹, it was briefly explained that the English language had also been used to counter hegemonic colonial powers whereby English-educated people became a key element in the struggle for independence in many former colonies. The role of English in this process was instrumental as it was part of multiple strategies: “a strategy of reinterpretation [by] providing new meaning for dominant discourses to suit one’s own interests and ideologies” (Canagarajah, 2000, p. 125), “a strategy of accommodation [by] invoking English and its discourses to accommodate their vested interests” (p. 127) and also a “strategy of appropriation” (p.128). Furthermore, Phillipson’s argument consists in condemning the discursive effects of the spread of English on people “accepting the ideological positions in support of English” (Pennycook, 2000, p. 114) which in itself sets the limits to Phillipson’s idea:

Phillipson does have things to say about discursive effects but they are not so much about the effects of the spread of English as about the effects of the ideological support for the spread of English. The spread of English is more a result of the discursive effects, rather than the discursive effects being a result of the spread of English.

In other words, Phillipson’s thesis is extremely pertinent to explain how the spread of English is a deliberate process from powerful countries such as the UK and the USA, how it relates to complex global forces and also how linguistic imperialism “permeates the five main dimensions of imperialism” (Dissanayake, 1993, p. 348) namely, the economic, political, military, cultural, social and communication dimensions. Nevertheless, this paradigm seems to oversimplify the ideological effects of the spread of English by implying a direct relation between English and imperialism or hegemonic ideology. That is also why, because

¹ See section 1.1.2

Phillipson's linguistic imperialism paradigm mainly addresses global, macro level processes, it has been critiqued for being "too impersonal" (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 41) and for lacking "a sense of agency, resistance, or appropriation" (Pennycook, 2000, p. 114). So what are the actual alternatives for EFL educators who refuse hegemony? This question can be a source of inner tensions and dilemmas for many EFL teachers. As TEFL professionals, opposition to these problematic processes confronts us with a major paradox that can be hard to face: how can we oppose the global hegemonic spread of English and participate directly or indirectly in this phenomenon? This paradoxical situation has been questioned by Holly (1990, p. 18) in extremely vocal terms:

If we are to take seriously everything that is involved in the learning/teaching of English to non-native speakers, we cannot, I am certain, ignore the fact of hegemony, the dominance of one over all the other socio-economic-cultural forms, nor the historical fact that English has become the 'court language', the main ideological and administrative vehicle of that hegemony. There is I fear no choice for teachers of English as a non-native language: either they cooperate wittingly or unwittingly, in colonisation of the mind or they take measures to combat it.

Holly (1990) does not expand on the nature of the combat she refers to and the "choice", however, does not appear that simple for many educators. Likewise, can we not, as suggested by Hyde (1994, p. 303), use the EFL classroom to equip our students with the tools "to deal with the cultural and ideological pressures from the outside world"? It seems necessary to go beyond the somehow deterministic idea of linguistic imperialism and encourage EFL educators to become engaged in resisting the hegemonic processes inherent to the spread of English.

In that respect, the critical applied linguistics (CALx) stance goes a step further insofar as it seeks "to oppose the dominant discourses of the West and to help the articulation of counter-discourses in English [to] resist the hegemonic ideologies of English [...] despite the power represented by the language" (Canagarajah, 2000, p. 131).

2.3 Critical Applied Linguistics (CALx)

The concept of CALx arose in reaction to mainstream applied linguistics and the growing need for research to address and question the role of the English language around the globe and its relation with wider socio-political, ideological or even ethical issues. In that respect, CALx is intimately connected with critical theory which is ontologically rooted in the assumption that we live in a world of pain and suffering resulting from unjust relations of power and that change can be brought about through consciousness (Freire & Ramos, 1970) and a sharp critique of all forms of inequalities. In other words, CALx integrates the philosophical tenets of critical theory into applied linguistics but “is far more than the addition of a critical dimension to applied linguistics” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 9); it is a way of thinking and doing applied linguistics. CALx is therefore by nature deeply political since it fundamentally seeks to relate language issues to the broader sociocultural, political and ideological sphere and views social relations as problematic in regard to language-related issues. Although the relation between language and society has somewhat been addressed by mainstream sociolinguistics (Candlin & Widdowson, 1988), CALx “goes beyond mere correlation between language and society and instead raises more critical questions to do with access, power, desire, difference, and resistance” through, notably, questioning these relations within the framework of critical theory thinking (Pennycook, 2001). In addition, a major aspect of CALx is its constant scepticism towards common, well-grounded assumptions about language related issues (Pennycook, 1999). CALx views these mainstream established premises as “givens” that should be constantly problematized and questioned (Pennycook 2001, p. 7).

Based on the above premises, Pennycook (2001) goes beyond Phillipson’s idea of linguistic imperialism insofar as he does not simply acknowledge the hegemonic processes inherent to the global spread of English and reproduced by TEFL, but insists that ELT/EFL educators should be politically and critically involved in opposing the dominance of Western-centred approaches in TESOL. Most particularly, these approaches to TEFL are predominant in many academic institutions, which does not only reflect a mainstream technical, non-political, non-ideological conception of ELT, but also a disinterest of the implication of these issues for language teaching. In other words, ELT professionals ought to counter these powerful forces by first reconnecting the profession with all these fundamental issues and provide an alternative “critical pedagogical project” (p. 87) through becoming critical, political educators at least at the very level of our teaching practice.

It is also fair to say that the above-mentioned dominant apolitical discourse is extremely present in many, if not most, universities across the Arab world, and particularly in the Gulf countries including the KSA (Karmani, 2005f). This discourse can also be widely observed in their policies and practices pertaining to TEFL. More specifically, such an attitude towards the spread of English and TEFL in education is reflected in their language education policy, notably with the implementation of EMI at university, as highlighted in the next section.

2.4 Language Education Policy and EMI

The status of English in the international educational arena has immensely increased over the last few decades and its role as a global language has had far reaching implications in terms of language policy (LP). More specifically, with regards educational policy, the English language is not only a form of instructional content –when taught as a discrete subject– but also acts as a vector and agent of content.

While language educational policy (LEP) is specific to educational contexts (Shohamy, 2006), LP has been defined as a “means by which the government or other public bodies seek to influence or to change elements in the language itself, in language use or in status of a language” (Amara, Mar’i, & Mar’i, 2002, p. 1), or simply as “decisions people make about languages and their uses in society” (Shohamy, 2006, p. 77). The concept of LP is not limited to official statements, document or declared policies but it exists in other forms and expressions such as hidden, unofficial or implicit ‘de facto’ policies or practices (Ricento, 2006; Shohamy, 2006). In that respect, educational practice plays a preponderant role in the success of any given LP to the extent that top down declarations at the level of policy often get into conflict with bottom up forces at the level of practice and implementation, which represent the true LP that is often reflected in the practices of a given community. From a critical standpoint, these conflicts can also be viewed in light of wider power issues insofar as authority decides *what* language should be used or *how* it should be used. This suggests that such decisions on language use are not neutral and serve as agents to promote political or ideological agendas (Tollefson, 2006) so that curriculum, content, and material become vectors of ideology. This directly relates to a fundamental characteristic of the spread of the English language: it is inextricably tied with wider socio-political, historical or ideological issues. Moreover, since language is regarded as one of the expressions of freedom, interfering in the forms of these expressions poses a threat to a fundamental right in the case of language use: the freedom to use one’s mother tongue (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Shohamy, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2006).

Likewise, the global spread of English in the education arena can be illustrated by the implementation of EMI around the world; in the KSA, for instance, the government has been recently reshaping its LEP by launching reforms in the EFL curriculum¹. Although Arabic remains the official language of instruction in all government schools, private schools can use EMI and most universities have now adopted EMI for scientific subjects. In addition, all universities in the KSA now require secondary school graduates to complete a preparatory year that consists of intensive EFL instruction prior to pursuing their higher education in the medium of English; this system is also in place in other neighbouring Gulf countries (Findlow, 2006; Karmani, 2010; Troudi, 2007, 2009). To account with the phenomenon of the spread of English in higher education in the Arab world Zughoul (2003, p. 21) notes that “the spread of English in the Arab world is so clear in the field of higher education” that “schools of science, engineering, medicine and business teach through the medium of English”.

The adoption of EMI in the KSA, in the Arab world and elsewhere have led a growing number of researchers to take a critical stance towards this trend (Abu Zayd, 2000; Al-Askari, 2002; Al-Bakri, 2013; Al-Jarf, 2008; Brock-Utne, 2007; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2001; Coleman, 2006; Findlow, 2006; Karmani, 2010; McLaren, 2011; Troudi, 2007, 2009; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). More specifically, Troudi (2007, p. 10) suggests that adopting a foreign language as a medium of instruction is detrimental to students as it adds “additional learning burdens” and Brock-Utne (2007) claims that EMI impacts negatively on students’ achievements. Furthermore, with particular respect to the Arab world, it has been argued that such LEP causes concern for Arabic language and identity (Abu Zayd, 2000; Al-Jarf, 2008; Troudi, 2009). In the KSA, as noted by Ras’Habbash (2011), there seems to be “contradictory discourses” with regards the place of English within the education system with the desire to promote EMI on the one hand and the strong will to preserve the local Arabic Islamic identity on the other. Interestingly, it appears that the adoption of EMI could potentially create a “linguistic cultural dualism” (Findlow, 2006). With particular reference to the UAE, Findlow (2006, p. 25) examined the impact of the various societal changes on higher education in terms of language use and representation and pointed to “the existence of distinct worldviews” with Arabic representing “cultural authenticity, localism, tradition, emotions [and] religion” and English embodying “modernity, internationalism, business,

¹ EFL is now compulsory from the age of eleven

material status [and] secularism”. This also suggests that worldviews are carried through the language.

Likewise, Abu Zayd (2000), a Saudi scholar, makes similar claims and others contend that the choice of a medium of instruction does not only have implications in terms of content material or recruitment of teachers, but more importantly, it is fundamentally tied up with the nature of the values to be transmitted (Byram & Risager, 1999 as cited in Findlow, 2006). This implies the existence of an implicit ‘hidden’ LEP in the form of an “unspoken curriculum” (Holly, 1990) whereby language serves as a vehicle of thoughts, values and ideology. This idea has been further developed by Karmani (2010, p. 87) who investigated the role played by EMI in the United Arab Emirates in socialising Arab students. His findings strongly suggest that EMI has a strong socialising effect on Arab students “by shaping their general views about the roles of English and Arabic”, which implies that EMI “acts as a kind of ‘hidden curriculum’ by instilling in students a sense of the proper role of Arabic and English in a modern university setting”.

Therefore, it seems particularly relevant to examine whether language education in general and TEFL in particular can serve as a vehicle of values, ideas or ideologies. To achieve this, the following sections argue that TEFL is inherently tied with a number of fundamental aspects including culture, ideology and educational values. In addition, the next sections present the debate among language educators with regards the place of culture in TEFL and how it relates to problematic ideological and educational issues.

2.5 TEFL, Culture and Values

2.5.1 Language and Culture

Prior to engaging on a discussion about the different positions on the question of the place of culture in language teaching, a brief overview of what is meant by the term culture is necessary. The task of defining such a rich concept is beyond the scope this discussion, but in order to clarify the term as it is used in this study, I will briefly refer to some of the most relevant definitions suggested in the literature. The etymology of the word culture (the Latin roots *cultura-cultis-colere*) indicates that it refers to what has been grown or cultivated (Kramsch, 1998; Merriam-Webster, 2004) that we acquire through time and space and through our interactions in society (Jabeen & Shah, 2011; Sariçoban & Çalicskan, 2011; Shah, 2012). The term culture also refers to “shared patterns of human behaviour” (Arabski, 2011, p. 263) including beliefs, language, customs and ideas; it can also be simply defined as “a way

of life” (Brown, 2007, p. 188). One of the fundamental features of culture is its multilayer nature as it relates to the “inner core” of the individual (Gao, 2006, p. 59), the beliefs for instance, and it is also reflected through outer manifestations such as language, acting as a “mirror to the culture” (Jiang, 2000, p. 328). In addition, culture appears to be a marker to which members of a group identify themselves and, therefore, holds a social or collective dimension (Jabeen & Shah, 2011; Sariçoban & Çalicskan, 2011; Shah, 2012). More importantly, it is worth stressing that belief systems are considered as a component of culture, which explains why ideology and values are often used interchangeably in the literature (Barrow, 1990; Lee, 2006; Ozog, 1989).

Moreover, applied linguists and anthropologists alike have differed on the nature of the relationship between language and culture. Amongst the most prominent theories that emerged is the linguistic relativity theory or the ‘Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis’ which states that our language shapes our worldviews and attitudes. According to this theory, we perceive the world through the expressions our language offers. In other words, “people speak differently because they think differently” (Kramsch 1998, p. 11); thoughts are subject to language, almost prisoners to language. However the extent to which there is a direct causality between the worldview of a particular culture and its language has been the subject of intense debate and criticism. Although it is widely accepted that language is closely linked to culture and that it is often seen as a fundamental marker of cultural identity and a vector of cultural transmission (Schiffman, 1996), accepting such a “strong version” (Kramsch, 1998, p. 13) of this theory or establishing a strict causal relationship between language and culture can easily result in various prejudices in general, particularly racial prejudices. However, a weaker version of this theory by establishing an “arbitrary” (ibid, p. 13) or “correlational” (Mekheimer 2011, p. 44) link between language and culture is generally accepted. The notion that “language use creates a map in the mind that filters experience” seems valid “as we don’t press the issue too far” (Lee, 2006, p. 68).

Following this brief theoretical premise, what seems particularly relevant to the current study is to examine the place of culture in TEFL; therefore, the next sections briefly review some of the relevant literature pertaining to this complex debate by shedding light on the dispute among language educators and researchers regarding the importance of culture in TEFL.

2.5.2 Language and Culture in TEFL

The relationship between language and culture in foreign language teaching in general and in TEFL in particular has been a subject of intense debate amongst researchers (Alptekin, 1984; Hyde, 1994; Jabeen & Shah, 2011; Jiang, 2000) as a result of the profession's increased awareness of the socio-political dimensions of ELT (Byram & Grundy, 2003). Foreign/second language educators differ on the place culture should hold in language teaching and learning as well as on its possible effects on the learner (Jabeen & Shah, 2011). Two main approaches have emerged: the first one advocating the necessity to integrate the target language with the target culture (referred in the thesis as 'the integration approach'), and the second one that insists on separating the two elements in the classroom ('the separation approach').

2.5.2.1 The Integration Approach

The first approach stems from the assumption that both elements cannot be separated from each other and that the teaching of a language is bound to include cultural aspects (Arabski, 2011; Sariçoban & Çalicskan, 2011) and that any attempt to separate the teaching of language from the teaching of culture is vain; elements of culture will occur almost naturally and there is "no way to avoid teaching culture when teaching language" (Joyce, 1990, p. 20). It occurs naturally and often unwillingly for it is present in everyday language use such as greetings or idiomatic expressions. Aspects of culture are so deeply entrenched in language that it cannot be separated from language teaching (Mekheimer, 2011; Sariçoban & Çalicskan, 2011); in other words, learning a language necessarily entails learning a culture, to the extent of acquiring another identity, which is "at the heart of culture learning" (Brown, 2007, p. 195). Therefore, the target language should reflect the target culture.

These assumptions imply that NSs would be more suited to teach English language in order to incorporate cultural references to the teaching of their own native language (Alptekin, 1984). Moreover, cultural competence is thought to be a facilitator of communicative competence, *the* main objective of the CLT approach, which is a prevalent "pedagogic model based on the NS-based notion of communicative competence" (Alptekin, 2002, p. 57). This idea of acquiring a new identity (Brown, 2007) is central to CLT; learners need to become English, to act English and to think English throughout the learning process. From a strict CLT perspective, a successful learner will have acquired new cultural references "reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers" i.e. NSs (Alptekin, 2002, p. 58).

Another argument in support of this approach includes the idea that integrating culture in language teaching facilitates cross-cultural understanding (Adaskou, Britten, & Fahsi, 1990; Elyas, 2008; Gao, 2006; Jabeen & Shah, 2011; Sariçoban & Çalicskan, 2011). By getting acquainted with the target culture, students raise their cultural awareness of the English speaking country, which enhances mutual understanding and reduces the spread of stereotypical representations and misconceptions. This point has been empirically reported by research; for instance, in the specific context of the KSA, two studies (Elyas, 2008; Mekheimer, 2011) revealed that students had positive attitudes about the target culture associated with EFL (British and American culture). Elyas (2008) conducted a quantitative study amongst Saudi university students and concluded that most students opposed “the idea of separating the learning of English and the culture” (2008, p. 43) and believed that learning the language with the culture was “necessary in order to develop their English comprehension” (2008, p. 45). Furthermore, in a qualitative study with a proficient, high level Saudi university student of English, Mekheimer (2011) explored the effects of being exposed to the target culture and reported that his participant’s acculturation –the extent to which he acquired a new culture– had a positive impact on his academic achievement and that “his awareness of the English culture [...] helped him to form a positive attitude towards learning English” (2011, p. 48). In a similar context, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in a quantitative study amongst seventy-five male and female students, Hudson (2011) reported that a vast majority of his respondents believed “it is important to study the culture of the English speaking country” when learning English. These findings seem to suggest that stripping English from its cultural content presents the students with a partial view of the English language, which could be detrimental for their learning experiences.

Beyond the evident relationship between language and culture, the validity of some of the arguments of the above-mentioned approach can be questioned especially in the current context of English as an international language (EIL). Using the NS model as a socio-cultural norm is problematic as it can no longer serve as a normative standard in terms of linguistic competence and cultural reference. Nowadays, NSs of English represent a minority of speakers of English, which means that most communication in the medium of the English language occurs between NSs and NNSs or amongst NNSs (Badger & MacDonald, 2007; Crystal, 2003; Jenkins, 1998, 2006, 2007; Phan, 2008). Therefore, the question of culture becomes problematic considering the fact that English language can now be associated with a multitude of cultures (Alptekin, 1993, 1984; Badger & MacDonald, 2007). As explained below, this approach is primarily based on using the NS model as a normative reference,

which has far reaching ideological implications.

2.5.2.2 TEFL and the Native Speaker Model

It has been argued that despite the absence of definitional and conceptual coherence in the term NS (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Cook, 1999), the NS/NNS dichotomy is not always referred to based on linguistic elements but often on ethnic or cultural ones. This notion, and the subsequent NS/NNS dichotomy, is surrounded with certain misconceptions as the term NS “represents not a linguistic construct but a socially constructed identity based on cultural assumptions of who conforms to the preconceived notion of a native speaker.” (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999, p. 416).

The monolithic normative conception behind the use of the NS model appears to be problematic in terms of its validity in the context of EIL and the NS/NNS dichotomy has a number of serious implications for many TEFL professionals. The notion of NS has often been associated with a number of misconceptions and stereotypes many of which are constructed or reproduced by the TEFL profession. Furthermore, despite the great socio-cultural diversity that characterizes the field of TEFL/TESOL, stereotypes and discrimination are so deeply rooted in the field that it has been described as “all-pervasive” affecting “gender, class, race, language, religion, nationality and ethnicity” practised by “people everywhere [...] knowingly or unknowingly” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 715). The field of TEFL seems to be reproducing these stereotypes at the level of discourse and practice in relating whiteness with the NS construct, thus leading to privileging certain groups or oppressing others. This stereotype, portraying all NSs as white, has been addressed by Shuck (2006, p. 259) who clarifies how ‘nativeness’ is perceived in the USA in relation to ethnicity or skin colour: “Caucasians retain a privilege widely perceived to be a natural outcome of certain characteristics thought to be intrinsic to Americanness, nativeness (in English) or Whiteness.” Amin (1997) reports that similar stereotypes and preconceived assumptions are held by certain language learners about their teachers including the idea that NSs can only be white.

Furthermore, NS teachers of EFL get access to better hiring opportunities and possibly increased salaries while the EFL teachers not identified as belonging to that group are being marginalised professionally (Canagarajah 1999). This constitutes the reality of many NNS teachers of EFL who suffer various forms of discrimination around the world in general (Amin, 1997; Davies, 2003; Holliday, 2006; Holliday & Aboshiha, 2009; Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997; Liu, 1999; Phillipson, 1992a; Ruecker, 2011) and in the Gulf region including

the KSA in particular (Ali, 2010). Ali's (2010) account of the current discriminatory practices in the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC), including the KSA, is particularly striking. She critically examined how the discriminatory practices of many GCC institutions overtly perpetuate a form of "linguistic elitism" (Nayar, 1994) by privileging Western NS teachers of EFL over NNS teachers and "consequently marginalizing an entire group of teachers from non-Western countries" (Ali, 2010, p. 37). As a matter of example, the many job offers advertised on the internet for the recruitment of EFL teachers in the KSA are overtly favouring NSs over NNSs regardless of qualifications or professional experience; NNS EFL teachers become the victims of the "native speaker fallacy" (Phillipson, 1992b).

This dichotomous conception that consists in portraying the Western NS teacher as the model vis-à-vis any "other group which is imagined to be deficient" (Holliday & Aboshiha, 2009a, p. 670) has evident ideological implications. According to Holliday (2009a, p. 671), this bipolar, dichotomous conception is rooted in the "ideological structure of the profession that teachers can be either unaware of it or ignore it". Due to the global and powerful prominence of English in the world scene, it has been argued that TEFL promotes certain conceptions and worldviews with regards Western –core English speaking countries– and non-Western countries. For instance, the spread of English in education has led to portraying the Western world as "repositories of knowledge" (Tollefson 1991, p. 97) and models of modernity. In addition, the promotion of CLT by many countries and educational institutions as "the most modern and productive way to teach English" (McKay, 2002, p. 110) has led to pushing forward the NS model as *the* model of 'communicative competence' and language proficiency. As a result of a greater awareness of the implication of integrating culture in TEFL, some have argued that TEFL should not be associated with such cultural references as explained in the section below.

2.5.2.3 The Separation Approach

The second approach with regards the place of culture in the EFL classroom is rooted in the assumption that TEFL should be independent from any sort of cultural references from the 'foreign' NS's country. The main argument in favour of removing cultural content in EFL instruction is based on a critical perspective of TEFL and the rejection of what has been perceived as the hegemonic nature of TEFL and because of the ideological elements it may contain. In other words, TEFL is thought to be a vehicle and a vector of mainstream Western ideologies that is often a source of tension with local cultures. According to Holly (1990, p. 11), English has become "the social vehicle, par excellence, of imperialism-old style and new

style” and that teachers, sometimes unwillingly, become the agents of “hidden” or “unspoken” curricula. This idea was also emphasised by Auerbach (1995, p. 9) who suggested that EFL practitioners reproduced often unconsciously invisible “dynamics of power and domination” through their pedagogical approaches and their choice of materials. According to her, “mechanisms of power are embedded in both the content and the processes of ESL [English as a second language] pedagogy” (1995, p. 28) and “the hidden curriculum in ESL education, [...] attempts to inculcate uniformity and Western cultural values in the guise of language education” (Master, 1998, p. 718).

Problematic situations between Western cultural values and local cultures have been observed in research within particular contexts involving Muslim students and teachers. In the case of the KSA for instance, Elyas (2011) reported how some Saudi EFL teachers feel that Islamic principles and values are in conflict with “Western decadence” (p. 222) and how some materials used in the EFL classroom could “harm [their] Arabic identity” (p. 226). Some of his participants expressed concerns regarding the content they described as being “full of Western ideologies foreign to [their] society” (p. 227) and end up censoring the material in order not to teach what they regard as “anti-Arabic/Islamic thinking” (p. 227). Elyas concluded that the students’/teachers’ exposure to Western cultural values in the material was a source of tension for some teachers and educators. The tensions and conflicts perceived by the participant of this study reveals that the remotely designed material in use by many TEFL professionals ignore local particularities. This explains why certain countries, including Saudi Arabia, “impose restrictions in educational and cultural domains to protect [their] way of life” in order not to have their “own culture totally submerged” (Alptekin, 1984, p. 15).

However, it is worth questioning whether the KSA EFL learners “are so different” that TEFL can possibly “re-orientate the view of life they have gained through the acquisition of their native language?” (Barrow, 1990, p. 5). Moreover, why should we assume that the cultural content of the language and the values inherent to TEFL are fundamentally different from those of our students? Moreover, it seems rather simplistic to narrow the term Western cultural values to what can be referred to as ‘surface’ elements such as the ones encountered in EFL course books. What seems particularly relevant to this study are not so much the salient features of the language but the hidden unspoken forms of culture inherent to it such as beliefs, values and ideologies and other problematic issues that lie, for instance, in the new modes of behaviour that TEFL entails; the following section sheds more light on this issue.

2.5.3 TEFL and Western Modes of Learning

Beyond what can be described as ‘surface’ cultural issues pertaining to apparent and outward cultural manifestations such as greetings, festivals, foods or clothing, the main concern of this study lies in the extent to which the cultural values and worldviews transmitted through language teaching can become problematic. At the pedagogical level for instance, as mentioned earlier, the spread of the CLT has led to promoting the teaching of certain aspects of Western culture in more subtle ways. The CLT approach seems particularly significant to this study because it has been promoted around the world as a successful methodology that appears to be dominant in TEFL in terms of materials and course books (McKay, 2002). In addition, and more importantly, this approach has been criticised for “referring chiefly to mainstream ways of thinking and behaving” (Alptekin, 2002, p. 57) and for imposing on students “Western modes of communication which may not be in harmony with the traditions of some cultures—including modes of learning” (Alptekin, 1993, p. 139). Also, as pointed by McKay (2002, p. 121) “many of the tenets of CLT reflect the characteristics that are often attributed to Western cultures of learning, namely, individualism, creativity, self-expression, and social interaction.” Minimal experience in teaching Arab students can provide evidence as to how Western modes of learning, such as, for instance, collaborative learning, can be difficult to implement in a culture that views the teacher-learner relationship from a totally different angle and where “the role of the students and/or receivers of knowledge ‘is’ to learn from the imam or teacher by listening attentively, willingly, and exclusively to him” (Elyas & Picard, 2010, p. 138). A number of aspects inherent to CLT have been described as not “culturally sensitive” (McKay, 2002, p. 112) and some researchers have questioned its cultural appropriateness in EFL settings (Ellis, 1996). The impact of Western mode of learning and the subsequent tensions this may cause in the classroom is quite visible in EFL settings; however, quite surprisingly, in the KSA, CLT has been unequivocally adopted by both the Ministry of Education and by many higher education institutions and EFL learning centres (Ras’Habbash, 2011).

Having examined how the spread of English can also be associated with the spread of certain values which may be the source of tensions, it seems pertinent to explore the relationship between TEFL and the spread of English and Islam. The study focuses on the relationship between Islam and the teaching of English from the perspective of Western Muslim teachers working in the KSA; therefore, the next section examines whether or not TEFL and the spread of English can be a source of tension with Islam and Islamic values and principles.

2.6 English and Islam or English Vs. Islam?

The growing importance of English in education in some Arab countries including the KSA raises concerns in regard to local Arabic and Islamic values due to the particular bond that exists between Arabic and Islam. In addition to what has been explained earlier in the thesis¹, the Arabic language does not only serve as a “unifying bond of the Arab world” but also “shapes and moulds that world” (Morrow & Castleton, 2007, p. 202). This is particularly true for a country like the KSA where all Saudi nationals are Muslims and Arabs and where Arabic is the only official language and Islam the official religion of the state and its people. Among those who have raised concerns regarding the place of Arabic in education and the impact it has on Islamic values, Morrow (2007) has been extremely vocal in warning against the “peril” facing what he calls “the Allah Lexicon” (i.e. the Arabic language). According to him, because the Arabic language and the Islamic faith are inseparable, the various language policies in place in the Arab world resulting from globalisation and the global spread of English constitute a threat to Arabic and Islamic identity. He also explains how historically, this bond was clearly understood by those who sought to “undermine Islam [or] eliminate Islam through the elimination of Arabic” (p. 202) by either attempting to secularise the teaching of Arabic, detaching it from Islam or simply prohibiting its use and its teaching. According to him, Arabic language is under attack from a semantic as well as from a religious aspect. More specifically, he fears that the Arabic language is the target of “cultural, semantic, and political imperialism” (p. 207) from the West. Furthermore, an earlier study by Coffman (1995) conducted amongst Algerian university students to investigate the differences between students educated in Arabic and in French in terms of their attachment to Islamic principles concluded that the language of instruction significantly determined students’ attachment to Islamic principles. In other words, education in Arabic resulted in an increased attachment to Islam. By extension, these findings seem to suggest that if the spread of a foreign language negatively affects the use of Arabic, this would result in Arabic and Islamic values being threatened.

On the other hand, despite the intrinsic connection between Arabic and Islam, even amongst critical thinkers –Pennycook and Phillipson for instance – there are disagreements as to the possible threat that the spread of English poses to Arabic language in the Arab world. For Phillipson, despite his harsh critique of the global spread of English, it “seems very

¹ See section 1.1.3.2

improbable that English can in anyway challenge the position of Arabic” in the region (Karmani, 2005e, p. 245). On the contrary, although he does not see in English an “immediate threat”, Pennycook in Karmani (2005b, p. 158) believes that due to the nature of the relationship between Arabic and Islam and given the “ideologies that come with English”, Arabic and Islamic values can be threatened.

Likewise, the problematic ties between ELT and Christian missionaries have accentuated an already existing feeling of mistrust amongst certain Muslims towards the English language. It is important to bear in mind that there is a history of conflict between the West and Islam as well as between English and Islam; both *words* –English and Islam– have often been associated with conflicting *worlds*. As explained earlier, in many colonised countries, a strong connection has often been made between English and Christianity as the first contact with English was through Christian missionaries. As a result, the rejection of Western colonial domination was often associated with both, Islamic religious revival and linguistic revival; hence, the rejection of the coloniser’s language (Pennycook, 1994). In a study conducted among Malay university students, Ozog (1990) explains that the suspicion of Muslims towards English medium education was mainly due to its historical connection with Christian missionaries and because of a certain feeling among many Muslims that English education could “lead to a conversion to Christianity” (p. 308). According to him, by rejecting the English language, some Malays reject “Western ideas and practices” while some extreme views contend that English is a non-Islamic language. Ozog also reported that according to his participants, the English language can be the vehicle of non-Islamic or Anti-Islamic values associated with Western culture. Likewise, the teaching of English has been the source of concern for second language educators in Morocco (Adaskou et al., 1990; Hyde, 1994) and in Pakistan (Mahboob, 2009) in terms of its potential source of conflict with Muslim worldviews.

In addition, the growing pressure on some Muslim countries to revise their curricula has been understood as yet another way to reinforce the teaching of English in Muslim countries often at the expense of Arabic and Islamic education. In that respect, the KSA educational system was the source of increased suspicion from the American administration after the events of 9/11 and after a number of “reports were raising doubts on the role of the education system in producing Islamic extremists” (Elyas 2008, p. 29). Karmani is one of the only Muslim applied linguist that has specifically addressed this issue in a number of publications (Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d); according to him, a great amount of

pressure was exerted on certain Muslim countries to reform their educational curricula because they supposedly foster Islamic radicalism:

Since the dramatic events of September 11, 2001 an extraordinary unprecedented degree of pressure has been mounting on Muslim governments to reform educational curricula, the underlying belief being that current educational systems in place in the Muslim world were partly responsible for motivating the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (Karmani, 2005a, p. 262).

For Karmani, this constitutes the rationale for an on-going “battle between English and Islam” (ibid, p. 262), which mainly occurs through secularising education and promoting “more English and less Islam”. Karmani quotes a Washington Post article where Glasser (2003) praised how the Gulf state of Qatar, a neighbouring country of the KSA, was on the way to “modernization” and “reform” that would “turn Qatar into a model state for the Persian Gulf of the future.” What is most surprising about that article is how the author draws a parallel between the American occupation of Qatar military bases and the USA “influencing classrooms in the homeland of Islam”. For Glasser, “modernization” occurs through “learning less Islam and more English”, remaking the English programmes and “making way for more hours of English” and finally, “cutting back” Islamic studies and Arabic classes. This article clearly reflects the “linguistic and political anxieties around the influence of English on Islam” (Charise, 2007), most particularly in the current context of “the war on terror”.

The American-led “war on terror” has not only occurred on a military, ideological or political front, but also on a “linguistic front between English and Islam” (Karmani, 2005a, p. 262) via the subsequent pressure on Muslim countries to revise their educational curricula. Edge (2003a, p. 703) corroborates this idea and draws a parallel between the hegemonic attitude of certain English speaking countries –the USA and the UK– demonstrated by their overt military presence in the Middle East and the role of EFL teachers who are compared to “a second wave of imperial troopers” in reference to the Medieval Crusades, which suggests that TEFL is becoming the vehicle of a certain idea of Western foreign policy imposed by means of military power (Edge, 2003b). As explained above, the events of 9/11 provide a political explanation for this apparent opposition between English and Islam which justified the need of some Western countries to reform educational curricula that were perceived as promoting anti-Western feelings among Muslim students (Elyas, 2008; Mac Farquhar, 2001; Prokop, 2003), particularly in the KSA, and introduce ‘more English and less Islam’.

In the KSA, TEFL has often been the source of tension with regards Islamic values especially for the religious elite. In a sociolinguistic study among students, teachers and religious officials, Aldosari (1992) reported that religious officials had “reservations” with regards introducing EFL in the curriculum. Likewise, he showed that the Saudi “traditional Islamic community” was showing signs of resistance towards EFL teaching and learning because of the influence of “the religious community on the educational affairs” and because of the Saudis’ “traditional tendencies towards exclusion of non-Arabic culture” (p. 128). Moreover, according to Aldosari, some religious officials feared that “a wholehearted commitment to the study of any foreign language other than Arabic [...] and the culture of the people who speak it may endanger the Arabic language and the Islamic culture” (p. 132). Likewise, more recently, another Saudi scholar, Abu Zayd (2000), in his book on international schools, expressed very similar fears for the Arabic language with regards the English language spread in education, notably in the form of EMI, which he holds to be responsible for introducing “foreign” ideas into young Muslims’ minds. Abu Zayd believed that the English language can be the source of tension with Islam by diminishing the role of the Arabic language in the education system, which can affect Islam at its core because of its intrinsic connection with Islam and its sacred nature in the eyes of Muslims. According to him, it is essential to preserve the bond between Muslims and their religion through the Arabic language which is the language of their Holy Book and their Prophet. Similar ideas were expressed by a high-ranking religious official in Qatar, who warned that “using a foreign language as its medium of instruction will produce a generation alienated from its Islamic roots” (Anonymous, 2009)

The above raises a number of questions for Muslim EFL teachers with regards their role as educators; can TEFL be adapted to suit the needs and the specificities of Islamic societies? Or, as pointed by Karmani (2005f, p. 738) “can English really serve Islam, or conversely, can Islam be forged to serve English”, or “can English be forged to make it Islam-friendly?” (Mahboob, 2009, p. 177). These are some of the core questions raised by this study.

Before attempting to find solutions to the above issues, it seems pertinent to take a closer look at and question the above-mentioned perception of the tension between Islam and English. This apparent conflict between Islam and English is partly due to the Western cultural or ideological elements carried through the language and because, for historical reasons, the English language has often been associated with Christian missionary work. However, this supposed opposition often implies a clear dichotomy between English and Islam, almost an intrinsic incompatibility between the two while one of the direct results of

the spread of English and the growth of the Muslim populations in English speaking countries is that English is now the first language and the only language of instruction of many Muslims around the world. In this context, opposing English and Islam without taking into account this essential element does not tell the whole picture.

Moreover, it seems necessary to question this dichotomous conception that views the Western world and Islam, or English and Islam as two polarising forces, or two polarised worlds. Nevertheless, the mere use of these two notions, Islam and the West, with the aim of discussing their relationship is in itself an extremely delicate issue. In reality, these two notions are far too broad and complex to even attempt to examine and label them as two separate notions; therefore, and contradictorily, this attempt to demystify and critique a supposed antagonism between them may also be perceived as an acquiescence of this imagined conceptual and essential opposition. However, by explicitly addressing the complexity of these notions, it is hoped that this brief discussion achieves its purpose, that is, questioning this essential dichotomy. Nonetheless, this dichotomous worldview seems to be rooted in several assumptions about culture, cultures and the world at large. First, due to the fact that the West can be regarded as a major dominant political and cultural force in this world, this representation of Islam and the West is deeply rooted in a western-centric conception about our world whereby Islam would be perceived as essentially non-Western, geographically and ideologically distant from the West, hence portrayed as *the other*. This, therefore, reveals the ideological dimension of our representations of culture which often leads to “the demonization of a foreign other” (Holliday, 2011). In addition, this representation of Islam and the West also seems to stem from an essentialist conception of the world. In other words, Islam and the West are perceived as finite entities defined by cultural, geographical and ideological boundaries. As a result, these expectations of what the West and Islam ought to be direct our representations of these notions and the people that are thereby defined in terms of belonging to these worlds. This is not only true from a Western-centred perspective, but also from a non-Western perspective, which creates a certain reciprocal othering and demonization between Islam and the West. Nonetheless, escaping the constraints of these essentialist boundaries can be extremely complex because this conception is deeply rooted in our representations of the world and present in many aspects of our daily lives. Moreover, it seems very simplistic –or essentialist– to imply an unequivocal connection between the West and the English language. Indeed, although as explained earlier, the spread of English and TEFL are ideologically embedded in a Western imperialist outlook, equating English with the West does not entirely account for the

complexity of the issue. In addition, as briefly discussed earlier (see 2.5.3 above), one should not necessarily assume that the cultural content of the language and the values inherent to TEFL are fundamentally different from those of Muslim students (Barrow, 1990). Therefore, although it seems hard to deny that the spread of English is a deliberate process from powerful Western countries and that it is related to certain complex ideological processes, reducing English and Islam to this mere relationship implies an essentialist conception of the world that does not acknowledge for the complexity of Islam on the one hand and English language use on the other. Indeed, this would suggest a conflict between and imagined Judeo-Christian West and the Islamic world, which does not take into account the cultural, religious and social diversity of the West and its Islamic components (i.e. Western Muslims) and also the diversity of the English language with regards Muslim speakers of English. On the contrary, as further explained below, the imagined essentialist boundaries between Islam and English can also be perceived as uncertain and overlapping, which, paradoxically, seems to be one of the indirect effects of globalisation (Holliday, 2011). Moreover, although certain imagined boundaries may be defined by fundamental differences and specificities than cannot be ignored, it is important to stress on their ideological nature. As explained above, the events of 9/11 can be considered as an important historical landmark in the role played by TEFL in the process of demonization of Islam and its supposed opposition with the West (Karmani, 2005a; Edge, 2003a). It is also worth noticing that the Islamic nature of the Arab world became salient, or ‘suddenly problematic’ from a Western point of view, only after these events although there is long history of interconnection and influence between the Islamic civilisation and the Western world (Mignolo, 2012).

Furthermore, this assumption can be questioned from a mere Islamic perspective as the opposition between the teaching and learning of foreign languages has not been explicitly expressed in sacred texts nor has this been understood in such dichotomous terms by numerous Muslim Scholars. First, the Quran, clearly stipulates that the existence of languages and dialects is a manifestation of God’s will, as explained by Syeed (1989) in his approach to the “Islamization of linguistics”: “the Quran thus not only recognizes the existence of the diversity of languages as a manifestation of Allah’s will but also presents it as a challenge for research and understanding” (p. 547). Moreover, the Quran makes clear mention that prophets and messengers “who spoke the tongue of their people were sent so that they could make things clear to them” (Holy Quran, 14:4). Some Prophetic narrations also mention that Prophet Muhammad himself instructed one of his companions to learn foreign languages

(Hebrew and Syriac) in order to spread the message of Islam to non-Arabic speakers¹. Based on this, some religious scholars have recommended Muslims to learn foreign languages and share the message of Islam through translating, preaching or writing about the Islamic religion in other languages than Arabic. Some Muslim scholars have even expressed the view that learning a foreign language could be classified as “Fard al-Kifayah”, a communal obligation in Muslim legal doctrine², which means that some educated Muslims have the responsibility of learning and mastering certain foreign languages in order to acquire knowledge that can only be obtained in the medium of those languages. In the case of English, due to its importance in matters of knowledge and technology, this seems even more necessary. With particular reference to Saudi religious authorities, as the study directly relates to this country, although the issue is subject to debate among contemporary religious scholars, the opinion of the ‘General Presidency of Scholarly Research and Ifta’ and the ‘Scholars of the Permanent Committee for Ifta’ in the KSA is that that no clear text within the Islamic law points to the impermissibility of learning a foreign language. On the contrary, some Islamic sources seem to suggest it is permissible or even recommended and desirable especially for Islamic purposes such as preaching (“Fatawa Al Lajna Ad-Da’imah,” n.d.).

The above may explain why some teachers or applied linguists have even called for the “development and promotion of an Islamic English” (Dahbi, 2004, p. 629), in the form of “additional religious lexicon and new spelling rules for Muslim words” (2004, p. 629) or Islamisation of the language “in line with the [Muslim world’s] own intellectual and cultural needs” (Argungu, 1996, p. 331). The term “Islamic English” can be first attributed to Al Faruqi (1995) the he defined in his book “Toward Islamic English” as follows:

Islamic English is the English language modified to enable it to carry Islamic proper nouns and meaning without distortion, and thus to serve the linguistic needs of Muslim users of the English language.

Although Faruqi’s work with regards the Islamisation of English can be regarded as seminal, his concern is more of a lexical nature and does not really address the core ideological, political or spiritual issues at stake. Likewise, Mahboob (2009) focused on the impact of

1 Zayd Ibn Thabit is a companion of Prophet Muḥammad who is credited with a crucial role in the collection of the Quran. He acquired Arabic literacy and the Hebrew and Syriac script. He was also one of the Prophet’s scribes and wrote down Quran verses as well as letters to Monarchs outside the Arabic peninsula, acting as an interpreter to spread the message of Islam within non-Arabic speaking people (Lecker, 2012).

2. Translation from the Oxford Dictionary of Islam, edited by John L. Esposito. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e625> (accessed 13-Apr-2015).

Islamic values on the structure of the language without really addressing solutions to face this dualist conception with regards Islam and English.

Hence, it is essential to go beyond this idea of Islamic English and address the core ideological and spiritual elements that are at stake. This seems even more important given the disinterest in the field of applied linguistics and TESOL for these issues that are yet of utmost importance to many Muslim professionals –and possibly students too– who may find ways to re-conciliate or re-connect between the ideological, the professional and the religious domains. One way could be to warn and resist against the possible results of exposing Muslim EFL learners to the ideologically and culturally loaded nature of the spread of English and remove –or censor– materials that could be regarded as ‘offensive’ or ‘un-Islamic’. This involves “focusing student awareness on the ideology behind English discourse” by ensuring the language reflects “the local environment rather than an external one” in order to become “ideologically more under control” (Hyde, 1994, p. 298). In other words, censoring is not enough, as it implies avoidance rather than resistance or confrontation; rather, Muslim students and teachers ought to develop strategies to address the problematic expressions of TEFL by attempting to integrate English into an Islamic worldview and not simply associate it with hegemonic cultural and ideological expressions. In that respect, the Muslim EFL teacher’s role is preponderant in finding the right balance between equipping his/her Muslim students with the means to face this ideological pressure and at the same time filter the information they receive.

2.7 Summary

In the literature review, it was argued that TEFL and the spread of English could not be separated from complex ideological issues that can be a source of tensions at the level of practice for EFL teachers and students. The chapter focused on critical discursive approaches within applied linguistics with particular focus on linguistic imperialism and CALx with regards TEFL and the global spread of English as well as their implications for education and language education policy. The idea of linguistic imperialism appears pertinent to explain the hegemonic attitude of powerful countries such as the UK and the USA but it seems to oversimplify the ideological effects of the spread of English by suggesting a direct link between English and imperialism. CALx, on the contrary, adopts a resistance approach by opposing dominant Western discourses and suggest alternative solutions despite the power issues inherent to the spread of English. The chapter also reviewed the debate surrounding the place of culture in EFL teaching and learning and explained that TEFL can serve as a vehicle of ideology, most particularly Western-centred ideologies. In that respect, it is worth bearing in mind that the NS model has evident ideological implications as it based on a bipolar worldview that is still firmly rooted within the TEFL profession. Also, the dominance of CLT, for instance, promotes Western-centred approaches to thinking and learning which may be the source of conflict in certain contexts. Finally, the chapter highlighted the extent to which TEFL and Islam could be perceived as in conflict. The study argued that Muslim students and teachers ought to address the problematic expressions of TEFL by integrating English into an Islamic worldview, hence the crucial role of the Muslim EFL teacher in equipping students with the means to face ideological pressure in accordance with Islamic principles. The above chapter served as a theoretical basis to tackle the questions raised by the study while the next chapter presents the overall approach adopted throughout the research and articulates the strategies and procedures followed particularly in terms of data collection and analysis of the data.

3. Research Design

Having critically examined TEFL and the global spread of English in relation to the study, following this theoretical premise, the thesis moves on to present the ways in which this research was conducted in view of the questions raised by this study. The process of educational research can be described as a set of procedures whereby researchers raise questions and seek answers which should ultimately result in the increase of knowledge and understanding of problems related to education (Brown & Rodgers, 2002; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Ernest, 1994; Picciano, 2004). Based on this, this chapter presents three of the fundamental aspects of the current research: its philosophical underpinnings, methodology and methods of data collection and analysis. In addition, the chapter highlights how participants were chosen bearing in mind essential ethical procedures. Finally, the chapter presents how the research has been conducted in a trustworthy manner from a qualitative research perspective.

3.1 Philosophical Underpinnings of the Study

This study is rooted in several personal and philosophical assumptions about the social reality under investigation at the level of ontology and epistemology. The first assumptions relate to the question of ontology which broadly refers to the way in which a researcher views reality and the outer world; in other words, the ontological standpoint refers to the assumptions one makes about the outer reality and constitutes the starting point of any empirical social research (Cohen et al., 2007; Grix, 2004). More specifically, this research focused on the spread of English with particular reference to TEFL in the KSA through the lens of teachers with a particular religious perspective: Western Muslim EFL teachers. Many Western Muslim EFL teachers working in the KSA are NSs and their perspective on the spread of their language in the world and specifically in a Muslim country like the KSA is particularly interesting and valuable because they have been precisely employed to portray a certain image of the West and a culture supposedly associated with the English language. Furthermore, their ideas on the perceived relationship between the Islamic religion and their professional practice particularly interesting considering the problematic situation they may face. This is a fundamental philosophical aspect of the study insofar as the perception of this social reality was conceived as subjective and multiple whereby participants were considered as actors of the social reality. However, it is worth bearing in mind the clear distinction between the spread of English as a reality and the perception of this reality. The study was therefore interested in the social reality being Western Muslim EFL teachers' perceptions on

TEFL and the spread of English with particular reference to the KSA. As a result, two aspects emerged as a result of the ontological foundations of this research.

First, the research explored the global spread of English and TEFL in the KSA as perceived and filtered through the lens of the participants and the researcher. The main purpose of this investigation was not to carry out an empirical study on the global spread of English but to gain an in-depth understanding of how this reality was perceived by Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA¹. With this in mind, it was essential to uncover the issues present at the micro level of the professional practice as they seemed ignored in the macro-level discourses surrounding ELT and the global spread of English. Furthermore, the religious element seems to play an important role in shaping peoples' perceptions and attitudes as a number of researchers have described the relationship between TEFL and Islam as problematic (Abu Zayd, 2000; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005d; Mohd-Asraf, 2005); therefore, the participants being Muslims, their perspectives regarding the relationship between Islam and TEFL were particularly interesting.

Second, the perception of this phenomenon was conceived as existing through my own subjectivity and that of the participants and not as a distinct objective truth independent from the actors of the social world. Therefore, multiple perceptions of the global spread of English and TEFL emerged as a result of the variety of individual subjectivities. This reality was not considered as objectively true and unique; rather, it was seen as diverse and reflected by the different subjectivities of the participants. Also, all the actors of this particular social reality, including myself, the researcher, were considered as active participants; I was both an actor and an observer at the same time. As the participants might not relate to the Islamic faith in the same way, their conceptions of the relationship between TEFL and Islam were thought to be different too.

Furthermore, one of the purposes of the study was to investigate the relationship between TEFL and Islam from the perspective of Western Muslim EFL teachers; therefore, as far as the epistemological nature of the study is concerned –assumptions about the “knowledge-gathering process” (Grix, 2004, p. 63)– it is rooted in the belief that knowledge is a process in the hands of the participants. This epistemology can also be understood as a subjective

¹ English language use has been thoroughly studied by means of quantitative methods such as surveys and the reality of the global spread of English has already been investigated by applied linguists (e.g. Al-Abed, 1996; Braine, 2005; Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997, 2004; Mair, 2003; Nunan 2003; Phillipson, 1992a).

concept insofar as knowledge is not a dependent entity distinct from the participants but built and constructed by the 'knowers'. Throughout the research process, our understanding as researcher and participants became the criterion as to what was to be counted as knowledge. In other words, we –the researcher and the participants– contributed to constructing our understanding of the relationship between Islam and TEFL. The diversity of understandings and perceptions contributed to create meaningful representations of TEFL in the KSA and how it was perceived in terms of its relationship with Islam.

Different questions may require different methods and approaches, nevertheless, the above-mentioned philosophical assumptions reflect many of the tenets of the interpretive paradigm, often combined in the literature with constructivism (Creswell, 2009; Ernest, 1994; Richards, 2003). This paradigmatic approach conceives reality as not existing as such, but filtered and interpreted by individuals. This tradition questions the concept of objective reality and puts forward the idea that its existence is dependent on the observer. Based on this, there cannot be real correspondence between truth and knowledge; instead, knowledge and truth are referred to as created, negotiated consensus (Pring, 2000a), but not discovered (Richards, 2003). Interpretivists claim that reality is socially constructed by the interactions of individuals (Gage, 1989) and “facts are dependent on human agreement or acceptance” (Searle, 1995, p. 149).

It is worth mentioning, however, that at first sight, this epistemological tradition may be perceived as contradictory to Islamic teachings that view knowledge as emanating from Divine revelation. However, Islam views knowledge as either “from divine revelation or from the activity of the human intellect” (Halstead 2004) and encourages the pursuit of all forms of knowledge. Therefore, distinction should be made between Divine revelation¹ and knowledge produced and constructed by human beings. This distinction does not mean separation and absence of connection; rather, all forms of knowledge have a religious significance and provide Muslims with limits that serve as guiding principles. This seemed a particularly salient feature of the participants' representations of their perceptions of all the issues addressed by the study. Following the above-mentioned philosophical underpinnings of the study, the next sections sheds more light on the general methodological approach followed throughout the research.

¹ The Quran and the Prophetic traditions

3.2 Methodological Approach

Generally speaking, a clear distinction is made between the quantitative and the qualitative approach, which are often associated with particular philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2009) although they originally described types of data. The study adopts a qualitative methodology which refers to a “form of inquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them” (Anderson 1998, p. 126). This methodology is mainly based on the collection of non-numerical data (Punch 2009) and emphasises “the qualities of entities and processes and meanings” rather than “quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). It is also “an inductive form of inquiry” (Anderson 1998, p. 126) that focuses on research problems to which answers can be sought from participants “through exploration” (Creswell 2012, p. 16). Cohen et al. (2007, p. 167) provide the fundamental rationale for conducting qualitative research through their description of nature of educational settings that they depict as “a messy place, full of contradictions, richness, complexity, connectedness, [...] multi-layered, and not easily susceptible to the atomization process inherent in much numerical research.”

Therefore, considering the nature of the current study and its research questions, in light of its philosophical underpinnings and in order to gain a greater understanding of the research problem, the best suited approach was to establish what I called “channels of conversation and human interaction with actors of this phenomenon”; therefore, a qualitative approach was followed. This meant that I sought to study and “make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3); in other words, it was important to capture the representations of the views and perceptions of the participants. More importantly, because this research involved a close relationship with real individuals, it was important to raise a number of fundamental ethical considerations throughout the research. Thus, the next section clarifies how the research was conducted bearing in mind potential ethical issues and how it strictly followed ethical procedures.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Several ethical issues should be carefully considered when conducting educational research and since it involves collecting data about the people and from the people (Creswell 2009; Punch 2009). The term ethics has been simply defined as “guidelines or sets of principles for good professional practice, which serve to advise and steer researchers as they conduct their work” (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 64). This suggests that researching individuals and entering the private sphere of the human being and opening it to the public involves a constant reflection about the possible ethical issues that may arise from our decisions as researchers. This aspect is particularly true for qualitative research; therefore, the study followed very strict ethical procedures in terms of participants’ consent, anonymity and confidentiality as explained in the sections below.

3.3.1 Informed Consent

Although participation in this study was on a voluntary basis, all participants were asked to sign an informed consent form¹. Seeking consent is an essential step in research and it “should be ongoing and renegotiated between researcher and researched throughout the research process” (Birch, Jessop, Mauthner, & Miller, 2005, p. 53). Furthermore, it is the researcher’s duty to inform the potential participants regarding “the nature of the research, what would be required from their participation, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken and how it will be disseminated and used” (Bloor, 2006, p. 67). Therefore, participants were all informed about the nature, the purpose and the procedures of this research project. They were also fully aware that the interviews would be recorded and transcribed for the purpose of data collection and analysis. Participants were all assured that they could refuse to answer any question or request the recording to stop at any time. In addition, I ensured that the interviews’ times and dates were convenient for each participant and gave them the total liberty in choosing the times and dates they were most comfortable with. Finally, beyond the values that underpinned the ethical nature of the study throughout the research, it was also necessary to formally seek the approval of the Chair of the Ethics Committee at the Graduate School of Education of the University of Exeter² prior to collecting data from the participants. Another fundamental aspect inherent to the ethical nature of the study was to make sure issues of anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed;

¹ See Appendix 2

² See Appendix 1

this point is highlighted in the following section.

3.3.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

With regards the storage and use of personal data, participants were all informed that the data, that is, all audio and text, would be securely stored in my personal computer equipped with an up-to-date anti-virus software that only the researcher could have access to; this was essential to ensure that the participants' identities were protected. In addition, all identifiers that could give any indication of the participant's identity were also removed. Finally, participants were attributed pseudonyms to protect their identities and ensure confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell 2009; Punch 2009). In addition to issues pertaining to anonymity and confidentiality, further ethical concerns are highlighted below.

3.3.3 Ethical Concerns

I was fully aware that the content of the interview material may have been a possible concern for the participants; therefore, I needed to bear in mind two potential problematic issues. First, it is evident that talking to a stranger about your own life and discussing issues that relate to your personal beliefs is a task that not everybody is at ease with; therefore, I tried my best to break the barriers between myself as a researcher and the participant by constantly reassuring them with the confidentiality of the research. In addition, I was fully aware that investigating their worldviews, inner beliefs or dilemmas might cause distress or harm in some way, especially when addressing issues that relate to reconciling faith and professional issues.

Adhering to all the above ethical standards was fundamental in establishing a trustworthy relationship with the participant. Therefore, bearing in mind the above ethical issues was of paramount importance throughout the research but particularly when designing an instrument that would best assist the process of data collection, as explained in the next section.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Although the terms *methods* and *methodology* have often been used interchangeably in the literature, the “methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data-gathering” while the methodology’s main purpose is “to describe approaches to, kinds and paradigms of research” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 47)¹. In order to present the methods used in this research, the following sections describe the instrument of data collection and highlight issues relating to access and difficulties in the data collection process.

3.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Because the current study considered human interaction as a central element in the production of knowledge, interviews were chosen as the main tool to collect data (2007). Interviews commonly involve “the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 351). They constitute an effective tool to gain an in-depth understanding of the social world from the perspective of other individuals and open a window through which their thoughts and feelings can be observed and interpreted (Mears 2009). Interviews allow participants “to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 349). Because the focus of the study was on teachers’ views, perceptions and opinions, and also because in-depth responses were needed to describe the realities of the subjects, interviews appeared to be the most appropriate tool.

Semi structured interviews are not only an effective way of capturing meaningful experiences from the perspectives of the participants (Kvale, 2008), but also allow respondents to describe with great details their own experiences on a particular phenomenon. Also, collecting data using semi-structured interviews gave me the opportunity to explore whatever ways seemed appropriate during the course of the interview by way of probing or prompting, when needed, depending on individual responses in order to stimulate interviewees’ responses. In doing this, I could also give the participants the opportunity to develop in-depth, natural responses (Perry Jr, 2005; Richards, 2003). The use of checks was an important feature of the interviews that were conducted; upon closing each section, I often summarised the respondent’s answers using a few sentences in order to make sure my understanding of

¹ The term methodology has also been defined as: “the assumptions, postulates, rules, and methods—the blueprint or roadmap—that researchers employ to render their work open to analysis, critique, replication, repetition, and/or adaptation and to choose research methods” (Given, 2008, p. 516).

their responses was correct and also to give them the opportunity to confirm, clarify or rectify their answers. As explained in greater details in section 3.6.2, the interviews were conducted over a period of several weeks and lasted between one hour to one hour and a half. Some participants were interviewed several times to further the discussion about particular points they wanted to address.

3.4.2 Access and Difficulties

Although I favoured the use of interviews to collect data, I was aware of its potential pitfalls. From the early stage of designing the interview protocol to the conducting of the interviews per se, various issues that could potentially hinder the process of data collection needed to be addressed. From the start, it was of utmost importance not to be “deceived” (Creswell, 2012); designing the interview protocol was at times challenging as some of the questions seemed to be leading the participants towards preconceived ideas I held about certain issues. As pointed out by Creswell (2012, p. 218), “interview data may be deceptive and provide the perspective the interviewee wants the researcher to hear”. Indeed, the subjective nature of this type of research meant that my personal bias and influence could potentially lead the participants. During the interview I needed to ensure I refrained from pushing forward my own perspectives and directed the course of the interview towards answers I would want to hear. Data generated with answers I wanted to hear, instead of answers my participants wanted to say would have been ‘deceptive’. Likewise, the qualitative nature of the research also meant that, as a subjective researcher, it was essential to “submit” to the data and allow for the unexpected to happen (Holliday, 2010). Indeed, due to the constructivist, interpretive approach followed by the research, it was essential to allow the participants to arrive at their own interpretations and constructions even beyond the perimeters of the interview protocol and the research questions I had in mind. To avoid the above pitfalls, the first phase of the research was particularly useful as some of the questions were redesigned following the feedback of the participants to avoid ‘leading’ questions, as suggested by two participants, and let the participants express themselves ‘naturally’ without feeling guided towards a predetermined set of answers. Again, following the advice of a participant during the first phase, I made sure I waited for the participant to answer and think through their responses. For instance, when necessary, leaving ‘blanks of silence’ of five to ten seconds appeared to be very useful in making the participants feel less under pressure to talk and express himself. Another challenge was to find participants prior to the end of the academic year or shortly after. Many expatriate teachers travelled back to their home countries and did not report

back to work until the beginning of the next academic year. Therefore, gaining access to participants was quite difficult at this time of the year in addition to the fact that obtaining a visa to the KSA can be a complicated process. Finally, education being strictly segregated by gender, access to female participants was challenging as males and females are housed in different locations in all government and public buildings such as schools, universities, administrative buildings and even in private institutions; therefore, it was not possible to gain access to female participants. After having explained some of the challenges encountered, the next section sheds more light on the participants of the study focusing on the sampling strategy adopted to select participants.

3.5 Participants of the Study

The process of selecting participants for a research study –sampling– refers to “the activities involved in selecting a subset of persons or things from a larger population” (Scott & Morrison, 2006, p. 219). The nature of a study often determines the sampling strategy adopted by researchers, but it can also be related to the chosen method of data collection (Scott, 2006). Qualitative researchers do not aim at generalising findings to a population but seeks to develop “in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon” (Creswell 2012, p. 206); therefore, I opted for a sample purposefully selected (Creswell 2009, 2012; Marshall 1996). The idea of ‘purposeful sampling’, or ‘judgement sampling’, is to “select the most productive sample to answer the research question” (1996, p. 523). This study also used a procedure called ‘homogeneous sampling’ (Anderson 1998; Creswell 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994) whereby “the researcher purposefully samples individuals or sites based on membership in a subgroup that has defining characteristics” (Creswell 2012, p. 208). For this study, I selected individuals that could potentially provide the richest information and that could best provide insight to the research questions. I needed participants with specific characteristics and experiences that corresponded to the issues I was investigating; therefore, three main criteria were used to identify the sample: (1) participants had to be Muslims, (2) they had to be working in the KSA as EFL teachers, (3) they had to be ‘Westerners’, or commonly referred to as NSs of English. Potential participants were first contacted by telephone or through emailing friends and former colleagues as I already had some connections with certain EFL teachers in the KSA. As a result, ‘snowball sampling’ was also used in the participant selection process as some participants referred me to their acquaintances or colleagues.

The participants of the study were nine Western Muslim EFL teachers who at the time of conducting this study, were all employed in the KSA at different institutions. As explained

earlier, for ethical reasons, they were attributed pseudonyms. All of them were Muslims and NSs from the UK (Adam, Ali, Fareed, Mohammed, Nasser Osman and Sami), the USA (Abdullah) and Canada (Ahmed). Although the size of the sample varies from one study to another “there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry” (Patton 2002, p. 184). Several sizes have been suggested by researchers (Dworkin, 2012; Marshall 1996); however, because I focused on specific issues in depth, having a relatively small number of participants was sufficient to gain insights into the research questions as I did not intend to generalise results to a larger population. Nonetheless, despite the small size of the sample, the interviews generated extremely rich and complex data. It is therefore interesting to note that this study, with such a small number of participants, has managed to investigate the research problem with a level of detail and complexity that a much bigger sample, by means of a longitudinal study for instance, would have probably ignored. Therefore, and more importantly, in spite of the small number of participants, the results obtained by the research have provided new insights into the phenomenon of the global spread of English and TEFL in the KSA in relation to Islam that further studies will need to take into account.

Following the above-mentioned issues pertaining to the sample of the study, the thesis focuses on the procedures followed to collect data; therefore, the following sections highlight the two phases of data collection.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through interviews conducted in the KSA and the research involved a cyclic process that was mainly conducted in two successive phases: (1) the first set of interviews and (2) the second phase with the last set of interviews, as explained in greater detail in the section below. During both phases, interviews lasted between one hour to one hour and a half, were conducted in English, audio recorded, transferred electronically onto my personal computer and later fully transcribed. Before arranging the interviews, the purpose of the research as well as the main areas I was going to investigate with the participants were explained verbally and in writing using the participant information sheet¹. Prior to starting the interview, we usually had a short discussion –not recorded– in order to make the teachers feel at ease. Once teachers were ready to start, I asked them if they had any questions and sought once again their permission to record and reiterated ethical issues

¹ See Appendix 3

including their right to withdraw, their anonymity and the confidentiality of the information they would discuss¹.

3.6.1 Phase One: First Set of Interviews

The first set of interviews were conducted with three participants: Ali, Abdullah and Adam. Two participants –Ali and Abdullah– were interviewed face-to-face and one –Adam– through Skype². I was aware of the pros and cons of conducting the interview through Skype, but it could not be arranged otherwise due to the participant’s geographical location. During this first phase of interviewing, it was essential to explore with these participants the main issues of concern for the study in order to guide the research process and ensure the clarity and appropriateness of the questions raised and the topics addressed in the course of our discussions. This first phase of interviews also enabled me to identify possible areas that needed further explorations and it allowed me to judge whether the way in which interviews were conducted could possibly yield relevant data to provide insights into the questions raised by the study and generate the richness and complexity expected in a qualitative study like this one.

This first set of interviews resulted in several benefits as it showed that overall, the interview protocol had been carefully designed and that the questions were clear. Before conducting the interviews, a protocol had been designed to guide the discussion. In our discussions, participants usually talked about their personal and professional lives before and after coming to the KSA, which provided rich insights into their motives for coming to the KSA. Generally speaking, we discussed several issues that revolve around three main areas³: (1) the spread of English and TEFL and its impact, (2) the relationship between TEFL and the spread of English and Islam and (3) the perceptions of the participants’ role as EFL teachers in relation to their Islamic faith.

In all, between the first and the second phase, slight changes occurred to the way the interviews were conducted. First, I had initially planned to explicitly question the participant on their identity, but in the course of the introductory conversations, all of them addressed this point and made sufficient references to the way they identified themselves, so there was no need to explicitly address this issue during the second phase. In addition, when I discussed

¹ See Appendix 2

² SKYPE is a software that facilitates audio or video conversations over the Internet

³ See Appendix 4

with the participants the impact of the global spread of English and TEFL in the KSA, all without exception talked about the values they thought were associated to them; therefore, I felt there was no need to explicitly 'question' the participants about the values associated with TEFL. Another point that particularly caught my attention and revealed the cyclic nature of the process of data collection as well as the constructivist nature of the study was that when participants were asked about their views on the impact of TEFL on the KSA culture, the term 'culture' evidently appeared too hard to define and was perceived as a concept rather too broad to grasp. Indeed, this question appeared to be loaded with assumptions with regards culture and our perception of the KSA culture. However, in the course of the discussion with Adam, the first participant to be interviewed, it became clear that this question had to be rephrased. As a result, I thought it would be far more valuable and far less leading to discuss with the participants their conception of culture and then the possible impact of TEFL on what they may have understood as culture in their immediate context. In addition to making me aware of certain shortcomings and making minor modifications, the first phase enabled me to evaluate the average length of the interviews which lasted between an hour and an hour and a half. Following the first phase, I was able to design another guiding protocol, which would help me explore further certain issues with the participants during the second phase. As a result, it was possible to merge the data from both phases as explained below.

3.6.2 Phase Two: Second set of Interviews

This phase comprised of face to face interviews conducted with six participants: Fareed, Osman, Ahmed, Mohammed, Nasser and Sami. As during the first set of interviews, the participants introduced themselves and particularly talked about their motives for coming to the KSA. They also expressed their views on the global spread of English and TEFL with reference to their immediate context, the KSA. As in the first set of interviews, the discussions were centred on these the global spread of English and TEFL in the KSA. We discussed the relationship between Islam and TEFL and also the interconnection of the Islamic faith and their profession. Interestingly, during the second phase, I engaged in discussions and I was encouraged by the participants to share my views on the issues that were raised in the course of the interview. This was an extremely interesting exercise as it revealed even more the qualitative, constructivist nature of the study as the interviews turned to be far more open discussions rather than a mere interrogation session between an interviewee and the interviewer. On the contrary, the personal nature of the study and my

presence as a qualitative researcher became even more salient as in answering the participants' questions, I got an even greater sense that, all the way throughout the research study, I was taking an active role in this research. In addition, I listened –and transcribed when possible– each interview shortly after conducting it in order to identify the possible misunderstandings that may have occurred. For this reason, no more than one interview per day was conducted. Finally, transcripts were sent to participants to allow them to comment, critique or praise any particular aspect of the interview.

Having presented the two phases of data collection, the following section highlights the analytical framework adopted to make sense of the data in light of the paradigmatic approach of the study. More specifically, the section below explains how data were analysed following a descriptive, interpretive approach informed by the broader qualitative nature of the study.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis process followed an “interpretive-descriptive” approach which consisted in “assign[ing] basic labels to data to provide an inventory of their topics” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 66). The data analysis mainly aimed at “identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p. 79). With this in mind, the process of analysis of the interview data required a “close examination of the information [...] collected to find answers to [the] research questions” (Radnor 1994, p. 18); this overall process involved several consecutive steps. The first step was the ‘immersion’ whereby all interviews were transcribed; this enabled me to familiarise myself with the data. I listened several times to all the recordings in order to ensure the transcripts’ accuracy; this exercise was extremely useful to immerse myself even more in the data. All the audio recordings were transcribed electronically using a word processor and then saved onto a secure password-protected computer. The second step involved reading through the transcripts again and listing the main ideas or ‘broad categories’ that first emerged from the data. This process was inductive as I did not start with pre-set categories already formed although I was aware that the research questions guided this process of initial analysis. The third step consisted in reading the transcripts again and assigning ‘subcategories’ to the ‘broad categories’ already created, which referred to the particular issues raised by the participants. I then read the transcripts again to account for any unlisted category or subcategory and reduce the possible redundancy across the categories. The next step was the ‘coding’, which consisted in dividing the transcripts into meaningful smaller segments; this involved highlighting the relevant fragments of text –or quotes– and assigning them to the related category/subcategory. To

achieve this, two instruments were used: the 'Excel' spreadsheet software and a qualitative data analysis software, Nvivo. Excel was used to code the data from the first phase only while Nvivo was utilised to code all the data¹. The content of all the transcripts was coded in this way and all the categories/subcategories covered, bearing in mind to preserve the context of the data from which the text was taken. The following step involved reviewing all the categories and refining them by reading all the extracts attributed to each category/subcategory and judging whether the analytical pattern was consistent. To achieve this, I summarised the content of each category using one or two sentences; this was particularly helpful to ensure consistency and coherence among the categories (Braun & Clarke, 2008). Finally, an "interpretive statement" (Radnor 1994, p. 21) was assigned in the form as a brief introductory paragraph to present to each category. The above sections demonstrate that the successive steps followed in the process of descriptive analysis and the overall research procedures were meticulously recorded and reported, which is a sine qua non in qualitative research for guaranteeing the trustworthiness of a study, as further explained below.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the Study

In order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the study and that it was rigorously conducted, it is essential to clarify the criteria that are commonly used to evaluate qualitative research and how they have been addressed throughout this research. In quantitative inquiry, issues pertaining to trustworthiness are addressed in terms of validity and reliability of the research instruments. Although some qualitative researchers have adopted the terminology of scientific inquiry and embraced the realist assumptions that it implies (Porter, 2007), alternative ways of addressing the notion of trustworthiness have been suggested in order to take into account the particularity of qualitative research (Creswell, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). For instance, Guba and Lincoln (1985) suggested four other criteria to determine the validity and reliability of qualitative research procedures: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. However, these notions do not appear to be fundamentally distant from their quantitative counterparts as they also seem implicitly rooted in a realist, positivist notion of "an external foundational reality, untainted by our subjective involvement, to which research results can be compared and judged for their truth-value" (Angen, 2000, p. 383). On the contrary, this study rejects the realist assumption of an

¹ Coded transcripts using both softwares have been included in Appendix 5.

objective reality distinct from the knower and although it followed rigorous procedures, it cannot be accountable to scientific verification and validation. In fact, the study argues that the above-mentioned criteria have been put forward as a result of a growing pressure to comply with positivist concepts of scientific universal truths and objective reality whereas, as stated earlier, a fundamental epistemological aspect of this study is that it sought to understand the world through the subjective eyes of the participants.

Nevertheless, two aspects seem fundamental in regard to the trustworthiness of qualitative research: the idea of rigour (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011) and the role of the researcher. In qualitative research, it is extremely important to rigorously provide evidence as well as a detailed account of all interpretations to allow readers “to judge the trustworthiness of the meanings” that resulted from the researcher’s interpretations (Angen, 2000, p. 390). Furthermore, the trustworthiness of qualitative, interpretive research primarily relates to the researcher him/herself; in other words, to what extent is his/her account believable? This question directly concerns the abilities of a researcher to convince his/her audience that his/her account is believable, which essentially means that the researcher becomes the research instrument.

Based on the above premises, in order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of this account, it was essential to accurately and rigorously describe all “the methodological procedures and sources used to establish a high level of harmony between the participants’ expressions and the researcher’s interpretations of them” (Given, 2008, p. 138). First, in regard to the participants, great care was taken to facilitate building a rapport with them through the exchange of emails and phone calls to make them feel comfortable with me so that they could speak as freely and as openly as possible. In addition, the quality of the information and the data I collected was of utmost concern, so I kept rigorous records of all the information collected, including the recordings and the transcripts, to ensure that all the steps in the research process were meticulously recorded. Also, the research instrument was carefully designed and modified several times. Also, as explained earlier in the thesis, the research followed strict ethical guidelines¹ and the process of data collection and analysis followed rigorous procedures that have been meticulously reported.

¹ See section 3.3

3.9 Summary

The above chapter highlighted the philosophical underpinnings of the study with respect to its subjective, interpretative nature. These fundamental philosophical underpinnings at the level of ontology and epistemology were present throughout the research as I sought to understand the world through the subjective eyes of the participants and the researcher. In addition, the chapter clarified the approach followed throughout the research in terms of data collection and analysis by notably considering interviews as a central element in the production of knowledge and by stressing on the importance of human interaction. The data collection methods employed in the research were helpful to gain an in-depth understanding of the social world from the perspective of the participants and open a window through their world. Likewise, the descriptive, interpretive process of data analysis was deeply influenced by the subjective nature of the study and its paradigmatic standpoint based on the centrality of subjectivity in the meaning-making process. Furthermore, researching people, entering their private spheres and opening it to the public eye involves a continuous reflection about the potential ethical issues that may arise as a result of our decisions as researchers; therefore, the research was conducted by adhering to very strict ethical procedures. The chapter also demonstrated how the study's trustworthiness was informed by fundamental ontological assumptions vis-à-vis reality in so far as it rejected the positivist principles of validity and reliability but emphasised on the rigour and the credibility of the account that was presented. With the above methodological choices in mind, the next chapter presents the main findings that emerged from the data as a result of these methodological and analytical principles.

4. Findings

Having explained the fundamental philosophical assumptions of this research and its related methodological, analytical and ethical implications, the thesis moves on to present how, in light of the above, I attempted to make sense of the data obtained from the participants. In doing so, this chapter first presents each participant in the form of a summarised portrait then, the thesis reports the findings that emerged from the data. As a result, seven categories are presented along with their corresponding references to the participants' responses: (1) the move to the KSA, (2) participants' views on the global English, (3) TEFL in the KSA, (4) TEFL and the KSA culture, (5) TEFL and Islam, (6) Islam in teachers' lives and (7) the Muslim EFL teacher¹.

4.1 Participants' Portraits

Before proceeding with the presentation of the findings, it seems pertinent to briefly present the reader with a short outline of each participant in the form a summarised portrait in order to help contextualise their responses to their persons and, as it was intended by the study, relate the findings to the reality of teachers' experiences. One of the main reasons behind this research project was to gain insight into the life of Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA by focusing on their perception of the global spread of English and the role played by TEFL in this phenomenon and investigating how they perceive the relationship between their profession and their faith. Therefore, I qualitatively examined these issues to shed light on what it means to be a Western Muslim EFL teacher in the KSA. Through the interviews, participants were encouraged to discuss and reflect upon their professional practice and on the values underlying it. All the participants shared with me fascinating aspects of themselves, their inner beliefs and feelings and also some of their inner ethical dilemmas. The words between speech marks are direct quotations from the participants' interview transcripts.

4.1.1 Abdullah

Abdullah is from the USA and describes himself as an Afro American Muslim. He has lived in the KSA with his wife and children for about ten years and works as an EFL lecturer. Like he put it himself, he “would not be teaching English if [he] had stayed in the West” although he presents himself as a professional and enjoys his role as an EFL teacher and takes it

¹ See Figure 1, p.66

“seriously”. He initially left the USA to be able “to study the Quran and other religious subjects”. Back in the USA, he was in need of a place that would be more “conducive to his way of life” and feels the KSA is much more adapted to his conception of Islam; he appreciates the fact that in the KSA, the Islamic religion is quite apparent in various aspects of social life.

4.1.2 Adam

Adam is a British convert to Islam who has been living in the KSA with his wife and children for about nine years. He is a professional teacher of EFL with postgraduate qualifications in TESOL. He simply describes himself as a “Muslim from England” but does not see his NS identity as problematic. He believes that this is a projected identity since most people in the KSA identify him as a NS mainly due to the fact that he is white. Interestingly, Adam acknowledges that this projected identity grants him a certain privileged status but denounces the fact that other non-white or NNS EFL colleagues can be victim of discrimination and “get a bad deal” in terms of salary for example.

4.1.3 Ahmed

Ahmed is Canadian; he is a highly qualified EFL lecturer at university who has lived and worked in the KSA with his wife and children for about five years. Although he rejects the term hijrah, Ahmed explained to me that he moved to the KSA for two main reasons: religion and money. Like all the other participants, he wanted to be close to the holy sites of Makkah and Madinah and thought it was important to raise his children in an Islamic environment.

4.1.4 Ali

Ali is a British EFL teacher who has lived in the KSA with his wife and children for more than ten years. He is a highly qualified teacher who joined the profession in order to find a job in the KSA thinking that given the growing demand for EFL/ELT in Saudi Arabia, he could stay there for a long time. He likes to refer to his move to the KSA as hijrah and as a sacrifice to “seek Allah’s reward”. Ali does not reject his British or NS identity and, at the same time, loves the Arabic language and expresses pride in his Islamic identity. Nevertheless, he expresses “sadness” about the way the English language and Englishness is being perceived as somehow superior.

4.1.5 Fareed

Fareed is British too and teaches EFL at university. He has been in the KSA with his wife for about four years but, unlike the other participants, he does not have children. Fareed seems very conscientious and dedicated about his religious practice in general and particularly his daily prayers. That is why he appreciates his present work environment in the KSA whereas at his previous workplace in the UK, he used to pray in “corners and dark rooms” in a “rushed” manner. This explains why he describes the KSA as an “Islamic country”, which was the “core reason” why he moved there.

4.1.6 Mohammed

Mohammed is an Englishman who converted to Islam and now teaches EFL at university; he is married and has children. He moved to the KSA with the intention of hijrah “for the sake of God” but does not show any kind of resentment towards his home country. In his words, his *moving to* the KSA seems more predominant than his *leaving* the UK. Mohammed is conscious that the English language partly reflects Western culture but according to him, the “pop culture” is more of a reflection of Western culture than TEFL itself. That is why he finds it “more potent in amending the way of life in these parts of the world than the teaching of English.” EMI also seems to be a source of concern to him and thinks language is the vehicle of values, ideas and worldviews, which may “infringe” upon the KSA culture and identity and specifically the Arabic language.

4.1.7 Nasser

Nasser has been living in the KSA for more than ten years with his wife and children. He is English and teaches EFL at university. He told me that he moved to the KSA “for the sake of Allah” and for “hijrah” because he appreciates the fact that he can visit the Holy sites of Makkah and Madinah. For him, there are undeniable “negative elements” of Western culture that are attached to TEFL and the spread of English including music, films and also the drinking of alcohol. Likewise, he thinks that the spread of English and TEFL are intertwined with political, ideological and power issues; he does not believe these processes can be described as value free or neutral. However, for him, the media, more than TEFL, is partly responsible for transmitting ideas and values in the medium of the English language.

4.1.8 Osman

Like Adam and Mohammed, Osman is an English convert to Islam. He left the UK about five years ago to live and work in the KSA with his wife and children. He is now employed

as an EFL instructor at university. Osman moved to the KSA in order to be close to Makkah and Madinah, which represents a great “spiritual uplift” because he can easily accomplish Hajj and Umrah or visit the Prophet’s Mosque in Madinah. In addition, he likes the environment of the KSA that he describes as “more guarded” than England and considers as more appropriate for his family. Because he believes language and culture are closely bound, TEFL is directly connected to Western culture. He is also concerned about the power issues inherent to the spread of English and considers this phenomenon as a manifestation of the “hegemonic power” of certain countries.

4.1.9 Sami

Sami is a British teacher of EFL who has lived in the KSA for four years. He describes himself as a British Muslim from a “devout religious Muslim family”. Although he did not come to the KSA for hijrah, the proximity of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah was an important element in his decision to move there. The lucrative aspect of the job was also an important factor for choosing to come to the KSA; as he explained, with his current job in the KSA, he gets a “sound” income and he is close to Makkah and Madinah. He also thought the KSA environment was a safe Islamic environment to bring up his children.

Following the above summarised portraits of the participants, the thesis moves on to present in detail the main findings that emerged from the data as the result of the descriptive analysis of the interview data. All the categories are presented below along with their corresponding references from the participants’ responses starting with the first category: the move to the KSA. The figure on the next page describes the analytical structure by listing all the categories/subcategories that emerged from the data.

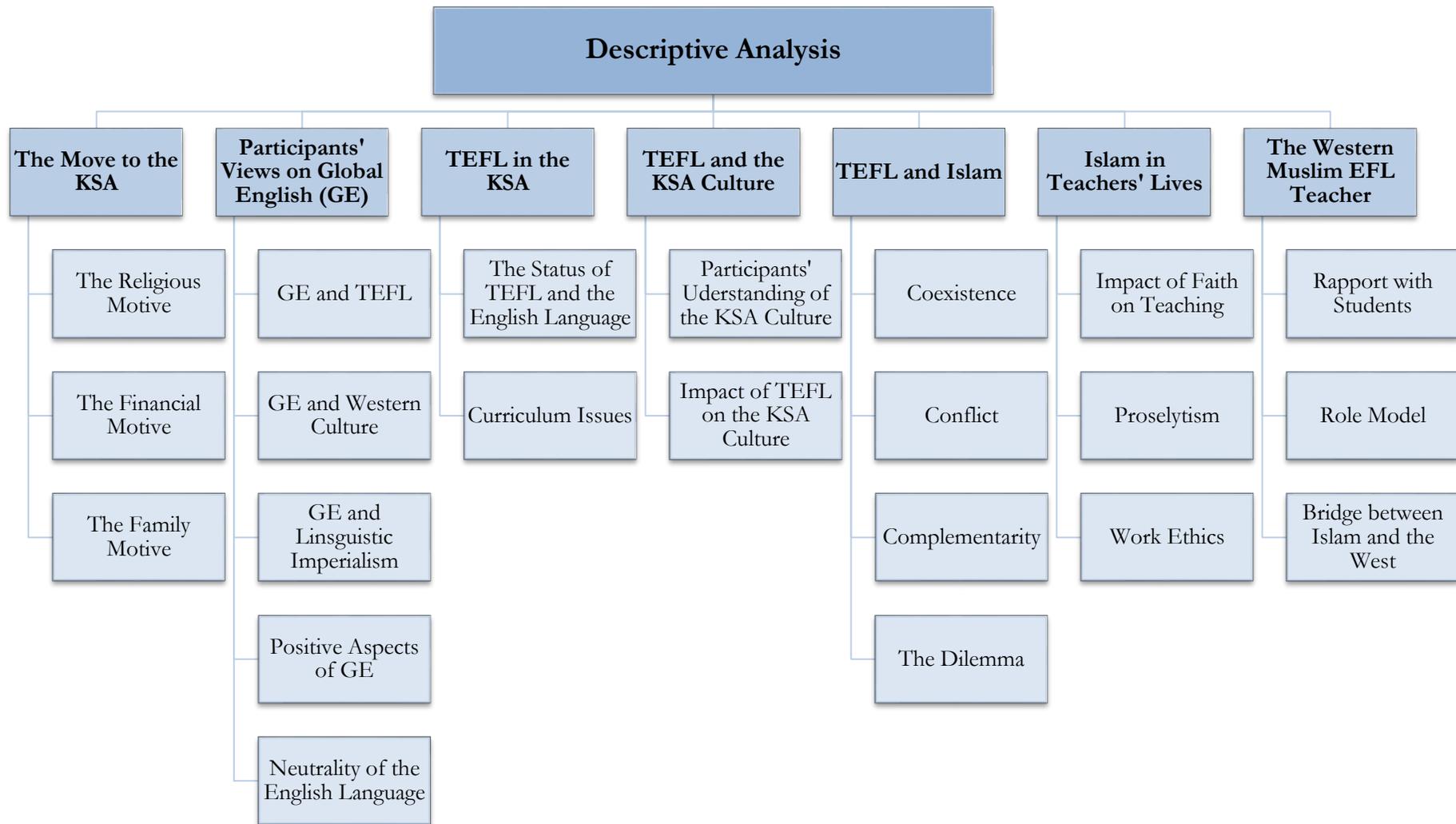


Figure 1: Descriptive Analysis Categories/Subcategories

4.2 The Move to the KSA

The data revealed the participants' motives for coming to the KSA and three reasons were invoked: religion, money and family, which have been classified under a category named "the move to the KSA" and divided into three subcategories: (1) "the religious motives", (2) "the financial motive" and (3) "the family motive", as presented below along with the corresponding evidence from the participants' responses.

4.2.1 The Religious Motive

Several motives for moving to the KSA have been included under the umbrella of religion including the proximity of the two holy sites of Makkah and Madinah, hijrah, the ease of religious practice, the relative absence of what is judged by some participants as "un-Islamic" aspects and the desire to live in what has been generally described as a "Muslim/Islamic environment".

First, the proximity of the holy sites of Makkah and Madinah was mentioned by all the participants. All without exception referred to their wish to be close to these holy sites in order to perform the pilgrimage (Hajj and Umrah) or pray in Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in Madinah¹. For instance, Osman explained that his job in the KSA gave him the opportunity to be close to Makkah and Madinah and emphasised on the spiritual reward he gained: "the blessing is to be able to go to the two holy cities, Makkah and Madinah, which on a spiritual level are extremely uplifting". Both, him and Sami referred to his presence in the KSA as a "blessing". Adam also mentioned he could "just go and make Umrah when [he] want[ed]".

In addition, the Islamic principle of hijrah, which relates to emigration towards the Muslim lands, was mentioned by four participants (Ali, Nasser, Adam and Mohammed). They clearly described their move to the KSA as hijrah, as they understood it from an Islamic perspective. For instance, Mohammed told me how his move to the KSA was "for the sake of God" and used the term hijrah: "it was for the sake of God; therefore, in that case, it would be considered hijrah". Likewise, Ali clearly mentioned he accomplished hijrah: "I have to remember why I am here: It's to do my hijrah". When I asked Nasser why he decided to come to the KSA he also replied his move was "for the sake of Allah" and called it hijrah:

¹ By living in the KSA, Muslims can perform the pilgrimage or visit the Prophet mosque with great ease, which may seem at first sight rather pragmatic; however, it is important to bear in mind certain aspects of the Islamic faith, such as the religious reward for praying in the two holy mosques or for accomplishing the pilgrimage. Such rewards include the expiation of sins and the accomplishment of one of the five "pillars of Islam". Makkah and Madinah are considered as the only two sacred lands, which grants them a high status in the eyes of Muslims around the world.

“my first reason for coming here was *fi sabil illah*¹, as we say, to move somewhere for the sake of Allah; this was my hijrah”.

On the contrary, Ahmed and Sami, explicitly refused to qualify their move to the KSA as hijrah. Ahmed invoked a religious evidence for this and claimed that hijrah was no longer applicable according to his understanding of a Prophetic tradition: “I don’t believe in hijrah because according to Islamic teaching, [...] there’s no hijrah after Makkah has been turned Muslim [...] the Prophet said.”² Sami did not qualify his move as hijrah because he understood hijrah as a permanent move to a Muslim country: “the people that I’ve spoken to [...] describe it as making hijrah. They come here for the purpose of living here permanently, whereas mine is slightly different.”

Although not all of them considered their move to the KSA as hijrah, they all invoked various reasons related to religion to justify their choice for coming to the KSA. In addition to the proximity of the holy sites, the ease of religious practice was invoked by Fareed, Adam, Ali and Abdullah. Fareed, for instance, recounted how in his home country he was not satisfied with the way he was performing his daily prayers at his workplace and explained that the KSA was more “convenient” due to the fact that employers have to provide dedicated times and spaces for the daily prayers:

Praying salah³, in the previous job, [...] it was rushed, I was trying to find my own time, finding corners and dark rooms to pray [...]. You don’t feel like you’re fulfilling or you’re praying in a way that you’re happy with. [...] coming to a place like this is so much easier, where they give you time to pray.

Likewise, Ali mentioned that back home in the UK, performing the Friday congregational prayer was a “problem” and after coming to the KSA, he did not have to worry about this anymore: “in the West, prayer is a problem and *Jumua*⁴”. Adam described the KSA as being a place where religious practice was easier than in his home country, and unlike in England, he was no longer afraid of being victim of religious discrimination: “In the KSA everything is in place [...] you can practice your religion more without having to worry that someone’s going to throw eggs at your wife or spit on your kids”. Likewise, Ali told me that he came to the KSA to have “the freedom to practice Islam openly”. As for Abdullah, he explained how

1. Arabic phrase: “for the sake of God”

2. Ahmed refers to a Prophetic tradition reported by Ibn Abbaas who narrated that the Prophet stated on the day of the Conquest of Makkah: “there is no hijrah after the conquest [of Makkah]”. (Hadith reported by Al-Bukhari)

3. Arabic word for prayer

4 the Friday congregational prayer for Muslims

he felt the KSA was more adapted to his way of life and that he could practise his religion more easily; he described the KSA as “more conducive to the way [he] practices Islam”.

In addition, Abdullah, Ali, Sami Ahmed, Fareed and Osman mentioned that they appreciated the “environment” of the KSA that was described as “Islamic” or “Muslim”. For example, Abdullah spoke about the reasons why he moved to the KSA: “that’s the reason why I am here: you know, being in an environment [...] with Muslims”. Sami also mentioned how he thought “a Muslim environment would be better” for him and his family while Ali appreciates the “Islamic environment” of the KSA. Osman praised the environment of the KSA and described it as being more guarded and as having a greater “sense of shame”: “Saudi is a slightly –well, a lot more– guarded and it has more of a sense of shame.” Fareed explained that one of the “core reason” why he came to the KSA was because it is “an Islamic country” while Ahmed said he was seeking “an Islamic atmosphere”.

Moreover, the study of the Quran or other religious disciplines was mentioned by two participants. Abdullah explained that he initially came to the KSA “to study Quran and other religious subjects” while Ali explicitly mentioned he wanted to “study and gain Islamic knowledge”.

Participants also mentioned the absence of what they perceived as un-Islamic practices. Ali, Abdullah and Fareed explained to me how they appreciate the fact that their current workplace in the KSA is gender segregated, unlike in their home country; Abdullah’s quote below is an example of this view:

Here you are able to work in this environment which is what I consider to be more appropriate and more suitable Islamically speaking [...] here in the KSA workplaces are segregated. It’s the only country like that.

Ali explained he disliked attending “non-Islamic things [...] at work in the UK, like [...] meetings with alcohol”.

As explained above, in their accounts of their motives for coming to the KSA, all the participants invoked religion, which seems to suggest that religion plays a preponderant role in their lives, both at the personal and professional level. This aspect of the data seems fundamental and is to be further discussed in the next chapter. Furthermore, as presented in the next section, a majority of them also mentioned the importance of the financial aspect in deciding to come to the KSA as EFL teachers.

4.2.2 The Financial Motive

Ahmed, Osman, Sami, Adam, Ali and Nasser explicitly referred to money as being one of the motives for coming to the KSA. Ahmed explained how the financial aspect of working in the KSA was the first reason why he came to the KSA: “I decided to come to Saudi Arabia for two main reasons: the first one is to make money, let’s be frank about it.” Osman decided to leave the UK as he felt his previous position was threatened by “austerity” and chose the KSA over another country because of the salary: “I came to Saudi having felt that my job in England was in danger because of the relative austerity [...]; if they had offered the same pay, maybe I would have taken Turkey”. Sami also mentioned the financial element behind his choice for coming to work in the KSA where he has an “economically sound income”. Ali also spoke to me about the financial benefit he gained in coming to work in the KSA as an EFL teacher and simply explains that “ELT is lucrative” while Adam stated he did his best to get “decent qualifications” in order to find a job and “have something to put on the bargain table”. Nasser mentioned, with a certain sense of guilt, why, in addition to hijrah, he also moved to the KSA: “I’m here for the money ‘asthaghfirullah’¹.”

An important idea that emerged from the data is that most participants also came to the KSA with a number of financial interests in mind. It is interesting to note that the participants evoked religious and pragmatic references to justify their move to the KSA. The combination of these two elements is an issue that needs to be further discussed due its apparent contradictory nature. The next chapter needs to take a closer look at the implications of these two interconnected references. In addition, as explained in the next section, all but one participant revealed how the family aspect was also a determining element in deciding to come to the KSA.

4.2.3 The Family Motive

A recurrent idea emerged from the data as one of the participants’ motives for coming to the KSA was family. All but one participant clearly mentioned that their choice for coming to the KSA was for the interest of their families and particularly their children. It is important to precise that under the umbrella of “the family motive”, several reasons have been included, such as, Islamic education, crime and safety, culture and also, family time.

Fareed was the only participant who did not explicitly refer to this issue, possibly because he

1. This is a supplication that means: I seek Allah’s forgiveness

does not have children, but the rest of the participants all expressed their desire to provide their children with a “safe”, “Islamic environment” in order to “protect” and “educate” them. Being able to provide their children with an Islamic education was recurrent in the participants’ responses and, for example, Sami simply said that he wanted to “raise [his] children in an Islamic atmosphere” and that his move to the KSA was “also for [his] children”. When I asked Adam why he came to work in the KSA, he told me quite simply that he wanted to “bring [his] children up in an Islamic environment”. Likewise, Ali had a similar response and reported that in the KSA he could “educate children in an Islamic environment and bring up [his] family in this environment”. Osman mentioned that he thought “the environment would be good for [his] family” and particularly for his three children. This is why he believed the KSA to be more appropriate for his children:

People here seem to have more of a sense of shame [and] modesty. They know what should be hung out in public and what shouldn’t. My feeling in England was that I was constantly guarding my children against things I did not want them to see or hear.

Nasser reported family time as one of his motives for coming to the KSA and made a comparison with his home country, the UK. He explained that in the KSA he can spend time with his family: “When I was in England, [...] I didn’t have a chance [...] to see them. In Saudi Arabia, [...] there’s more time to have family time. We’re a family-orientated people. You are doing this *fi sabil illah*¹ for your family”.

Some participants mentioned safety and the absence of crime as being a motive for coming to the KSA, which provides them a sense of protection for their children. Sami, for instance, explained that his decision was also motivated by the wellbeing of his children and by the fact that life in London was rather unsafe compared to where he lives now in the KSA, which he described as “a safe environment for the children”. He also said he came to the KSA “for the sake of children”.

The above findings² show that three major reasons have been invoked by the participants for coming to work in the KSA. Religion was claimed by all the participants while for six of them, money played a role in their decision to come to the KSA. Likewise, all the participants except Fared reported that they decided to come to the KSA for the sake of their family and particularly their children. An important idea that emerges from this set of findings is

¹ For the sake of Allah

² Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3

that the participants relate their move to the KSA to both religious and pragmatic references, which is an aspect that will be further investigated in the next chapter. At first sight, these two set of references may appear contradictory; however, it seems that most participants seem to be combining and interchanging the pragmatic and the religious element. The following sections present another aspect from the data that is one of the core issues raised by the study: the participants' views on the phenomenon of the global spread of English.

4.3 Participants' Views on Global English

The global spread of English has been described in various terms by the participants. According to them, TEFL contributes to the global spread of English which is also described as having a number of advantages. In addition, although the English language was viewed by the participants as intrinsically neutral, its spread was not described as a neutral activity; on the contrary, it was depicted as value-laden and closely connected with Western cultural and ideological values. As a result, the "participants' views on global English" relates to six notions: (1) global English and TEFL, (2) global English and Western culture, (3) global English and linguistic imperialism, (4) global English and Western values, (5) the advantages of global English and finally, (6) the intrinsic neutrality of the English language.

4.3.1 Global English and TEFL

First, the participants made connections between the global spread of English and TEFL; according to them, the role played by TEFL cannot be separated from the reality of the global spread of English. Fareed, for instance, expressed the view that the connection between TEFL and the global spread of English seemed logical:

You would assume that there is a connection there between English language teaching and the spread of English. And yes, of course, there is. It seems a logical deduction that there is a connection there.

Likewise, Ahmed explained the relationship between TEFL and the global spread of the English language in a similar manner and added that it was being used in many areas of modern life:

I think English is being taught everywhere in the world because it's already there, because people need English, because it's the language of science, the language of diplomacy, the language of technology and so on.

In a very simple way, Nasser explained that TEFL was "associated with the spread of English."

The above quotes are indicative of the unanimous view among the participants that TEFL participates in the global spread of English and is therefore closely related to this phenomenon. In addition, participants made connections between the global spread of English, TEFL and Western culture, as explained in the next section.

4.3.2 Global English and Western Culture

All the participants made explicit connections between the spread of the English language (not only through TEFL) and the spread of certain aspects of Western culture. Participants particularly referred to Western movies and Western music as being interconnected with the phenomenon of global English. In other words, the global spread of English was described as a vector and a carrier of Western culture. For example, Fareed explains how “Western culture” has been infiltrating communities worldwide:

There are certain things that are propagated perhaps [...] through the English language, in terms of their music culture and the culture of movies. There are so many things that a person might say that it is through the English language these things infiltrating Muslim communities. And it's fascinating because it's actually infiltrating within communities in the remotest parts of the world, you might say.

However, Fareed made a clear distinction between the culture propagated through the medium of the language and the teaching of English per se: “there's a distinction here in the sense that it's not so much about English teaching, it's by English culture”. Adam made references to the relationship between TEFL and Western culture, which he views somewhat negatively:

Well, one of the negative impact is this idea that there is the notion that if you teach English, you teach the culture with it. You know, in some places a lot of the culture is being taught; like a Western culture

He further explained how TEFL participates in spreading the Western culture and particularly pointed to the textbooks that portray and promote what he described as “white English culture”:

These are global textbooks used in the world so they're very clinical, promoting a set kind of culture along with the language. Even with these textbooks, the culture they bring in it goes back to who owns English? I mean, white English culture

Ahmed explained how the teaching of a language unavoidably includes the teaching and the learning of culture: “whenever we teach English, any language or learn a language, it comes with the culture, whether we like it or not”. I questioned him about what he meant by the

culture attached to the English language; he mentioned “watching movies or playing a lot of video games, or listening to songs, mainly American, because [it] is the predominant culture.” For Osman, language and culture are related; he made references to the West and also mentioned movies to refer to Western culture:

When the language comes, the culture comes too [...] I don't know which would have come first, but they've somehow bought into the culture and the language. Did they start watching the movies because they understood a lot of them, or did they start understanding the language because they were watching lots of movies?

Abdullah simply reported that “there's a culture that comes with [TEFL]”, which he called “Western culture”. He added that the spread of English and the Western culture relate to certain underlying assumptions: “with the global spread of English, there are cultural issues and the assumption that the Western culture is somehow better and more civilised in general.” Mohammed and Nasser reported similar views and described these aspects of Western culture attached to the spread of English as “negative” and made references to music, films and also the drinking of alcohol. Mohammed, for instance, made specific references to young Saudi Arabians' exposure to Western culture through the spread of English:

I think the age of the student here means that witnessing the positive aspects of the spread of English is maybe more difficult because the exposure that I see that these young, as in 18, 19, 20-year-old men have is through probably not the most positive aspects of Western culture, maybe through music and film.

Nasser was also explicit about the link between the English language and culture: “all sorts of ideas and everything else can be transmitted, cultural things like some negative cultural things attached to it, like drinking for example”.

The above quotes provided a detailed account of the participants' views on the link between global English and Western culture and the last two quotes from Nasser and Mohammed showed that they can also be viewed negatively. As highlighted in the next section, the next subcategory from the findings shows that some participants made connections between the global spread of English and linguistic Imperialism.

4.3.3 Global English and Linguistic Imperialism

Linguistic imperialism has been explicitly or implicitly addressed by seven participants. It should be noted however, that while not all the participants subscribed to the idea that TEFL and the global spread of English participate in maintaining Western hegemony, five among them expressed the view that the global spread of English was a manifestation of Western cultural hegemony in some way while only one teacher (Sami) mentioned that language and imperialism were not related. For instance, in very clear terms, Ahmed explained the connection between TEFL, the spread of English and the cultural domination of the USA:

TEFL [...] has a very big impact in just solidifying [...] the cultural influence and cultural predominance of English not as a language, but English culture, especially American now [...]. TEFL is a way of making that predominance stay there and making it continue.

Likewise, Osman expressed the view that the spread of English is a manifestation of the “hegemonic power” of certain English speaking countries:

Certainly, the countries that seem to have the most hegemonic power in the world right now speak English and therefore, English is rolling out across the world for business and political reasons and the language of various other things like science, medicine, and so on.

Osman clarified his point and described the spread of English as a “symptomatic” of hegemony. Nasser was also quite clear in explaining the connections between the spread of English (and TEFL) and power issues at a political level or cultural level and refuted the idea that these processes (global English and TEFL) were neutral: “although they tried to maintain that this is a kind of a neutral exercise, it’s not.” He talked about “the global community under the English language [with] America as the superpower of the day”.

Fareed mentioned the historical links between imperialism and the spread of the English and talked about the harm of colonisation and its relation to the English language:

It’s not inseparable in the sense that [...] in the days of the Empire who went and colonised so many parts of the world including the Middle East? [...] The history is still there. [...] People are not going to distinguish: “okay, this is just a language. These are the people that did such and such to my country and to my people and to my fathers and my people even today, to my family even today.”

Adam, implicitly referred to the main tenets of the linguistic imperialism paradigm and particularly the political agenda behind the deliberate promotion of the English language and TEFL:

They’re going to have their own agenda that might not necessarily agree with the

country's agenda. They might be recruiting people who might be, you know, fulfil the agenda and obviously this is a negative thing. It's not just that simple: "I'm going to teach you English, I want you to learn a language, I want to help you learn a language". There is a political undercover agenda behind that.

Finally, Abdullah expressed the view that the language was being spread to "make money and spread the culture, like missionaries; willingly and unwillingly".

On the contrary, Sami explicitly mentioned the issue of linguistic imperialism only to deny that hegemony could be linked to TEFL. He mentioned that some of his friends had warned him about working as an EFL teacher in the KSA and spreading imperialism:

When I decided to come here and I was speaking to my family and friends, they said, "why would you go to another country and teach English? Because you're spreading English imperialism". I can see it, but I don't think that's necessarily linked to language.

Sami was the only teacher who explicitly expressed the view that the global spread of English was not connected to imperialism or hegemony. Furthermore, three participants did not refer to the issue at all.

The above quotes show that most participants made explicit connections between the global spread of English and imperialism or hegemony while some of them did not refer to this issue and one explicitly mentioned the absence of connection. This reveals that the participants showed awareness of the ideological implications of TEFL. Owing to that, the findings shed light on the relationship between TEFL, the global spread of English and values as presented in the section below.

4.3.4 TEFL, Global English and Values

Seven participants associated the spread of English with a number of values and ideas while six of them expressed the view that TEFL participated in propagating these values and ideas, which denotes that they do not view global English as a neutral phenomenon. The values mentioned by the participants were: freedom of speech, Christianity, democracy, Western values, Western education, success and materialism and the lack of morals. It should be noted that two participants did not believe that TEFL and the global spread of English were associated with particular values.

The idea of democracy was mentioned several times by the participants as a value propagated through the global spread of English and TEFL. Adam, for instance, referred to the textbooks that disseminate the concept of democracy to the students:

TEFL is associated with certain values. Look at the books, nothing relates to students' life; they are just manufactured versions of language and pretend they want to open students' minds to democracy.

Osman also referred to democracy as being one the values being circulated by the media in the medium of the English language:

To be pretty honest, democracy would be another one. [...] I believe all the ideas that we've already discussed today about freedom and democracy and whatever [...] are sold to teachers about why they should even teach English that are probably part of that whole package where you think you're doing them a favour because English is the language of the world now.

Nasser also alluded to the connection between TEFL and the media, which helped in propagating ideas and values; he specifically referred to the idea of democracy:

Democracy is being blasted all around the Arab world, but what does it mean? These are words that are being sprouted out by the media. Media is now becoming quite a large part of the TEFL arrangement. It forms a study now, everything is media-related, textbooks refer to news.

Abdullah also reported that "the idea of democracy as understood in the West" was associated with TEFL and the spread of English.

Moreover, the idea of freedom in general, and particularly freedom of speech, was mentioned by some participants as being propagated by TEFL. Adam's quote is indicative of this view: "calling to this so-called freedom of speech you know, the tenets of a lot of these countries that call to these ideas [are] in these books." Osman also referred to the concept of freedom as "a very good example [of] words that you can impress in English and have them ultimately translated and understood as being Western concepts".

Adam was the only teacher who mentioned Christianity as being associated with global English or TEFL and expressed the view that TEFL contributed to "calling to Christianity but in an indirect manner". He also referred to "Western values" in general as being associated with TEFL. He made the connection between the countries where the textbooks were published and the values around which many Western countries were built upon such as equality and freedom of religion:

I think values that, you know, "we are all equal", "it doesn't matter what religion you are"; the same as the countries where the books are published, if you look at the value systems that they are built upon.

Osman described EMI as reflecting a Western conception of education and specifically referred to his own institution:

If you look at the university that we work in, there are clear signs that they've taken their model from the West. Certainly when you talk about a good education and you talk about it in English, you have a very clear idea that what good education means is what I would expect to see in an objectively functional classroom in England or America or something like that. Therefore, that model, when it's projected around the world, comes in that package. It doesn't take other forms.

When Abdullah talked about values associated with the spread of English through TEFL, he mentioned values such as honesty, openness and hard work "as understood in the West" as being "carried culturally" in EFL textbooks. He judged these values as inherently positive that do not exclusively belong to the West but that have become mainly associated with the idea that the West is superior. As a result, he believed some of his Muslim students have become unfamiliar with their own set of values:

The notion of honesty, the notion of working hard and being professional, you know, these things are also carried culturally in those books. And these are positive things, but [...] we're dealing with people who actually don't or slowly become unfamiliar with their way of life. I can see openness, being receptive to other people's ideas, but again, with the idea that Western culture is still superior. So I think those are values I associate with TEFL.

Mohammed talked about the relationship between language and values and in his opinion, language does carry certain values and ideas. When he spoke about worldviews spread through the language, he particularly referred to a materialist conception of what defines success:

I think that the mechanisms and the means by which that worldview is spread and promoted; I think that the most powerful aspect is what defines success and what defines a successful individual, which is almost exclusively defined in terms of material success or material wealth [...] I think that that's really interesting to see the relationship between the language and the values that are upheld within that, or are suggested in that language.

On the contrary, Ahmed and Sami held similar views in regard to the possible values being associated with TEFL or the global spread of English; for instance, Ahmed did not believe values or ideas were propagated by the TEFL. According to his experience as an EFL teacher in the KSA, EFL is taught for very pragmatic reasons:

I think the way English is taught here is perceived as a tool for learning, for having access to science, to technology, for engineering students, for computer science students. You teach them English so that they learn. There's no moral or cultural value embedded in the way the language is taught, so far at least. That's how I see it according to my experience.

Sami acknowledged the connection between language and values but made a clear distinction

between the English language across the globe and in the UK. He made specific references to the KSA context and thought language, as it is being used now in the KSA, was free from value-laden references:

Saudi Arabia has its own strong values. I think if you go to learn English in the U.K, it's different from how we teach it here. If you go to the U.K, then cultural values plays a role in the language, whereas here it has been very sanitised.

The above evidence from the data suggest that most participants view the global spread of English and TEFL as value-laden processes; however, as highlighted in the following section, they also unanimously reported the positive aspects of the global spread of English and how TEFL can be beneficial.

4.3.5 The Positive Aspects of Global English

All the participants mentioned the benefits and the advantages behind the teaching and learning of EFL which they relate to the global spread of English. The participants talked about the opportunities EFL could provide in terms of communication in general, trade and access to better jobs or to different kinds of knowledge. Because English has now become *the* lingua franca for trade, science and technology, communication between people from different cultures has been greatly facilitated. Fareed, for instance, told me how learning English could facilitate communication between people:

The positive side of it is that it facilitates communication on a global scale, which is beneficial, you can say, for many reasons. I don't think a person can say that there's a loss by learning a new language, especially if it's a language that helps a person communicate in various parts of the world.

Likewise, Abdullah believed the spread of English in the world facilitates communication: "the spread of any single language is going to make it easier for people to communicate." He added that it could foster positive relationships between different peoples and thought of it as "a step towards good relations between human beings". Sami spoke about the status of English as an international language, which he considered as a positive aspect. As all the other participants, he explained how learning an additional language could participate in improving communication between people:

I think, if anything, language will help people understand or develop their perspectives of life. With language, we can communicate, speak to new people, use and utilise it in your workplace, in your social life. More than a hindrance, I think language is very important.

Likewise, according to Adam, learning English is much needed in order to communicate

with the world due to the global status of the English language and because it was now become a lingua franca: “I guess realistically there is a need to learn English [...] so they can communicate, especially that English is a global language or a lingua franca in the world.” The idea that learning English can facilitate communication was also mentioned by Nasser who believed it provides opportunities to interact with people from different cultures:

English does have a lot of positives. You can reach out to a lot of people of different nationalities and different cultures. You can talk to them, sharing, finding similarities between people –this is a good thing.

Sami believed that learning EFL in the KSA can have a positive impact on young Saudi students:

The positive impact will be that a community like Saudi Arabia, to interact with another language because at the moment, my observation of Saudi Arabia is that it's a closed community. By learning another language, these students, after they finish their university go to study Master's abroad and that develops their horizons.

Beside the communication opportunities provided by the spread of English globally, trade and business was also mentioned by the participants as another aspect of modern life that can be facilitated. For instance, Adam explained that because the English language has now become the language of global trade and commerce, by learning it young Saudis could contribute to strengthening their country: “one of the reasons why they're learning English is to make this country stronger, in communication, business with the world”. Similarly, Sami held the view that in order to take part in “international business [Saudis] need to learn the language [English]”. Fareed also highlighted the benefits behind learning the English language “in terms of trade” because of its global status and described EFL as “valuable”.

Another important aspect was pointed out by Ahmed who reported that TEFL has a “positive impact” on students not only because it is an essential tool at university where the language of instruction is English, but also because it facilitates access to science and technology:

The positive impact [...] especially English, because that would give you access to science, technology– for our students, it's very practical because they need it to finish their degrees. Everything is in English: their textbooks are in English, the teachings are in English, the exams are in English and they have to write papers in English.

Muhammad expressed a very similar view and mentioned that students could have “access to even something as simple as scientific literature and technology.” Nasser described the

English language as “useful” because of its global status in terms of research and publication:

All the research which is being done and which is being published is being done in the Western countries. If you want to keep your fingers on the pulse of all these new developments, you’ve got to know some English.

Similarly, Sami expressed the view that by learning English and studying abroad, Saudis could “bring the positive innovations back to their homeland”.

The participants described the global spread of English and TEFL as having positive elements using descriptors such as, “positive”, “beneficial”, “useful”, “benefit”, “very important” or simply “a good thing”. Furthermore, as shown in the next section, participants made a distinction between the spread of English and TEFL and the language per se which they described in somewhat neutral terms.

4.3.6 Neutrality of the English Language

The interview data also show that participants made a distinction between the processes of global English and TEFL, its associated values or cultural aspects and the intrinsic nature of the English language or even the teaching and learning of English per se. Hence, language was metaphorically described as a “vehicle” or “tool” that was not inherently positive or negative. In total, six participants made clear distinctions between the intrinsic nature of the English language (and also TEFL) and the various cultural and ideological elements associated with it. For these participants, the teaching and learning of EFL is not a problematic activity as such.

Fareed’s quote is indicative of this view whereby he explained that TEFL needed to be distinguished from what he called English culture:

There’s a distinction here in the sense that it’s not so much about English teaching, it’s English culture. Teaching English in a very formal context, there’s not necessarily the scope to affect a culture for whole people, if you want it that way, exclusively through teaching English in a formal controlled modulated setting.

For Ahmed, TEFL could not be labelled as inherently positive or negative; rather he described it as a “tool that can be used either way” depending on other factors. Osman did not see the English language as intrinsically problematic and described it as a tool rather than the cause of problems: “it’s a tool of it, but it’s also symptomatic of the agenda. The real problem is not English. The problem is the people who are spreading English for their own ends”. Nasser also described the English language as a “tool” which one “can choose to do [or] not to”. Sami also described the English language as a “medium to express the

differences” and reported the view that if the English language was associated with certain ideas, it was not due to the language itself.

In the course of a discussion about language and ideas, Mohammad highlighted that he considered language to be a “means”; he also questioned whether certain ideas and values were intrinsically embedded in the English language: “I don’t know if it’s intrinsically in English, if it’s the language itself; the language itself is just the means”.

To sum up the above findings¹, it can be said that the participants’ views on global English and TEFL were not monolithic but reflect a variety of opinions and perspectives. This strongly suggests that TEFL and the global spread of English were not viewed as value-free processes but linked to certain socio-political or ideological issues. This aspect of the data relates to one of the fundamental issues raised by the study and will be further discussed in the next chapter. The next sections present the findings that relate to the category pertaining to TEFL and the global spread of English in relation to the specific context of the KSA.

4.4 TEFL in the KSA

The data show how participants made repeated references to their professional context and expressed their views on the status of TEFL in the KSA; they also addressed curriculum-related issues and talked about the syllabi used in TEFL. From this category, “English and TEFL in the KSA”; two ideas emerged: (1) “the status of TEFL and the English language in the KSA” and (2) “TEFL curriculum issues”.

4.4.1 The Status of TEFL and the English language in the KSA

Participants talked about the need for TEFL in the KSA but some of them felt it had been imposed upon Saudi students, notably through EMI. Six participants mentioned the need for the English language in the KSA reflecting conflicting views among them on the issue. Adam felt that learning English was not needed to the Saudis and wished people were learning Arabic instead as he thought it should be the lingua franca of the Muslim world: “it is a difficult question I guess. I do not think they need it. In an ideal world really, the rest of the Muslim world should be learning Arabic.” Later on, in the course of the conversation, he seemed to be contradicting himself and told me that he had to be “realistic” about this issue, affirming that Saudis needed to learn English: “but I guess, realistically there is a need

¹ Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.6

for the Muslims in this country to learn English.” He further suggested that the need for learning English was so strong that he felt as if Saudis did not really have the choice; in fact, he described this need as a must: “I think they realise that now it’s almost a case like their children are not going to be able to, I wouldn’t say survive that’s too strong, but they don’t really have a choice.” Ahmed simply explained that he was teaching EFL in the KSA because Saudis *need* to learn English. For him, the equation was simple: English is spreading in the world, so they need to learn English; he was there to fill this need by teaching EFL. He went even further in his analysis and explained that he *had* to teach English as a result of the global spread of the language in various fields of today’s modern life: “people need English, because it’s the language of science, the language of diplomacy, the language of technology and so on. We are teaching English because we have to”. Sami made a similar analysis of the current situation. In his opinion, Saudis do need to learn English as a result of its global spread:

These people need to learn the language. They need it for international business, they need it for day to day life. [...] The status of English at this current time requires them to learn English.

Osman looked at the issue from a different perspective and seemed to question the importance of the English language for Saudis; he explained that its growing status in the world and in the KSA, to the extent that it was being used as a medium of instruction, had a subconscious effect on people’s perceptions of its real importance:

Just being taught English in an Arabic classroom must, to some extent, even if you don’t want it, make you think the rest of the world sees English as important. My own country sees English as important. Maybe you don’t even think of this on a conscious level, but it’s there.

Abdullah expressed the view that although he could not conceive how the KSA could develop as a country without the teaching of English, not all Saudis need to learn English:

I don’t see how the country can grow and develop at this point without some level of English. I don’t think that’s necessary for everyone, but I do think they do need to have an educated community that can use the language in a way to benefit themselves and their country and I don’t see how anyone can deny that.

Referring to EMI at university, Nasser raised the question of whether English was relevant to all academic specialities; he also felt that English was imposed on the students:

Is it relevant to the people, especially here in *****¹? Where are they going to go, are they really going to use it? Do they need it? I don’t think it’s relevant for all

1. For ethical reasons, the name of the city has not been revealed.

subjects like this humanities track [...] they don't need that English. So why are they forced to do it?

By raising the last question, Nasser pointed to another issue that was addressed by three other participants who saw the English language and TEFL as being imposed on the students in the KSA. Nasser developed his argument and referred to the idea of student's lack of choice in terms of the learning of English: he referred to the newly established university preparatory year programmes where students receive one-year intensive EFL instruction before starting their undergraduate degree:

I think the main drawback for me is that the students here don't get a choice. If you're going to study whatever you need to study, you've got to go through English [...] they're forced to study English.

Moreover, according to Adam, "this causes students' dislike for English"; he also denounced the absence of choice and the fact that students were forced to learn English: "it has been forced upon them; students have no choice." Ali related both issues together (i.e. the need for learning English and the fact that students were forced to learn it) since according to him, TEFL was given too much importance and had been imposed: "it is over emphasised; they force people who don't need and don't want to learn English."

The above quotes reflect the views and opinions of the participants regarding the status of TEFL in the KSA. In addition, as shown in the following section, they made recurrent references to the books and the materials used in TEFL in the KSA drawing examples from their specific professional contexts.

4.4.1.1 Curriculum Issues

It is worth bearing in mind that all participants are employed as EFL instructors/lecturers in higher education in the KSA and their views reflect a range of opinions and suggestions in regard to curriculum-related issues. In total, eight participants made explicit references to the EFL materials used in the KSA. Fareed, for instance, raised a number of issues regarding the course books, which he thinks needs to be revised because it contains references to what he described as "not suitable from an Islamic point of view". Abdullah expressed a very similar view regarding the books that he described as containing "un-Islamic references". For Adam, two issues were a source of concern; books were not relevant to the students because "nothing relate to [their] life" and they were "inappropriate" because they contained references to the drinking of alcohol or images of "women improperly dressed". He also described the books as "manufactured versions of language [...] fake and unreal". Abdullah

also explicitly referred to these two points (i.e. the drinking of alcohol and women attire): “you know, the books often contain things related to drinking or the books have images of women that are dressed inappropriately.” This was also reported by Nasser who explained how he skipped some passages from the book: “In the book, [...] they had this thing about alcohol [...] they had this picture of a woman who was a bit scantily clad [...] I skipped through that and finished.”

A number of participants suggested making the materials more culturally sensitive to the local Saudi culture. Ahmed, for instance, broadly referred to cultural references and advocated that it would be preferable to use “textbooks that would be more in tune with the local culture”. I asked him to develop his point in relation to culture and suggested that course books should contain Islamic cultural and religious references, which has a positive effect on students:

We have to make the material reflect more our culture. [...] when we teach the past, we can use Islamic history, for example. We could use what happened at the dawn of Islam or when Islam was in the first stages. I think it would be easier for the students to understand because they know already this. I think that the books have to reflect the Islamic and religious culture.

Similarly, Abdullah alluded to these cultural references and explained that books should contain more “Arab references” or “mention Arabic names and civilisation”.

However, a number of participants mentioned that on the contrary, the books used in the KSA were adapted to the Middle East in general and to the KSA in particular. For instance, as reflected in his earlier quotes, although Nasser explained how the books contained improper references, he admitted that publishers were currently addressing these issues by making some changes in the books:

Now, they are making changes. They’ve got Middle East edition textbooks and we’re putting these things up. They’ve obviously recognized that there needs to be some kind of cultural sensitivity.

Even Ahmed who advocated for changes in the current textbooks, noticed that efforts were being made to adapt them to the local culture:

I don’t think this is taken into account unfortunately, although in the last couple of years they changed. For instance, for the basic English courses, they changed the Headway and chose a Headway that is designed for the Middle East, closer to the Middle Eastern culture.

Osman described Middle Eastern editions of EFL books were being “far more sensitive” to prevent potential cultural tensions with the local Saudi culture. He also illustrated his thought

with the issue of women attire:

They were even more tasteful than they were before now; hardly any pictures of women in the Western world and mostly covered up, and so on. I think some of the more obvious tensions between the culture and the Saudi culture, some of those are fretted away as a result of that.

Likewise, for Sami, the books had been “sanitised” and adapted to the target audience.

As the above quotes show, a number of participants made recommendations to review the materials used in TEFL while others believed the books used in the KSA were suitable and adapted to the local audience. Nevertheless, both views denote the importance of using EFL materials that reflect the local KSA culture.

To summarise the above findings, it is worth noticing that the participants felt that TEFL had been imposed on the students and that the material used could be a source of concern; however, they also pointed to the importance of the English language in today’s world. These views relate to other findings and provide insights into the research questions as it will be further discussed in the discussion chapter. The next category that emerged from the data is related to the possible impact of TEFL and the spread of English in the KSA on the Saudi culture.

4.5 TEFL and the KSA Culture

Participants discussed the impact of TEFL and the spread of English on the KSA local culture and the data revealed a range of views thematically organised under a category named “TEFL and the KSA culture” from which two main ideas emerged: (1) the participants’ understanding of the KSA culture and (2) the impact of TEFL on the KSA culture.

4.5.1 Participants' Understanding of the KSA Culture

The KSA culture was broadly described by the participants using a number of core attributes and values such as family, Islam and traditional Arab values. All the participants explicitly mentioned the Islamic religion as being one of the main aspects of the KSA culture. Abdullah, for instance, described the KSA culture as an “Islamic way of life” and Fareed explicitly addressed the significance of Islam to the culture and to the country as a whole: “Islam is a very important part of Saudi culture, it’s the official religion of Saudi Arabia; in essence, in principle, it’s the basis on which the state was founded”. Likewise, for Ahmed, one of the main aspects of the KSA culture was Islam that he described as having “a very big influence because it’s institutionalised”. For Osman, when thinking of the KSA culture, “the two things that come immediate to mind are religion and family.” Overall, Sami described the KSA as having a “strong cultural identity [and] values”. He added that Islam “moulded” the culture of the country and described the Islamic faith as being the main aspect of the KSA culture: “the main aspect is religion, and then, it seems like it revolves around that. Yeah, I think religion, to certain aspects, helps them mould their culture.” Likewise, Muhammad told me that he felt Islam was important within the society due to its outward manifestation as defined by society: “the exoteric aspect of Islam is very evident in Saudi society, or the outward aspects of what this society defines Islam to be are very evident in the society”. He clarified this point by explaining the outward aspects of Islam as “the practice of the faith –Islam– in accordance with the heritage of [the] country”.

With regards the cultural “heritage” of the KSA, as mentioned by Muhammad, five participants described the culture of the KSA as being made of traditional Arab values, such as Arab tribal traditions and the importance given to the language and to learning. Adam, for example, broadly described the KSA as being “a very traditional country” while Fareed specifically mentioned the importance of tribal values in the KSA culture: “importance is given to ties of kinship and to tribes and where you’ve come from and your lineage”. For Osman as well, the KSA culture was closely tied with traditional Bedouin culture, but he particularly focused on the importance of learning and the Arabic language:

I think intrinsic Bedouin culture, going back to the olden days, I wouldn’t say wealth and I probably would say learning and other things like more artistic tendencies like the value of the Arabic language.

Ahmed also talked about the importance of Arabic in the KSA culture and how it was influenced by Islam: “it’s still Arabic culture and it’s Islamic. Islam still has an enormous

impact on the language.” Muhammad referred to the KSA cultural heritage as being rich in oral traditions:

I think that there’s a very rich culture and rich heritage in these parts of the world –a literary culture, an oral culture of telling stories which necessarily develops language skills.

Furthermore, four participants mentioned the importance of family in the KSA culture. For example, Fareed generally described the KSA culture as “based strongly on family ties” while Osman explained that the family was given a great importance: “in connection with the position of religion in the lives of Saudis, the importance of family is great.” For Muhammad, family was an important aspect of the KSA culture and society:

A tremendous respect for family [...] and a knowledge of each other’s lives within the family. People sit together and they speak together. There is a hierarchy and there is respect within the family hierarchy

For Nasser, two main aspects characterised the KSA culture: Islam and family:

In terms of lifestyle then, and cultural lifestyle: this is a Muslim community. I don’t know if this is the first and foremost thing over here. This is Islam – number one. Number two, I think is family. These people are very, very family-oriented.

Finally, in relation to the preponderance of the Islamic religion in the KSA culture, Ahmed made a specific comment; he found that the KSA culture and society was paradoxical insofar as it was showing signs of Islamic conservatism and at the same time being very much influenced by the consumer society imported from the USA:

[There’s] a contrast between conservatism and people trying to stick to the letter of what they see as true Islam and at the same time we have McDonald’s and we have a lot of other things that’s imported, ready-made [...]. At the same time, this is a very conservative culture; you see a lot of paradoxes here.

The above data reflect the diversity and variety in the participants’ accounts of their conception of the KSA culture. Based on this, the participants expressed their views in relation to the impact of TEFL on the KSA culture as highlighted in the section below.

4.5.2 The impact of TEFL on the KSA Culture and Identity

The participants differed on the idea whether TEFL could affect the KSA culture. While a number of participants believed that TEFL had affected the KSA culture, others reported that it had not. Participants also expressed the view that the KSA culture could have been affected by factors other than TEFL. For example, the following quote from Fareed is a clear

illustration of the view held by seven participants who believed TEFL had not affected the KSA culture:

There's not necessarily the scope to affect a culture for a whole people, if you want it that way, exclusively through teaching English in a formal controlled modulated setting.

Ahmed shared this view and made a distinction between the impact of TEFL in the KSA and the impact of studying in an English speaking country: "I don't think the teaching of English per se has a very big impact on Saudi culture and Saudi youth. Probably people who go outside the country who live for a while". Likewise, Abdullah believed TEFL did not really affect the KSA culture apart from minor elements; however, he felt that TEFL had the potential to do so:

I don't think it has affected their culture but I see small things though; for example, the children refer to their father as "daddy" or mother as "mummy". You know, these sorts of things. They are significant, but they don't amount, you know, a full blown shift in cultures or anything like that. But it has the potential to do so.

According to Mohammed, the poor level of English proficiency he had witnessed in the KSA was an indication that TEFL did not have a significant impact on society to the point English would be used in homes; he used his personal experience to put across his point:

With my interaction with Saudi families I visited, the level of English is not [...] that high, so discussion in the house is not in English and the television programmes that I've seen people are watching are not in English. So whether the language has infiltrated into the home, I don't think so.

Sami believed learning a language entails "some form of assimilation" to the culture. In his opinion, "if you're using a language and you're changing your lifestyle according to that language, then you're leaving something from your own culture". However, he made a distinction between different places in the KSA. In his view, where he lives, he did not witness any significant change in the culture to affirm that TEFL had an impact on it; however, he admitted that other regions may have been affected:

I haven't seen the people in ***** change. Obviously, I don't have anything to compare it to, but I don't think the English language has impacted the people of ***** as much as it has done in the Eastern Province or in Riyadh.

He also made a similar comment than Ahmed who earlier made a distinction between learning English in the KSA and in an English speaking country: "I think it would become more evident for those Saudis that go to another country as opposed to Saudis that learn

English in Saudi Arabia.”

On the other hand, for some participants, TEFL did affect the KSA culture to a certain extent. For example, Nasser, who initially felt undecided about the issue, recognised that some people may have been affected by TEFL in a positive way. Although, he was the only teacher who expressed this view, he told me that he felt that the use of the English language had a positive impact on some of the people he had met:

I think it has affected some people positively. They seem to have a stronger work ethics. This is funny, this is positive, this is a massive positive. How they deal with people, their behaviour and everything else –it seems to have been coloured by the use of English.

Osman and Adam shared the view that only the older generations of Saudis had not been affected by TEFL or the English language spread. The following quote from Adam is indicative of this view: “you are talking about one section of the culture, because the older generations, I guess, have not been really affected.” For Osman, people have been affected by TEFL in a way or another and according to him, introducing English in the curriculum had an impact that he described as “encroachment”:

The fact that English is now part of the Saudi curriculum. [...] I don't think there are many people who are completely unaffected, except for maybe the oldest generation. I think that to some extent, the culture has encroached it, so seeing English taught in schools is a legitimisation of the West and of the language. These things probably, at least on a subconscious level and possibly more than that, do affect your culture.

Mohammed felt that TEFL and the spread of the English in the KSA could potentially “infringe” upon the KSA culture, particularly upon the Arabic language. He used concrete aspects from his teaching experience to illustrate his view:

English has the potential to infringe upon that traditional culture. When I speak to my students about Arabic literature or Arabic poetry or things like that, what they always seem to relate back to is: “yeah, my grandfather did that, and my father did that.” I ask them, “do you read Arabic?”. “No, if I'm going to read, I'm going to read in English because it's going to help me learn the language.” So maybe preserving aspects of culture, it seems that's being... that will be influenced by the spread of English.

Abdullah insisted on the interconnection between language and culture and the potential effect English could have on the local culture although, as seen in his previous quote, he did not believe TEFL had affected the KSA culture. In his view, TEFL “definitely had the potential” to affect the culture, “because of the culture that comes with it”. For him, “you don't learn the language without accepting some of the aspects of the culture”.

Similarly, as explained earlier, Ahmed did not think the KSA culture had been affected by TEFL at this stage; however, he believed that in the future, TEFL may affect the local culture. Like Abdullah, he justified his view by highlighting the close connection between language and culture and made a specific reference to the American culture:

Whenever we teach English, teach any language or learn a language, it comes with the culture. [...] I think the teaching of English in Saudi Arabia is making, and will make, people more influenced by or under the influence of English, especially American culture.

As the two previous quotes from Abdullah and Ahmed showed, references to the connection between language and culture were made when addressing the impact of TEFL on the KSA culture. Furthermore, the data revealed that seven participants felt that the KSA culture was being affected by cultural or ideological aspects rather than by TEFL itself. For instance, when addressing the impact of TEFL on the KSA culture, Adam mentioned that TEFL was just one factor among many others: “TEFL is just one section of lots of things affecting Saudi culture: pop culture, different ideologies”. Mohammed also reported that “the kind of popular culture [was] far more potent in amending the way of life in these parts of the world than the teaching of English.” In addition, he minimised the influence of TEFL compared to other more influential aspects such as technological advancements:

I don't think that they learn those things in the classroom. I don't think they learn that from the English language. I think that's down to technology. That's down to development, access to information, other influences other than English although they may be in the medium of the English language, like the internet or whatever else.

For Sami, the influence of Western culture on the local culture occurs through the media, the Internet and the TV or the cinema rather than through formal EFL instruction:

I don't know if it's through learning English or cinema or in television. Obviously, they have access to the internet. I would say Hollywood, if anything. But I don't think it's the actual learning of the language. I think it's an appeal of a foreign culture. I think not necessarily in the classroom but through the media.

To summarise the above findings¹, the data highlighted the participants' understanding of the KSA culture and whether they believed it had been affected by TEFL or the spread of English. This suggests that the participants demonstrate a certain level of awareness of the possible implications of both TEFL and the spread of English for the local culture, thus

¹ Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2

relating macro level issues to micro level ones. This aspect is of particular interest to the study and will be further discussed in the next chapter. The following section present how the participants viewed the relationship between TEFL and Islam.

4.6 TEFL & Islam

The study investigated the participants' perceptions of the relationship between Islam and TEFL. The data demonstrated that the participants viewed this relationship between in three different ways: in terms of (a) conflict, (b) coexistence and (c) complementarity. In total, eight participants believed there could be a conflictual relationship between Islam and TEFL in some way (although not all of them subscribed to this view) while four teachers believed TEFL and Islam could complement each other. Based on that, a number of participants made suggestions to adapt TEFL to Islamic requirements or Islamic teachings. On the other hand, five participants seemed to view Islam and TEFL as coexisting. In addition, the data revealed how three participants managed what was perceived as a dilemma in the case of a conflictual relationship between TEFL and Islam. Therefore, the data was analysed and classified under the category "TEFL and Islam" from which four ideas emerged: (1) coexistence, (2) complementarity, (3) conflict and, (4) the dilemma.

4.6.1 Coexistence

Five participants described the relationship between TEFL and Islam in terms of coexistence. For instance, Ahmed mentioned that because English was being taught for very pragmatic reasons in the KSA (i.e. for the purpose of pursuing studies in the medium of English) and because there was no plan to teach EFL with an Islamic outlook, he described TEFL and Islam as "being there" and coexisting:

I don't think there's an overall planning of TEFL, of the way English is taught in this country and Islamic culture. So I would say they are just there, they coexist, because the way English is taught here is just for very practical, very pragmatic reasons.

Nasser rejected the idea of conflict between Islam and TEFL and considered TEFL and Islam as separate: "I don't have a problem with teaching English and Islam. I feel that there is no conflict. Unless I'm doing something bad in my job, this is not against my Islam". Likewise, Sami perceived TEFL and Islam as two separate entities; in his opinion, learning and using English were separate from Islam and did not affect it whatsoever: "I've kind of kept them separate. What I do is my job and my religion is outside of the classroom; [...] I would say it's coexistent, especially on an individual level." Abdullah perceived this

relationship from an Islamic perspective and considered that as long as religious scholars did not emit a ruling on the permissibility or not of the teaching of English according to Islam law, he did not perceive any tension: “for me it is OK and I haven’t heard of scholars say this is not permissible or not good; it’s a job for me”. Similarly, Mohammed did not perceive any sort of conflictual relationship between TEFL and Islam. For him, TEFL did not seem to be the source of any dilemma as he did not perceive any sort of tension between the English language and Islam:

I don’t feel a divide within myself; [...] therefore, I don’t feel uncomfortable teaching the language. I don’t feel that there’s any tension between those two – between my faith and my identity, or my faith and my language.

The above quotes illustrate that the relationship between TEFL and Islam is perceived by some participants in terms of simple coexistence; however, at the other end of this spectrum, the relationship between Islam and TEFL was described by almost all the participants in terms of conflict as presented in the following section.

4.6.2 Conflict

While not all the participants subscribed to the view that Islam and TEFL were intrinsically in conflict, almost all them (eight in total) recognised that certain aspects within TEFL could be problematic from an Islamic point of view. To illustrate this point, Fareed told me he did not perceive any conflict between his faith and TEFL but acknowledged there were elements that could be a source of tension:

People may say –and they do say– that there are harms. There’s a viewpoint perhaps that through learning a language, in particular English, that this opens up the doors or opportunities to engage in things which are perhaps contradictory to one’s faith.

Likewise, Adam expressed the idea that this relationship was not monolithic; he explained that although he perceived the relationship between TEFL and Islam as conflictual in “reality”, he admitted that, “realistically”, TEFL and Islam were coexistent. The fact that TEFL was his job seemed determining in his response: “in reality it is definitely a conflict but realistically, I will have to talk about coexistence. I mean, myself as an English teacher, there is definitely a conflict but realistically it is my job.” As his previous quote showed, Ahmed believed TEFL and Islam coexisted; however, he also thought there might be instances where, because of the materials used, TEFL could be in a conflictual situation with Islam: “in teaching you can come up with a situation where you have conflict between Islamic values and the material you are teaching.” According to Osman, “there could be a tension

between the two cultures” (i.e. the KSA Islamic culture and the Western culture associated with TEFL), but in his opinion, the main source of tension did not lie in TEFL or in the language as such. He believed that TEFL and the spread of English were symptomatic of a wider problem: “the main source of tension is grounded in hegemony [...] it’s not the language as such.” Abdullah mentioned that at times, he perceived a conflict between Islam and TEFL, which he referred to as “inner conflict” or “dilemma”; however, he believed that being aware of the dilemma helped him addressing it:

I do see a conflict between what I’m doing and my Islamic values. It’s something that I have to address within myself at times or in the way that I do things. [...] The fact that you may be aware of inner conflicts it makes you more aware and sensitive. [...] If I were not aware, I would not be able to address it.

Mohammed expressed his opinion about the views of a number of Muslims who perceived some kind of conflictual relationship between Islam and TEFL. He believed the interpretation of one’s faith was a determining element in the nature of this perception and that the source of this perception was rooted in an anti-Western sentiment:

There are different understandings because some people are just, it seems, more just anti-West. They haven’t thought about anything. They haven’t really reflected any deeper about these things. So if they’re just anti-West, –I’m sounding very stereotypical– they are then just transposing this confusion onto the easiest possible target, and that is, “we’re teaching our children haraam¹ we’re engaged in haraam”.

Likewise, according to Fareed, the perception of the relationship between TEFL and Islam was partly derived from the understanding of one’s faith:

The way they perceive things is different [...]. It’s the way a person interprets their faith, so to speak. [...] People, even in their faith, they have different ideologies as well. There’s a whole sort of spectrum of ideologies, and there’s a whole spectrum of people in a particular faith.

As for Sami, he referred to his personal experience to explain how TEFL could be a source of tension with Islam in general and with students’ religious beliefs in particular. He spoke about incidents that occurred at his institution when non-Muslim EFL teachers attempted to spread their own beliefs in the course of teaching. In his opinion, that is why TEFL and religion in general should coexist to avoid causing tensions:

There have been problems in the establishment that I work in, where people have actually tried to spread their own beliefs through their own language to

¹ Islamically impermissible

students who believe something totally different. Then you have a conflict. It's important for those individuals or those teachers that are doing that to be professional enough to not confuse the two things.

The above quotes highlighted the perceived conflictual relationship between TEFL and Islam and the materials used were often seen as the source of the tension. In addition to coexistence and conflict, the relationship between Islam and TEFL was also seen in terms of complementarity as presented in the next section.

4.6.3 Complementarity

Four participants expressed how TEFL could not only be compatible with Islam but also encouraged by Islam. Fareed did not perceive any sort of conflict between his faith and TEFL and on the contrary, he believed there were aspects within TEFL that could be praiseworthy Islamically-speaking:

There's nothing that is objectionable in principle to teaching or learning a language. What's wrong with that? I've seen people of religious nature who I teach English to –they want to learn English. They want to use English for good uses. From their point of view, they are using English for propagating their faith potentially, for interacting with people from different communities.

Ahmed expressed the view that learning English could be encouraged by Islam; in fact he described it as “highly recommended in Islam” and supported his opinion with a Prophetic Hadith:

We have even a hadith by the prophet that if you learn the language of other people, then at least you can protect yourself against their evil deeds, if ever they wanted to harm you. So foreign language is always good. Also, if you want to look at it from a strictly Islamic perspective, then when you learn foreign languages, this opens the doors for you to spread Islam.

Likewise, Osman metaphorically described how Islam could be spread through using TEFL in a positive way to resist hegemony:

Islam could use English. It could flip the script completely and use English to spread Islam. There are pockets of people using English well. In America, or England, but it's a counter wind against a prevailing wind which is blowing very firm in the opposite direction.

Mohammed also believed Islam encouraged learning languages. In his view, this could broaden the minds of Muslim learners and help them deal with and address what would be deemed as acceptable or unacceptable from an Islamic point of view:

I think mastery of a language is something that will be encouraged. [...] I think that broadening someone's mind to be able to understand different cultures and

to be able to take the good from it and to be able to distinguish what we perceive to be Islamically acceptable and what we perceive not to be.

Furthermore, two participants suggested adapting TEFL to Islamic teachings. For instance, Ahmed advocated changing the syllabus and adapting it to Islamic principles, using what he called “Muslim English” and referred to other Muslim countries:

The way English is used in other Muslim cultures: it’s perfect English but it’s Islamic, if you want to look at it this way. It’s Muslim English. Yes. So it’s cultured English. [...] I was thinking about that because if you are teaching English to Muslim students, I think the syllabus itself has to be changed. [...] I think that the books have to reflect [...] Islamic cultural values.

Likewise, Adam referred to another Muslim country, Malaysia, “the syllabi are checked and include Islamic elements”. He also suggested adapting the textbook with Islamic cultural references: “why not teach English with an Islamic culture? How many Muslims are there in England or the USA?”

Moreover, five participants mentioned how the English language could serve the Islamic religion notably by reaching out to non-Muslims. For instance, Abdullah explained that “Muslims [could be] learning English so that they could go out and giving Daawah¹ to English speaking people.” Fareed told me that he had met a number of “people of religious nature [...] using English for propagating their faith”. Osman and Adam both evoked the general aims of EFL in the KSA that explicitly mention the preaching of Islam to non-Muslims using the English language. According to Osman, “one of the purported aims of the Saudi education system is to use English as a means of giving Daawah according to Islam” while for Adam, “the initial idea for learning English in Saudi Arabia [is] to be able to give Daawah to non-Muslims”. Mohammed did not explicitly use the term Daawah but explained that English could be useful to articulate ideas related to the Islamic faith:

If someone who has a genuine understanding of this faith can grasp the English language and can take some ownership of that, not to the expense of anyone else but be able to use it and to converse in it and to be able to articulate ideas in that language, then there’s potential in that for helping people to overcome some of the challenges that they face. Even emerging works in the Islamic spiritual tradition are written in English. The acquisition of English language opens that door

For Nasser, mastering the English language was important and useful in teaching Islam to

1. Preaching Islam.

non-Muslims, but also to Muslims who do not know the Arabic language:

If you want to speak to people about your religion –we’ve got a lot of Westerners over here. Westerners sometimes are curious about Islam –the non-Muslims. Even some Muslims, some of us, we come over here and we don’t know Islam so well, but when you want to talk to people, if you don’t speak Arabic, how are you going to get information from people? So it is useful.

Even Sami who believed Islam and TEFL coexisted asserted the importance of the English language in Islam, precisely for the same reasons: “for the spread of the Islamic religion, the language of English is very important.” He added that knowledge of the English language could widen the understanding of the religion and its variety in terms of practice:

Learning the language or speaking to people, it can perhaps develop an understanding of Islam that also exists elsewhere as well. Islam is fundamentally the same but the way it’s practised is different.

The above quotes illustrate the richness of the data in terms of the participants’ perceptions of the relationship between TEFL and Islam and the following section addresses how this perception is managed by the participants particularly in the case of a perceived conflictual relationship between TEFL and Islam.

4.6.4 The Dilemma

Adam’s previous quote showed how, “in reality”, he believed there was a conflict between his faith and TEFL but that he had to be “realistic” about the issue. When I questioned him about how he dealt with this perceived conflict, he admitted he was confronted with a difficult dilemma. He described his situation as being faced with two solutions and that he had to choose between the lesser of the two evils, namely going back to the UK and facing religious discrimination or teaching EFL in the KSA and enjoying religious freedom while being but a small part of a global wider problem to which he was not the direct cause of:

It is the lesser of two evils. I would go back to England? I wanted to live in KSA. What could I do? It’s a dilemma between me staying here or leaving. We are a cog in a big machine. I’m not at the fore front. I hope Allah will forgive me for the greater intention; to live in an Islamic country. There are many things I wouldn’t be doing in the UK like practicing Islam. I see the bigger picture and I’m just part of the problem I am not causing it. These are unconscious choices I don’t think about.

Abdullah’s awareness of the conflict helped him address his inner dilemma and believed that the necessity of learning English was such that in order for Muslims to benefit from technological progress, his situation as an English teacher was important insofar as he felt like helping the Muslims:

I give myself the excuse that unfortunately we're in a position where a lot of technological and industrial advances, [...] require them to know the English language. So it's a kind of balancing between, giving them the tool and hoping and encouraging them to take what they're doing seriously.

Likewise, Ali mentioned that being a Muslim, he did not feel comfortable about teaching EFL in the KSA because in his opinion, it was not Islamically acceptable. However, like Adam, he was trying to look at other overriding benefits that could make his position more acceptable from an Islamic point of view:

When I go to the classroom I am 50-50, because I am part of it. If I had the choice... I can see the benefit and the harm. Some scholars say it is haraam and this is what makes it 50-50 in me. Obviously, they will benefit from it. I can seek Allah's reward in doing this. We can't change anything, but we can help the Muslims, and we can benefit the Muslims in reading writing, time keeping, study skills. There are good things we can teach the Muslims and seek Allah's reward. But I have mixed feelings. Islam teaches patience, so I remember why we are here, that is to do hijrah and seek knowledge. I see my children, we have the mosque, the prayer. The only way is that Hadith: "benefit your brother". [...] Plus the work environment is halal¹, I pray on time and it is a Muslim system.

Although Abdullah had to address this inner dilemma, he also believed his presence as a Muslim EFL teacher was important for the local Muslim community. Being an EFL teacher in the KSA, aware of the tensions that may arise in the course of teaching English, his presence was Islamically and culturally preferable for the students rather than having non-Muslim teachers potentially dealing with inappropriate issues with the students:

In fact, it's important for us to be here. There are non-Muslims bringing a culture with them and because these are so young and they're exposed to this culture and those who love English may be in conflicts with their families [...] and they may become confused from an Islamic point of view of what is halal and haram and also from a cultural point of view, they may begin to challenge certain things in their culture.

The above quotes show how some participants addressed what they perceived as a dilemma and that their decisions were closely linked with their understanding of their faith. It is interesting to note that some participants held views that may appear contradictory on the surface; however, this seems to indicate that the relationship between TEFL and Islam was not always perceived in a monolithic or dichotomous way. Mohammed, for instance, rejected the "trench mentality" that consists in looking at the influence of English as inherently negative but explained that the perception of the relationship between TEFL and Islam

1. Islamically permissible

stems from one's understanding of faith:

If we say that there is an inherently negative message carried in the English language or that the influence of English is by definition negative, then what do we advocate in that case then? [...] I don't know what we would be advocating as an alternative to that. It's kind of just like a trench mentality. [...] I think that's rooted in a person's understanding of their faith. If we divide the world into beyond conceptual, beyond the idea of "this is a Muslim country, and this is not," –because I think that's talking about majority of the population– meaning that "these are the good, and this is the bad" and "this is a positive area, and this is a negative area. These are negative influences. Everything that comes from that is always negative." If we've created that kind of divide in our mind or in our understanding of faith, if we define ourselves in that manner, then anything that belongs to the other side is going to be negative.

To sum up this category¹, the data clearly demonstrate that the relationship between Islam and TEFL was not perceived in monolithic terms; this point relates to one of the core issues raised by the study and, therefore, it seems particularly important to discuss why this relationship is perceived in this way in the next chapter. In addition, the data also suggests that the perception of the relationship between Islam and TEFL is derived from the understanding of one's faith, which is a fundamental epistemological issue that will be discussed further in the next chapter. This points to the importance of Islam in the participants' lives as presented in the next section.

4.7 The Place of Islam in Teachers' Lives

The study investigated how participants managed the perceived relationship between Islam and TEFL and almost all of them (eight) explicitly referred to Islam as impacting on their professional practice as EFL teachers. These data show that their decisions as teachers, their pedagogical choices and their attitude towards their profession were largely inspired by Islamic teachings or by the desire to please God. The issue of proselytism –Daawah²– was addressed by six participants although some of them refrained from proselytising within their institution. Furthermore, it appears that the participants related to the issue of work ethics in terms of the impact of faith on their role as EFL teachers. Therefore, the data revealed "the place of Islam in teachers' lives" and three ideas emerged from this category: (1) the impact of Islam on teaching, (2) proselytism in TEFL and (3) Islam and work ethics.

4.7.1 The impact of Faith on Teaching

¹ Sections 4.6.1 to 4.6.4

² Preaching Islam

All but one participant reported that their Islamic faith had an impact on their roles as EFL teachers. Abdullah for example, explained how his faith impacted on all his actions, not only as a teacher but also as an individual; he referred to his faith as his “core values” and explained that “it impacts on everything that [he does] because it’s who [he is]. He also explained how part of his choices as a teacher were informed by his Islamic beliefs and particularly referred to the teaching material. He broadly described the impact of Islam as “positive” because it helped him work within the boundaries of “pleasing of Allah”. In addition, his choices of materials depended on the extent to which he perceived them in accordance with Islamic principles:

The things I’m willing to teach are determined by my beliefs and the things I may leave off or try to replace are again related to my beliefs. The things I’m willing to do in the classroom. From my perception, it’s a very positive impact because I limit myself to what I believe is pleasing to Allah.

Fareed illustrated the impact of his faith over his job with a concrete example from his teaching experience. He told me how he adapted an activity by including an Islamic element to it and also explained that his choice was motivated by his religion:

Therefore, I basically adapted the activity and I actually gave the students a choice. [...] I included a famous reciter of the Quran [...] If they wanted to use a reciter of the Quran instead of a singer, [...] then I left it to the students. [...] it’s better to use reciter for the Quran. That’s my personal preference. Of course that’s because of my religion.

Likewise, Adam explained how he adapted the teaching material to his religious beliefs: “when something’s wrong in the book, I avoid it because it is against my religion”. Ahmed addressed the topic of the impact of his faith on his profession and referred to classroom experience and to the teaching materials. He told me how he sometimes tried to adapt the material to make it “more culturally and Islamically acceptable” and tries “to not forget about Islam” in the course of teaching. He also described these decisions as “purely religious” and “based on [his] own beliefs”. Osman also explained that he adapted the material “an Islamic viewpoint”, which was motivated by his feeling of “God watching” him. Adam also referred to the presence of “Allah” and his faith which he felt with him at all times, even in the classroom: “It’s not like you enter into the classroom and you forget Allah and your religion.” Mohammed also explained the impact of his faith and stressed on its unconscious and intrinsic nature. In his view, his Islamic values impacted on his actions and speech and described Islam as “a source of peace”:

It’s something that I have. I don’t wake up in the morning and say “today I want

to go and be an English Muslim teacher or whatever.” You just be yourself and if those values become evident, then that just comes through the discourse.

Nasser stressed the importance of faith in his life in general and in his professional life in particular by explaining how his secular requirements were intertwined with his religious ones:

Everything about what I do, faith has impacted on that because if there’s a moral dynamic, it’s a faith issue. If there’s any kind of work-related dynamic, it’s a faith issue. [...] Other people may not feel like that or may not even believe that. They can separate their religious and secular requirements, but I can’t do that.

Sami was the only one who expressed the view that his faith had no impact on his role as an EFL teacher: “I don’t think my religion impacts my role of teaching” because he believed his faith and his jobs were “separate”.

Based on the above, for almost all the participants Islam impacted on the participants’ professional practice particularly in terms of teaching practice and material selection. The next section presents the subcategory related to the issue of proselytism and TEFL.

4.7.2 Proselytism in TEFL

The notion of proselytism was recurrent in the data although not all the participants expressively declared they engaged in proselytism through teaching. The issue was addressed by six participants; three of them declared that despite the instructions they received not to address religion in the classroom, they did not see a problem in talking about Islam with their students. For instance, Ali declared he sometimes did Daawah¹: “I do Daawah; I talk about Islam.” I was told by Osman and Nasser that teachers (Muslims and non-Muslims alike) were instructed by their respective institutions not to address religious issues in the classroom; however, Osman did not see a problem with talking about God and the Quran with his Muslim students: “I don’t personally see a problem whilst being careful and not getting into any potentially denominational differences with reminding, for example, students of God’s words in the Quran.” Likewise, Fareed felt that him being a Muslim, his students being Muslims and the country Islamic, he could allow himself a certain flexibility:

In the classroom, religion is not part of what you’re teaching, but the thing is that, at the end of the day, I am a Muslim and I’m teaching in a country where Islam is the official religion and I’m teaching Muslim students. The boundaries don’t have to be so strict necessarily.

¹ Preaching Islam

Mohammed, on the contrary, rejected the idea of overtly preaching his religion: “if I do achieve change within my own self and people can witness that, then that’s a positive thing, but not to the extent that I’m going to go in there and ‘today, I’m going to preach’.” Likewise, Sami did not like bringing religion in the classroom: “I don’t feel comfortable bringing religion into my teaching in any way.”

The data revealed that although the issue was disputed among the participants, only three participants declared preaching Islam in the EFL classroom; however, the findings show that Islam had a direct impact on the way the participants accomplished their professional duties. This aspect of the data, as presented in the next subcategory, revealed the importance of Islam in relation to work ethics.

4.7.3 Islam and Work Ethics

The impact of Islam on the participants’ professional lives was often addressed in relation to professional ethics. Five participants spoke about the impact of Islam on their work ethics. Fareed for instance, raised the question whether his role was influenced by his professionalism or by his Islamic faith: “is the fact that whatever I do for my job really... Is the core of it because of my Islam or is it because of my general professionalism?” Fareed raised an important question, and among the participants, five believed their work ethics were informed by their Islamic faith. Even Fareed who first seemed unsure as to what informed his role as an EFL teacher declared that his faith encouraged him to uphold high professional and academic standards:

Islam encourages perfection in whatever you do. If a person conducts himself properly –and just purely from an academic point of view, as a teacher, or from a pedagogical point of view, as you can say– they can see the effort somebody has put in behind the teaching and trying to help them, and they appreciate it.

Osman described the impact of Islam on his professional attitude and referred to issues of time keeping and respect for teachers and students. Although he believed these values and attitudes were upheld by the Islamic religion, he also affirmed they were embedded in Western culture:

Things like that, I think, are absolutely tied up with your faith because our faith teaches us to keep our promises, to honour our arrangements, and it shows a respect as well. Islam is constantly about honouring your guests, honouring your neighbour, honouring everybody. If you don’t turn up to class on time, and yet they’re there to be taught by you and you’re not there, and likewise if the student comes in and interrupts you when you’re already teaching something, it’s not honouring anybody. It’s not respecting anybody. Faith is tied up with that, but

it's not to say that these are actually values that are mostly built into Western ideals.

He added that his faith and his relationship with God reinforced these values and attitudes: "Faith for me reinforces it, [...] God is watching you regarding this, if you don't do what you have to do, it's not just the other person, it's also between you and God". Nasser also made the connection between Western professionalism and Islam and explained how he was much more conscious of his accountability in Islamic terms by bearing in mind God's punishment:

At work, we have to follow certain letters of the law. If you have to do that, you have to be in class at this time. You have to do this. I like to be strict on this. This is a Western background, but it's also a religious duty because we are taking money from this institution to uphold the laws. And the Islamic accountability by far is far greater for me because I don't want to be punished for not doing my job.

As he previously indicated, he found it hard to differentiate between religious and secular requirements. As he metaphorically put it, his professional duties were intertwined with his religious ones: "there's no separation of church and state [...] over this particular issue because following your job properly or doing your job is an Islamic requirement." Likewise, Abdullah explained how his Islamic faith in general and his consciousness of the presence of Allah in particular impacted on his profession. He referred to time keeping, conscientiousness and being well-prepared for the students:

I guess from a social perspective my faith impacts on my profession in that way. The use of my time at work, I try to be conscientious and prepared for my students, I don't want to cheat them of anything. You know they often ask: "will you let us go please? We won't tell anyone! No one will know!" And I tell them: "you know, you don't have to tell anyone, Allah sees everything."

Finally, Sami also mentioned that being a Muslim, he felt he had to work harder to deserve the salary he was getting; however, he made it clear that his Islamic faith did not make him more professional than any of his non-Muslim colleagues:

As an English teacher, I think being a Muslim, you just have to be fair on the income that you get. But then again, I wouldn't say that non-Muslims are less professional than I am. But I have a duty if I'm getting paid to make sure that I'm giving 110%.

He also explained how Islam served as a catalyst to professionalism: "that fuels... For me, it's Islam, but for someone else it might be ethics."

The above particularly dealt with the importance of Islam in the participants' professional lives as Muslim EFL teachers, which relates to one of the key issues of concern for the study:

connections between issues of faith and ELT. Therefore, based on the above findings, it seems fundamental to discuss in the next chapter the impact of the Islamic faith on TEFL and on the participants' professional practice. The following section presents how the participants viewed their role as Western Muslim EFL teachers.

4.8 The Western Muslim EFL Teacher

The participants talked about their role as Western Muslim EFL teachers, which has been included under the category: "the Western Muslim EFL teacher". Four subcategories emerged based on the issues addressed by the participants: (1) the rapport with Muslim students, (2) the role model and (3) the bridge between Islam and the West.

4.8.1 The Rapport with Muslim Students

Six participants felt that their Islamic faith established an atmosphere of brotherhood between the teacher and their fellow Muslim students. For instance, Ahmed believed that being a Muslim made his students feel "closer" to him as he shared a number of cultural characteristics with them due to his Islamic faith:

They feel closer to you probably because you are more or less from the same culture and also because you are more aware, I think, than other teachers of the cultural differences, between what we are teaching and the students' background.

Abdullah considered that Islam established a brotherhood relationship with his students: "I see them more than just students, you know, they're my brothers [...] they're like my sons." Adam explained that Islam established a rapport with his students: "they look at you and think that you want the best interest for them because you are a Muslim; you build like a rapport." For Mohammed, Islam had a positive impact on the rapport Muslim teachers entertained with their students:

Being visibly Muslim, students will come in and will greet you in the Islamic way and will have certain expectations of you, and then they know that the teacher has certain expectations of them, so it does change them. I think it can work positively.

According to Nasser, Islam made a great difference in terms of his relationship with his students to whom he affiliated because of the shared Islamic faith: "I think it's a major plus because they're always happy to know that you're Muslim; there's this immediate kind of affiliation." Sami expressed the view that "teaching another student from a Muslim background, you can at least have empathy."

These participants believed that Islam contributed to establishing a certain relationship with

students. Furthermore, a number of teachers talked about how they could serve as role models for their students, as presented in the following section.

4.8.2 The Role Model

Five participants held the view that as Western EFL teachers, they could serve as role models for their Muslim students. Among them, Fareed explained how being “a practising” Muslim from the West, he could convey a positive image to his students:

They know that, fair enough, this guy is practising as a Muslim. He’s from the West. And the thing is, what they see in my work is a standard for them to see as well –that they can see that this guy is working for us. [...] You’re portraying an image here; there’s something being conveyed.

In a very similar way, Adam saw his position as a Western Muslim teacher as a good example for the students: “for some of the students it can be like a reminder for them; it can perhaps encourage the students to be more Islamic if we can say that, like a role model.” Likewise, Abdullah evoked how he could set examples for his Muslim students by conveying the image of educated religious people: “we are not only teaching English; we bring with us an academic culture, we can be examples of educated people and practising Muslims.” As a teacher, Osman felt obliged to convey a certain image and uphold certain values: “I’m still meant to be an example; a teacher is meant to be certain things, students are meant to respect the teacher because a teacher is meant to uphold certain values”. Being a Western Muslim teacher, Nasser hoped to inspire his Muslim students –his “fellow brothers”– by passing on to them a set of skills:

I’ve got a skill, I’ve done it quite well. Why not raise the level of my fellow brothers over here in Saudi Arabia? I could really help the students, encourage them. [...] Maybe we can inspire them to push on. I’m a Western Muslim. We give them an example of how Western Muslims behave.

The above quotes show that most participants act as role models for their students by portraying a certain image to them. In addition, as explained in the next section, some of them described themselves as bridges between Islam and the West.

4.8.3 The Bridge between Islam and the West

Some participants viewed themselves as bridging between Islam and the West. For instance, Adam used the metaphor of the “bridge” and the “window”; in his view, the fact that he was a Western Muslim diminished the impact the Western way of life could have on the students:

A lot of these youngsters are growing up with technology and Internet and all of these things you know. I think they can see you as a bridge to that kind of life

and that world. But if you're a Muslim it can perhaps, it's like, they're not getting a full whack you see. [...] you know they see you like a window to that kind of world.

Similarly, Ali metaphorically described himself as a “buffer” between the Muslim students and the West and said he acted as a protector against a perceived evil from the West: “we are like a buffer between them and anything from the West. We can tell them this is wrong and we can protect the students.” Mohammed also used the metaphor of the bridge between Islam and the Western world: “they necessarily see you as a bridge between these two cultures.” Nasser believed that as a Western Muslim, he could dismiss a number of misconceptions about Westerners and also inform his students about what it is like to be Muslim in the West: “we give them an example how Western Muslims behave. We don't think that our students then have a view of life in the West like Westerners are all like party animals or whatever.” Sami also believed he had a role to play as a Muslim teacher and described himself as an ambassador of the English language. He also explained that he could correct a number of misconceptions students might have about the West.

To summarise the last category from the findings, it should be noted that the participants emphasised on the relationship they had with their fellow Muslim students and on their role as Western Muslim teachers; therefore, it seems particularly interesting to investigate this issue in greater depth as it relates to one of the key questions raised by the study. Moreover, some participants metaphorically described their role as Western Muslim teachers of EFL in the KSA, which is an interesting aspect of the data that needs to be delved into as explained in the section below.

4.9 Participants' Use of Figurative Language

The above analysis revealed an unexpected feature of the data present throughout the participants' responses: figurative language. This aspect appeared as a salient feature of the way in which participants conveyed their opinions, views and perceptions. Their use of metaphors was particularly significant in terms of frequency, in terms of the powerful meaning they carried and also because they related to the core issues that emerged from the data. As a matter of example¹, participants metaphorically described their students as “brothers” or described themselves as a “bridge”, a “window”, a “door” or a “buffer”

¹ See section 4.8.1

between the West and the Islam¹. In addition, some participants referred to TEFL as a “package”², as a “product” and also as a “tool” or a “vehicle”³. The above metaphors are indicative of the recurrent use of such linguistic device; therefore, due to its frequency and recurrence in the data, figurative language served as a connecting thread between all the findings. This characteristic of the data was a fundamental aspect in the way the findings were discussed as explained in the next chapter. Prior to discussing the findings of the study, the following section concludes the chapter with a summary explaining how the findings provided insights into the research questions.

4.10 Summary

The above chapter helped gain a greater understanding of the issues raised by the study, which can be divided into three main points: (1) the views of Western Muslim EFL teachers on the spread of English globally and in the KSA and the role of TEFL within this process, (2) their perception on the relationship between Islam and TEFL and (3) how and why they manage this perceived relationship.

In regard to the first point, the views of the participants revolve around three main ideas. First, from the participants’ point of view, TEFL contributes and participates to the global spread of English. Second, the global spread of English was also viewed as value-laden and linked to political and ideological values. More specifically, the global spread of English and TEFL were viewed as a manifestation of Western hegemony, hence the references to linguistic imperialism for instance. Also, most participants associated the global spread of English with certain values that TEFL contributes to propagate such as democracy, materialism or a Western conception of education. Few teachers explicitly disagreed with that point and insisted on the value-free nature of TEFL in the KSA. In addition, all the participants viewed the global spread of English as a vector of Western culture since, according to them, the English language was not being divorced from specific expressions of Western culture. Particular references were made to the predominance of American culture and its connection to the global spread of English. These two points also explain why all the participants but one voiced concerns about the EFL materials, which were described as culturally not adapted to the students. Finally, despite the above, all the participants

¹ See section 4.8.3

² See section 4.3.4

³ See section 4.3.6

mentioned the benefits and the advantages behind the global spread of English. More specifically, the data revealed that the global spread of English was viewed as a facilitator in terms of communication, cross cultural understanding and also international business and trade. Therefore, due to its lingua franca status, the English language was considered by all the participants as a necessary tool to acquire in today's world. These three issues relate to a fundamental question raised by the study and need to be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

The second point relates to the participants' perceptions of the relationship between Islam and TEFL, which was viewed in terms of conflict, coexistence and complementarity. Participants were divided in this issue and did not hold monolithic views; they perceived this relationship in more than one way. This seems to indicate they do not understand this relationship in a dichotomous manner and that this relationship cannot be explained in terms of coexistence or complementarity or conflict only. Instead, the data suggest that participants perceived Islam and TEFL as coexisting, conflicting or complementing each other at the same time. This issue is of particularly interesting and will be further discussed in the next chapter. Moreover, the findings also demonstrated that the participants perceived TEFL as containing elements that were a source of tension with Islam; the EFL course books seem to be the main source of tension because of their "un-Islamic" references in terms of beliefs, values and culture. The relationship between TEFL and Islam was also described in terms of coexistence most participants who considered Islam and TEFL as two distinct entities existing side by side. It is interesting to note that some participants expressed the view that TEFL was compatible with Islam and that certain aspects of TEFL were praiseworthy Islamically-speaking. For instance, the idea of using the English language to preach Islam was recurrent in their responses.

Finally, it is worth noticing that the perception of this relationship was closely linked with the understanding of one's faith, hence the variety of their responses, which suggests that the nature of this perception is not a fixed reality but the mere result of their own reflection inspired by the understanding of their faith. This may explain why several participants alluded to the notion of haram¹ and halal² and that they could not declare TEFL as haram. Indeed, participants made a clear difference between the Islamic religious ruling, which might deem

¹ Islamically impermissible

² Islamically permissible

TEFL as halal or haram, and personal subjective perceptions that mainly emanate from the understanding of one's faith. This raises a fundamental epistemological questions that will be discussed in the next chapter.

The third major finding that emerged from the data helped gain a greater understanding of the way in which the participants managed the relationship between TEFL and Islam. It appears that the Islamic religion plays a preponderant role in the way they perceive and manage this relationship, as it has been shown from the detailed accounts they made of the importance of Islam in their lives. The participants articulated how their Islamic faith impacted on their actions as individuals and as teachers too. Moreover, Islam seems to be a determining element in explaining or justifying their perceptions; for instance, when participants discussed problematic aspects within TEFL in terms of curriculum, they always referred to Islamic principles. In other words, what seems to cause tension is labelled as “un-Islamic” or “Islamically unsuitable” –such as references to alcohol– and the way to “solve” these problems is to introduce Islamic references into their teaching and adapt the materials to suit their Islamic beliefs. Also, when solving what they perceived as ethical dilemmas, some teachers tended to justify their actions as Muslim EFL teachers using Islamic references, such as, for instance, Prophetic traditions or Islamic principles. Furthermore, the data showed how some participants viewed their presence as Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA as necessary from an Islamic point of view and to some extent, preferable than that of a non-Muslim teacher in order to correct possible misconceptions students may have. Some teachers reported protecting their students from a perceived un-Islamic evil coming from the West and reducing the negative impact of the Western way of life on them. This reveals a certain conception of their role as teachers in general and as Western Muslim teachers in particular as this will be further discussed in the next chapter. In addition, the findings suggest that upholding irreproachable work ethics was perceived by the participants as an Islamic requirement, as some teachers were seeking Allah's reward in teaching their fellow Muslim brothers beneficial knowledge. Some participants justified the fact that Islam and TEFL could be complementary by using either a Prophetic narration or by mentioning how Islam could be spread around the world using the English language since it was a world language, hence, almost viewing TEFL as an Islamic duty for them or at the very least, praiseworthy Islamically-speaking.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the findings also point to the fact that the participants managed the relationship between TEFL and Islam in a pragmatic way. For

instance, even when they feel their profession confronts them with dilemmas, as they sometimes find their role as EFL teachers as incompatible with their Islamic faith, they resort to pragmatic elements to either justify their position or solve their dilemmas. Some teachers mentioned being “realistic” about TEFL which they described as their “job”. This aspect of the data reveals that they viewed themselves as only a small part of what the wider issues that seemed remote from the level of teaching practice. Also, when TEFL and Islam were perceived as coexisting, very pragmatic elements were mentioned by the participants which may be related to the fact that most participants admitted coming to the KSA for very pragmatic reasons such as financial welfare, or family life. This strongly suggests that these pragmatic references constitute a key element in the way they managed the relationship between Islam and TEFL. This shows how participants engage in a sort of interplay between the pragmatic and the religious, which also relates to their multiple perceptions of the relationship between TEFL and Islam. This interaction between pragmatic and religious references is a fundamental finding that will be further discussed as it appears as a salient feature of their epistemological references.

5. Discussion

The previous chapter presented a meaningful account of the participants' voices and its primary objective was to tell the readers 'the overall picture' and enable them to "see what [I] saw and to hear what [I] heard" from the participants (Saldaña, 2009, p. 71). The above chapter also enabled me to present the readers with what was found from the participants' world while in this chapter, I sought to shift the focus towards presenting the knowledge that resulted from the interpretative encounter of my world and that of the participants. At this point, there were a number of ways in which the discussion could have been guided; by main finding, by research question or by thematically structuring it around the literature review. Nonetheless, in this thesis, a different, more creative approach was adopted, inspired and validated by a quality emerging from the data itself: the participants' use of figurative language that was highlighted earlier¹. It was used as a literary device to make sense of the data through the participants' own meaning-making processes. In other words, the data analysis from the previous chapter laid out the foundations for a more insightful interpretive, subjective understanding of the participants' responses in light of my prior knowledge, experience and the literature. As a result, in order to go beyond the descriptive level, it was fundamental to gain depth rather breadth in the understanding of some of the key issues raised by the participants. With the objectives and the research questions of the study in mind², it was essential to relate the discourses of ELT to the realities of the participants and shed more light on the values underpinning ELT and the global spread of English. I also sought to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which the participants used TEFL in accordance with Islamic values and ethics and how they dealt with value conflicts.

Based on these premises, the chapter is organised as follows: first, it explains the rationale for using the participants' metaphorical language as a guiding framework for discussing the findings. Then, the method used to discuss the key findings is explained. Finally, the chapter discusses the new themes that emerged in light of the literature, the entirety of the data and my personal interpretations. Throughout this chapter, three elements are therefore very present: the voices of the participants, the voice of the researcher and the voices of the literature that was reviewed earlier in the study.

¹ See section 4.9

² See section 0

5.1 The Approach to the Discussion

As reported earlier in the thesis¹, it was evident from the data that recurrent use of metaphors was made by the participants, though qualitatively and quantitatively diverse, to discuss the core issues addressed by the study. Therefore, with this in mind, the findings were discussed in light of a careful textual analysis using techniques borrowed from a number of traditions and disciplines². To discuss the findings, I sought to combine “elements from different discourse analytical perspectives and [...] non-discourse analytical perspectives” (Jørgensen, 2002, p. 4) focusing particularly on rhetorical analysis. By analysing their metaphorical representations, I managed to connect the data to several elements: the literature, my interpretations and the overall context of the data.

This approach was mainly rooted in the idea that metaphors are not only an ornamental stylistic device used by speakers to embellish speech, but also a powerful tool to create analogies between concepts, ideas and worldviews. As the definition and etymology suggest³, metaphors have the ability to facilitate understanding through descriptions of the world and carrying over meaning and worldviews from one concept to another (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000; Dictionary). Like analogies, metaphors operate through an “analogical transfer of meaning” (Kittay, 1987, p. 2) and express “relations between concepts” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 399). The connective power of metaphors was therefore extremely useful to relate the data to the wider issues that were addressed by the study. Furthermore, the analysis of the metaphors was a key element to unpack the participants’ representations of the world and “afford different ways of perceiving the world” (Ortony, 1998, p. 5) as I sought to make sense of how, through their use of metaphors, participants were carrying ideas, worldviews, thoughts or ‘messages’. I –the audience, the researcher and the interpreter– had to unpack plausible underlying meanings conveyed by this rhetorical device.

More specifically, the decision to conduct rhetorical analysis to discuss the findings was broadly guided by two sets of interconnected assumptions: (1) personal assumptions that mainly relate to my own personal knowledge and expertise as a researcher and (2) theoretical assumptions about language and rhetoric. The first set of assumptions reflect how my

¹ See section 4.9

² For example, ‘explication de texte’, discourse analysis, rhetorical analysis and what Barthes (1968, p. 4) called “science du discours” (trans. science of discourse) or “conjonction de la linguistique et de la littérature” (trans. the conjunction of linguistics and literature)

³ From the Greek, *metaphora* i.e. to transfer, carry, bear

experiences and my historical and educational background emerged throughout the study, that is, the way I was educated on a personal level and on the academic level as well. Moreover, the personal dimension was probably one of the most salient features of this study and my personal assumptions served as a starting point to the entire process which was initiated by following an ‘Ariadne thread’—not in the logic, ‘trial and error’ sense of the term—in the maze of initial intuitions and hunches about the data. At this stage of the research, more than ever, my role as a subjective researcher became much more evident in terms of personal subjectivity, life world, experiences or personal history, which had a tremendous impact on the way I proceeded to discuss the findings. More specifically, having been brought up and educated in France and having studied the humanities and English language and literature, I have been quite affected and ‘formed’ by the French traditional classical discipline of ‘*explication de texte*’¹ and rhetorical analysis. This particular point closely relates to and informed the second set of assumptions that broadly inspired the methodology and the theoretical framework for analysis and discussion that is rooted in fundamental premises vis-à-vis language and discourse and the power of rhetoric to generate and convey meanings. The study is ontologically rooted in a conception of the social reality that is constructed by the participants and it also rejects the idea of a correspondence between truth and reality. On the contrary, the social reality was viewed as filtered through the participants’ interpretations and perceptions. Based on this philosophical assumption, language was seen as a decisive vector in this process of filtering, interpretation and perception of reality. Language—and discourse—structure thought and exteriorise representations and perceptions of the world (Billig, 1991; Johnstone & Eisenhart, 2008). Moreover, what seems particular about language is its multidimensional nature in two specific ways: (1) it is not only a product, but also a process of interaction and meaning creation, (2) it exists socially and fulfils a purpose (Gee, 1999; Trappes-Lomax, 2008); hence its central role in conveying the participants’ perceptions of reality. Finally, as far as rhetoric is concerned—or what can be defined as “the persuasive power of discourse” (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000, p. 207)—this study assumed that the participants’ use of rhetoric conveyed meanings which the process of analysis sought to highlight. It is essential to emphasise that one of the main drawbacks of rhetorical analysis is that by analysing the participants’ use of figurative language, analysts claim to “recover the intentions” of speakers—or rhetors. This analytical approach can be compared as a process

¹ textual analysis

of “reverse construction” of the intent of the participants, which appears tremendously informed by a realist conception of reality. On the contrary, this study was more of an exploration of the meanings conveyed by the participants through their use of figurative language rather than an attempt to recover their initial intent. I did not and cannot claim to reach the participants’ original intent ‘out there’; rather, I explored and investigated the *plausible* intents behind the participants’ use of figurative language. Owing to that, rhetorical analysis was conducted in light of other findings, the overall context of the study and the “entirety” of the participants’ discourse. This approach was also rooted in the belief that the participants’ use of language and rhetoric was an act of persuasion and expression of opinions, worldviews and ideas. In other words, their use of words, phrases and rhetorical devices was not purely incidental and revealed deeper meanings that would have been extremely hard to explore otherwise. One of the fundamental premises of this analytical process is that it was inherently interpretative, firmly grounded in the data and not driven by a pre-set theoretical orientation (Cronick, 2002; Johnstone & Eisenhart, 2008; Trappes-Lomax, 2008). Based on this, the chapter clearly shifts away from scientific claims of pure objectivity and universal truths, generalisations and certainty (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000) and involved the active participation of both, the researcher and the reader.

5.2 The Procedure

The study findings were based on interviews so I sought to gain depth by not only exploring the findings, but also going beyond the findings themselves. I thought of surpassing the textual level since the interview transcript was only the trace of the actual discourse of the participant in a somehow “impoverished” form (Trappes-Lomax 2008, p. 141) because it was stripped from a number of essential elements that affected it, such as the context, the audience or the life world of the speaker. It was critical to recapture the actual discourse from which the text was taken and analyse it in context and not treat it as a discrete piece of fragmented text (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). As a result, I sought to conduct a textual analysis of specific features of the participants’ discourse and convey my own interpretations to gain a deeper personal understanding –as opposed to a universal understanding– of the meanings participants ascribed to the issues we investigated together; once more, the personal aspect was evident since my voice as a researcher was a key element to situate the text in context and relate my understanding to who the participants are and to the relevant literature. Rhetorical analysis provided the tools to analyse the specific features identified within the data (i.e. figurative language) and involved two steps: (1) locating within the transcripts the

metaphorical representations (2), conveying my interpretations of the plausible reasons behind their use of such language making references to the literature, my knowledge of the context and my understanding of the participants.

For example, figure 2 on the next page is an illustration of this procedure using the example of the term “bridge” that was mentioned on more than one occasion by some participants, as highlighted earlier in the findings in section 4.9. With this in mind, I decided to look for more metaphors which I then highlighted in the transcript and considered their significance within the findings. As highlighted in the figure below, the word “bridge” was used metaphorically by more than one participant, so I considered the analogy made by each participant and explored the possible meanings of the metaphor. I then linked these representations with other findings and searched how they had been addressed in the literature; I then repeated this process with other metaphors. I also sought to thematically organise these metaphorical representations and my interpretations by attempting to tell a story that would represent both the specificity of each participant and the new knowledge that emerged through this process.

Figure 2: the "bridge" metaphor



5.3 Western Muslim EFL Teachers: Bridges and Windows Between two Worlds

Some participants described their positions as Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA using metaphorical language such as, “the bridge”, the “window”, the “buffer” or “the door” as in the following quotes from Adam, Osman and Ali:

I think they can see you as a bridge to that kind of life and the world [Adam].

Perhaps there’s a role in both societies. In a traditional Islamic society and also back in our home countries, to be able to bridge that divide of understanding where people don’t quite understand each other. [Osman]

Even if, let’s say, there are dangers, there are threats that I can acknowledge, at my level, I could be a counter-power. I can act as a buffer between these kinds of things. [Ali]

Employing such metaphors, participants did not only draw portraits of themselves as being part of two worlds that are described in terms of conflict, (i.e. the Western world and the Islamic world), but also depicted their position in the KSA as the link between these two worlds, which seems to contrast with the view of Islam and English as two conflicting entities. The terms “bridge” and “window” imply three essential notions that the study has shed light on. First, comparing themselves to a “window” or a “bridge” to the Western world suggests that as Western Muslim EFL teachers, the participants did not dissociate themselves with their Western identities. Second, as suggested by the findings, strong connections were made between the global spread of English and TEFL and the Western world; however, although many participants described this association in somewhat negative terms, they did not seem to reject the idea of being assimilated to, or identified by others as being part of – or belonging to– the Western world. Finally, as discussed below, the use of these terms implies two contradictory worldviews, one of a dualist bipolar worldview dividing the world into English/Western and Islamic and another conception that envisions these two worlds not only as juxtaposed but as linear and in connection.

5.3.1 Conflicting Worlds

In his accounts of how he perceived TEFL and the spread of English in the KSA, Adam described himself as a “bridge to that kind of life and that world” and as “a window to that kind of world” to which TEFL would be the carrier or the concrete representation. He was referring to the Western world and the Western way of life; however, he was specifically representing it by resorting to negative images he, and other participants, commonly associated with the Western world as being part of TEFL and the global spread of English.

The idea that TEFL and the global spread of English were perceived as belonging to a world in conflict with the Islamic world or Islamic values was also a way of representing two worlds in terms of good and evil, the Islamic world as good and the Western world as evil. This dichotomous, dualist worldview was also very present in Ali's responses who used a similar metaphor and described his role as a Western Muslim EFL teacher:

We're like a buffer between them [the Muslim Students] and anything [bad] from the West.

Although the terms "buffer", "window" and "bridge" differ, they belong to a very similar register insofar as they were used to depict two conflicting worlds: one representing the Islamic world or their own conceptions of what the Islamic world ought to be, and another world, the Western world, depicted by the participants using specific and recurrent images, such as Western music and movies, as representing un-Islamic ideas and behaviours promoted and carried by the global spread of English and TEFL. In a similar respect, Osman explained how Islam could resist the hegemony of the West and employed another metaphor to describe Islam, also suggesting a bipolar vision of two worlds in conflict:

Islam could use English. It could. It could flip the script completely and use English to spread Islam. There are pockets of people using English well. In America, or England, but it's a counter wind against a prevailing wind which is blowing very firm in the opposite direction.

This idea of two conflicting worlds was also reinforced by the use of the term "soldier" by Adam and Fareed who respectively metaphorically described TEFL and the global spread of English as a Western soldier battling local values and particularly Islamic values:

I feel like a foot soldier from the West with these people [Fareed]¹. With a native speaker, they get the full package. He can deliver it like a soldier [Adam].

This military warfare metaphor suggests two ideas; first, this reinforces the view that TEFL was perceived as being imposed upon the students in the KSA as other participants reported. Also, this metaphor suggests that TEFL and the global spread of English did not occur in an ideological or political vacuum, but on the contrary are closely related to Western political and ideological hegemony in the region. These two participants seemed to be moving away from mainstream conceptions of ELT that are still, for the most part, disinterested in the socio-political and cultural implications of TEFL (Karmani, 2005f). More generally, this relates to the idea among all the participants that TEFL cannot be separated from broader

¹ Fareed was actually referring to one of his colleagues.

socio-political, religious or cultural concerns. This idea was further developed by Karmani (2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005f) who talked about a “linguistic front between Islam and English” (2005a, p. 262). Similarly, Edge (2003a, p. 703), who corroborates these claims, draws a parallel between the hegemonic attitude of some English speaking countries such as the USA and the UK demonstrated by an overt military presence in the Middle East and other Muslim countries and the role of EFL teachers who “may now explicitly be perceived as a second wave of imperial troopers”. It is interesting to note how participants made a very similar comparison using warfare repertoire to describe the enterprise of ELT in the KSA.

This suggests that some EFL teachers have become the facilitators of a particular Western foreign policy imposed by means of military might (2003b). With respect to this point, the events of 9/11 constitute a decisive landmark and provide a political explanation for this perceived opposition between English -and TEFL- and Islam. Since these events, a number of Muslim countries, particularly the KSA, have had their curricula under severe criticism from some Western countries for supposedly promoting anti-Western feelings among students (Elyas, 2008; Mac Farquhar, 2001; Prokop, 2003) and were consequently under pressure to reform the contents of their educational programmes. The underlying assumption behind this call for curriculum reform was that acts of terrorism were claimed to be directly related to Islamically-inspired education systems that supposedly promoted religious extremism and religious hatred. Furthermore, Karmani goes a step further discussing this perceived opposition between English and Islam by claiming that the promotion of the English language was used as a way to lessen the influence of Islam in Muslim societies – “more English and less Islam”– as a way of “eradicating the seeds of Islamic terrorist activity”.

Moreover, this finding is particularly interesting because by placing themselves as a window, bridge or buffer, participants showed that they viewed their role as Western Muslim teachers as protectors or perhaps ‘gate keepers’ of Islam against a perceived evil coming from the West through TEFL and the global spread of English. Their awareness of the language and its ideological and cultural embedment coupled with their Islamic faith seemed to provide them with a justification for acting as agents and guardians of a certain conception of what Islam is or ought to be in order to “filter out the polluting values that might be carried with English” (Dan & Naysmith, 1996, p. 232). This is particularly evident in the way they adapted the material judged inappropriate from an Islamic point of view. It is also worth noting, however, that this was not specific to Adam and Ali since for nearly all the participants, their

understanding of Islam impacted on the pedagogical approaches of their day-to-day teaching practice. Furthermore, this bipolar vision of two conflicting worlds also explains why Adam and Ali both declared they moved to the KSA to perform hijrah, which was in their view, leaving the land of transgression and emigrating towards the Islamic land. In the case of Adam this is particularly clear when he explained how he left his home country to be able to practice more freely his religion and also enjoy life in a more Islamic environment. Their conception of hijrah seemed in adherence with this bipolar vision of the world that can be extended to the Muslim World and the non-Muslim world.

Finally, the idea that Western Muslim EFL teachers fulfil a protective role against a perceived evil from the non-Muslim West also implies they act as protectors of a certain conception of Islamic values, which reveals a particular attitude towards students who are perceived as unaware of the evils of Western societies to which they seem to aspire. This is why many participants seemed to take for granted that their young Muslim students aspire to Western lifestyles or are attracted by that world. This very idea was also suggested by other similar metaphorical terms; for instance, Fareed reported that students are “enamoured” and “lost in” Western culture:

They're spending their days and their nights watching movies and listening to songs. They're totally enamoured by it. They're lost in it. They're truly lost in it. I can see that, and I've seen that myself.

As for Osman, he mentioned that his students “look West” to the “forbidden fruit” of the Western world: “their head is being turned to some extent by what they see as maybe something of a forbidden fruit or a better life or however you want to say it.”

5.3.2 Connecting Worlds

Despite the above-mentioned dichotomous bipolar worldview, the study also goes beyond the deterministic assumption that views TEFL and the spread of English simply in terms of conflict with the other, as indirectly implied in the linguistic imperialism paradigm (Phillipson, 1992a). The terms “window” and “bridge” also suggest a certain ambivalence in the perception of these two worlds, which does not always indicate a vision of two worlds in conflict in the sense that the bridge can also be used to depict two connected worlds. This is present in Mohammed's use of the “bridge” who did not express any form of rejection of his Western cultural background and also saw his position as a Western Muslim EFL teacher as connecting the two worlds and creating bridges of understanding with his Saudi Students whose only encounter with the Western World has been through a “screen” and who were

not exposed to the “most positive aspects of Western culture”. In doing so, Muhammad appeared to be acting as an ambassador of the West within an Islamic framework. Similarly, the “window” is an interesting metaphor because, unlike the “buffer”, it can suggest a different idea from the above-mentioned vision of two conflicting worlds. The window is a transparent object that contrasts with the opacity suggested by the term buffer that evoked a more negative connotation. This also relates to what other participants reported including Abdullah and Nasser, who were sometimes in the position of rectifying misconceptions about the Western world or portraying a more positive, less prejudiced image of the West and combining what they perceived as the best of both worlds, hence, bridging, linking or connecting the two worlds, Islam being the connecting thread between them. That is also why Abdullah talked about “the best of the two worlds” to describe Western Muslim EFL teachers, that is, the best of Western culture combined with Islamic culture. Likewise, Nasser used an Arabic expression, taken from the Quran, to explain his intention behind coming to the Muslim world: “fi sabil illah”, literally, in the “path” of Allah. Similarly, the idea of a path between the West and the Islamic world seems to relate to this conception of two connecting worlds, which was very present in his representations.

This in itself also serves as a response to some of the fundamental questions raised by the study and by Karmani (2005a) regarding the role of Muslim TESOL professionals within these complex processes which also found resonance in some of the work of Mahboob (2009) who sought ways to make English “Islam friendly” when, in his view, many EFL classrooms in Muslim countries are “steeped in the values and cultures of Christianity” and that the global spread of English reproduce unequal power relations between the West and the Muslim world. The following sections attempt to shed light on this particular problem and show how the participants used Islam as a means of appropriation and ownership of English.

5.4 Islam and TEFL and the “Church and State”

To depict the relationship between Islam and TEFL the metaphor of the “separation of Church and State” was used by Nasser to describe how religious requirements were intertwined with professional duties:

And in terms of work, he’s supposed to be there. There’s no separation of church and state, if you will, over this particular issue because following your job properly or doing your job is an Islamic requirement.

In addition, the findings strongly suggest that the participants considered their professional duties as part of Islam and, as Mohammad metaphorically put it, “tied up with faith”:

It’s a contract of sorts to be in class on time. It is a contract for the teacher, but it’s certainly a contract of sorts, even if it’s an unspoken one and unwritten one, that students should do the same. Things like that, I think, are absolutely tied up with your faith because our faith teaches us to keep our promises, to honour our arrangements, and it shows a respect as well.

This suggests that these participants seem to uphold what can be labelled as ‘Islamic work ethics’. Hence other participants made references to God “watching”, to “pleasing Allah”, “not displeasing Allah” or “making sacrifices for the sake of Allah”. Also, to describe the ambivalent position of Muslim EFL teachers, a participant metaphorically described himself as a “cog in a big machine”. In light this aspect of the data, this part of the discussion focuses on two issues which constitute a major contribution of this study: Islamic TEFL as form of ownership and appropriation and as a guiding framework.

5.4.1 Islamic TEFL: Ownership and Appropriation

Some Western Muslim EFL teachers seemed to have claimed ownership of the English language using Islam as a distinctive element of this process of appropriation, hence suggesting the idea of “Islamic TEFL”. This issue relates to one of the core questions raised by the study; if TEFL and the global spread of English participates in reproducing a form of Western hegemony that is in conflict with Muslim students’ worldviews in the KSA or other Muslim countries, or if TEFL is associated with values that may be a source of tension with Islam, how can Muslim professionals reconnect this profession with their faith, or as Karmani (2005f) puts it himself, how can we “[reconnect] the political and the spiritual with current TESOL practice in the Arab Muslim world”? Therefore, what constitutes as a fundamental notion revealed by the findings is that TEFL and to a larger extent, the English language, is being used and appropriated by the participants and described in terms of belonging and not as an alien entity. Although they addressed a problematic situation that

sometimes confronted them with ethical dilemmas, Western Muslim EFL teachers did not only oppose English but instead, appropriated “English for Islamic purposes” (Karmani, 2005b, p. 163). Western Muslim EFL teachers face this paradoxical situation that sometimes expose them to value conflicts, by reflecting on their position amidst all the socio-political, ideological or religious issues surrounding the global spread of English and TEFL. Therefore, they expressed new ways to combine their Islamic faith with their profession and adopted what can be coined as ‘Islamic TEFL’. Thus, the study argues that English belongs to Islam and as mentioned by Nasser, English is “also the language of the Muslims” and not “the language of the conqueror” (Templer, 2003) or “the language of the Kuffar”¹. This suggests that Western Muslims advocated their belonging to the language by affirming its belonging to Islam. This also does not seem in contradiction with Islamic principles since according to the Prophetic tradition, Prophet Muhammad instructed one of his companions, Zayd ibn Thabit, to learn Hebrew and Syriac and act as an interpreter to spread the message of Islam within non-Arabic speaking people.

Another fundamental aspect is that the findings contribute to the debate concerning the ownership of English. The once well-grounded assumption that the English language belongs to white NSs of standard English has long been dismissed and refuted (Alptekin, 1993; Kachru, 1994; Kachru & Smith, 2008; Norton, 1997; Rajagopalan, 2004); however, the study adds another layer to the issue of ownership, not based on purely geographical or linguistic terms, like the concept of world Englishes, but by considering religion as a determining element of ownership, hence, ‘Islamic English’ or ‘Islamic TEFL’. The idea of ‘Islamic TEFL’ goes further than the concept of “Islamic English” described by Mahboob (2009) as it is not only limited to the impact of Islamic values on the structure of the language, but also resides in the way Muslims ought to teach their learners. This is not limited to a process of selecting the material to what would be ‘Islam friendly’—though this aspect should not be neglected— but it is an attitude towards TEFL that starts with awareness of the complex ideological issues surrounding the global spread of English and evolves towards the idea that the Islamic faith can inform and shape TEFL in terms of work ethics, pedagogical approaches or relationship with students; thus, ‘Islamic TEFL’ provides teachers with a framework to which are anchored guiding principles.

1. The language of the disbelievers.

5.4.2 Islamic TEFL as a Guiding Framework

The above also constitutes an epistemological issue in terms of ethics or moral authority insofar as for the participants, Islam did not only serve as the source of knowledge of the good, and by contrast, of evil, but also of how to act, what to do or not to do within their professional practice. As the study showed, many references to “pleasing Allah”, “not displeasing Allah” or “making sacrifices for the sake of Allah” were made by the participants and the findings clearly emphasised the impact of faith on their role as teachers and their professional practice in general. The following quote from Abdullah is indicative of this aspect of the data as explained in section 4.7:

From my perception, it's a very positive impact because I limit myself to what I believe is pleasing to Allah. Of course there are times I may slip or not be aware or feel there are overriding benefit that I might, you know, at that point, make some sort of, I guess, compromise.

The following quote from Ali also reveals the impact of the Islamic faith onto his profession:

I have made sacrifices to come here but there are good things we can teach the Muslim students and seek Allah's reward.

Interestingly, the metaphor of the “separation of Church and State” was used by Nasser to describe how his religious requirements were intertwined with his professional duties:

There's two roles. As I said to you before, you can't differentiate between these two. Islamically, [...] and in terms of work [...]. There's no separation of church and state, if you will, over this particular issue because following your job properly or doing your job is an Islamic requirement.

In addition, as far as work ethics are concerned, participants seemed to be reclaiming and reaffirming what they considered to be Islamic requirements neglected by many Muslims in Islamic countries while being upheld very strictly in Western countries or by their Western colleagues in the KSA. Professional ethics were primarily described by the participants as religious requirements encompassing secular requirements; therefore, Western Muslim EFL teachers were again re-appropriating what they considered as part of Islam and, as Mohammad metaphorically depicted, “tied up with faith”:

It's a contract of sorts to be in class on time. It is a contract for the teacher, [...] things like that, I think, are absolutely tied up with your faith because our faith teaches us to keep our promises, to honour our arrangements, and it shows a respect as well. Islam is constantly about honouring your guests, honouring your neighbour, honouring everybody.

The upholding of what can be labelled as ‘Islamic work ethics’ is not only concerned with

the attitude of the teacher, his/her relationships at work or the quality of his/her work, but also, and most importantly, how attitude at work is tied up with the relationship with God. That is why Osman talked about God “watching” him while Abdullah reminded his students that “Allah sees everything” as in his following quote:

The use of my time at work, I try to be conscientious and prepared for my students I don't want to cheat them of anything you know they often ask: 'will you let us go please? We won't tell anyone! No one will know!' And I tell them: 'you know you don't have to tell anyone, Allah sees everything.'

This constitutes a fundamental epistemological issue with regards moral authority as Islam seemed to provide the participants with a code of behaviour; in other words, actions were judged as “righteous” when in accordance with the Divine revelation (Reinhart, 1983). This can explain the recurrent mentions of the awareness of the presence of God as well as the use of Islamic legal terms such as “haram” or “halal”. However, although they seemed guided by in *sensu stricto* immutable scriptures and texts that constitute the foundation of a moral framework for their actions, participants engaged in a process of interpretation of Islamic principles in light of contextual or personal factors. This seems to suggest that their actions as Muslim teachers also emanated from the deep inner beliefs and values that exist in social settings and which can be affected by external socio-cultural factors that operate in the course of their interactions. Similar findings have been reported by Mansour (2011) who showed that Muslim teachers' views about science were partly socially-constructed and often subject to their interpretations of religious principles.

Furthermore, such an attitude to language teaching and learning revealed a conceptual lag between the principles of language teaching and learning as they are instilled in many academic institutions in the world and particularly in the KSA –which corresponds to a purely technical conception of ELT– and how the participants engaged with TEFL. On the contrary, the study has shed light on the need to explicitly address the links between Islam – or religion in general– politics and language teaching.

The above also explains why their views on the relationship between Islam and TEFL were varied and did not reflect simplistic, dualist perspectives; on the contrary, participants seemed to view this relationship across a wider spectrum, hence managing and negotiating this relationship. Moreover, although the juridical issue in terms of the permissibility of teaching and learning foreign languages in Islamic law was addressed, none of the participants regarded this as haram. Even Ali who referred to a number of religious rulings from Islamic scholars who considered it as haram, resorted to justifications from within the Islamic

tradition to justify his position. This also explains why participants were referring to the benefits of the English language for Muslims in terms of preaching the message of Islam to a wider audience.

This particular point has been addressed by a number of contemporary as well as past religious scholars; for instance, Shah (2012, p. 667) reported how Islamic religious scholars from the Indian subcontinent reacted to the teaching of English during the time of the British colonisation:

If English language learning has no negative effect on Islamic ideology, beliefs and culture then there is no objection in learning English language. Its learning for halal live hood is also a righteous deed. Moreover, if someone uses this knowledge for the preaching of Islam then it would not be less then prayer.

In the KSA, although the issue has been the source of a debate among contemporary religious scholars, the prevailing opinion among them is that no clear text within the Islamic law prevents the teaching and learning of foreign languages; on the contrary, Islamic sources point to the permissibility or even the desirability of learning or teaching a foreign language for Islamic purposes such as preaching. This has been reported by the ‘General Presidency of Scholarly research and Ifta’ and the ‘Scholars of the Permanent Committee for Ifta’ in the KSA (“Fatawa Al Lajna Ad-Da’imah,” n.d.).

Another fundamental point that emerged from the findings is that the relationship between Islam and TEFL was twofold; first, it was conceived by the participants within an Islamic framework and epistemologically rooted in Islamic principles or Islamic sources such as the Quran or the Hadith and second, it was negotiated and also justified in light of non-religious, pragmatic elements. The latter partly explains why despite their awareness of the Islamically-problematic issues related to the global spread of English and the role of TEFL in this process, TEFL was used as an instrumental pragmatic means to achieve religious aims. This particular point –non-religious pragmatic elements– relates to the motives invoked by the participants for coming to the KSA whereby very pragmatic elements like money and family were used to justify their move to the KSA. In that regard, Sami metaphorically described his life back in the UK as “brown envelopes through the post” (i.e. bills to pay), always “trying to make ends meet”:

I think the most important factor [...] is not getting brown envelopes through the post. In London, every time you get a brown envelope, it’s bills. You’re trying to make ends meet. You’re always paying for something, whereas here, everything is self-contained. It’s relaxed. It’s a good environment, safe environment for the children.

Likewise, even if one considers the importance of religion in their motives for moving to the KSA, it appears that most participants used their TEFL qualifications and the TEFL profession as a platform to fulfil certain religious motives, hence connecting pragmatic elements to religious ones.

A parallel can also be drawn between these Muslim participants who connect TEFL to religion and some Christian EFL teachers who utilise TEFL for religious purposes. As discussed in the literature review, some evangelical Christians use TEFL as a platform for targeted missionary work especially in Muslim countries (Varghese and Johnston, 2007; Pennycook, 2005; Edge, 2003a); however, unlike evangelical Christians, the participants are instrumentalising their profession as a pragmatic way to justify their somehow contradictory position as both facilitating this process and critiquing its dangers. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that there are undeniable common elements between EFL evangelical Christian teachers and Western Muslim EFL teachers as faith seems to play a preponderant role in informing their professional practice. This strongly suggests that faith and religion, regardless of its denomination, is a powerful factor that does not only affect teachers' professional practice, but is also tied up *with* professional practice. Therefore, although the current study was conducted among Muslim teachers, this finding was consistent with those of Varghese and Johnston (2007, p. 21) who suggest that “teaching and [...] religion were thoroughly intertwined” despite the ethical issues behind using TEFL as a covert platform for missionary work. Similar findings have been reported by Mogra (2010, p. 172) who explained that the British Muslim teachers that participated in his study were “concerned about their own spirituality whilst engaged in teaching and actively pursuing a spiritual path that impacts positively on their life and work”.

Another metaphor used by Adam illustrated the ambivalent position of Western Muslim EFL teachers; he compared himself to a “cog in a big machine”:

It is the lesser of two evils. I would go back to England? I wanted to live in the KSA. What could I do? It's a dilemma between me staying here or leaving. [...] We are a cog in a big machine. I'm not at the fore front. I hope Allah will forgive me for the greater intention; to live in an Islamic country.

The above metaphor suggests in my view two important ideas. First, the notion of “the cog” corroborates a certain deterministic vision of the role played by TEFL as an agent of linguistic imperialism; its circular shape suggests that EFL teachers in this part of the world are caught in a sort of vicious circle they cannot escape from. In addition, this metaphor seems to point to the contradictory, yet determining role of Western Muslim EFL teachers

in the KSA, as protectors but also facilitators or as powerless, yet preponderant actors if changes are to be brought about. The cog is a subordinate but essential part of a whole mechanism; it appears insignificant, but if it fails to operate, the entire structure cannot function. Likewise, this suggests that Adam was voicing concerns with regards a perceived feeling of powerlessness in front of these complex and powerful forces surrounding ELT without, however, ignoring his central role in this process. This point was raised by other participants who expressed the need to take part in this enterprise by not acting as mere witnesses, but as active agents using Islam as a dynamic or counter dynamic to this force. The “counter wind” metaphor mentioned earlier is in that respect quite relevant.

This certainly constitutes a fundamental finding insofar as it can be considered as a ‘solution’ to the dilemma or the paradox many EFL teachers, regardless of their faith, may be faced with, as reported by Holly (1990), Shah (2012) Johnston (2003) or Edge (Edge, 1996; 2003a). By taking part in ‘Islamic TEFL’, participants were advocating the “moral worth in [...] acting as a cultural bridge between them and the new culture; [...] teaching another language; and [...] giving these particular individuals access to English” (Johnston, 2003, p. 58).

The above also suggests that by affirming Islam as a guiding principle in their role as EFL teachers and by affirming English and the broader spectrum of “the West” as belonging to Islam, Western Muslim EFL teachers correspond to some extent to how Ramadan (2004, p. 4) depicts Western Muslims as “constructing a ‘Muslim personality’ [...] drawing the shape of European and American Islam: faithful to the principles of Islam, dressed in European and American cultures, and definitively rooted in Western societies.”

5.5 TEFL and the Reflection of Western Worldviews

The study attempted to shed light on the views of Western Muslim EFL teachers in terms of the values that underpin TEFL and the global spread of English with particular reference to the KSA. To address these issues, the participants used specific expressions such as “Hollywood” and the “pop culture” to depict the culture they believed was attached with TEFL and present in the material used in class. They also alluded to Western celebrities that they described as icons of Western culture such as “Britney Spears”, “President Obama” or “Celine Dion”. Therefore, the use of such language partly explains why TEFL was not perceived as a neutral process, but closely tied with ideological and cultural values mainly associated with the USA and the UK. In that regards, the findings related to two fundamental aspects: the place of culture in EFL material content and how Muslim professionals related to the theoretical discourse surrounding TEFL. Through analysing the above figurative language, the two sections below shed light on (1) the cultural and (2) ideological representations associated with TEFL.

5.5.1 Cultural Representations and EFL Materials

Although this view was not a unanimous among the participants, the findings showed how they considered that the EFL materials used in the KSA was closely attached to Western culture in general and American and British culture in particular. Participants referred to these cultural references in somewhat negative terms and to depict their conceptions of Western culture, many participants referred to particular aspects that they deemed Islamically or culturally inappropriate such as Hollywood movies, Western music, nudity or the improper attire of women. For example, some participants referred to “Hollywood” and the “pop culture” to draw portraits of the culture they believed as embedded in TEFL in general and manifest in the textbooks used in their settings in particular.

More specifically, a number of famous Western celebrities were described as icons of Western culture. For example, Adam referred to Music and the iconic figure of Britney Spears, a famous American singer, as a symbol of what he believed represents the evil aspects of Western culture associated with TEFL and the global spread of English:

Now I guess there's a lot of temptation out there. A lot of these youngsters are growing up with technology and Internet and all of these things you know. I think they can see you as a bridge to that kind of life and that world. But if you're a Muslim it can perhaps, it's like, they're not getting a full whack you see. You know, 'I want to know about Britney Spears', [...] they see you like a window to that kind of world.

As for Fareed, he mentioned Celine Dion, a famous Canadian singer, to talk about the evil of Western culture:

I've seen students who come to class with Celine Dion songs in their minds and they want to know the lyrics to this song. They have a great affinity towards singers and towards movie stars. [...] These guys are from a small remote village somewhere in this region [...] on the surface of it is not so affected, if you look on the outside, by Western culture. But the thing is the Western cultures are the root because the students that come from these villages [...] they're spending their days and their nights watching movies and listening to songs.

Interestingly, the above examples from the participants' quotes echo some of concerns expressed by Gray (2012) about the unquestioned presence of representations of Western celebrities in a growing number of English language textbooks, which according to him, coincides with the recent Western neoliberal economic expansion. Moreover, these two examples are worth exploring as the choice by the participants of these two figures is not entirely fortuitous for two main reasons. First, these figures are women and upon reflecting on the interviews with Adam, Fareed and also Ali, what is striking to note is how these participants referred to the mixing of the sexes as culturally and Islamically inappropriate in the context of the KSA. In other words, these two female figures, were possibly used to represent certain underlying aspects of culture that they deemed inappropriate such as nudity. This can also be related to what other participants mentioned regarding how images of attractive women, as commonly portrayed in the western media or inadequately clothed (from an Islamic point of view) and as described by Nasser "scantly clad", are often a problematic issue in the EFL classroom in a country like Saudi Arabia.

The second aspect is that these two figures point to the issue of music; it is essential to bear in mind that in the KSA, music is not allowed in public places and a number of Islamic scholars in the Kingdom consider it as haram; therefore, references to music and singing in the EFL classroom appear to be problematic. Furthermore, to a greater extent, these two examples are emblematic references to other problematic aspects of many of the EFL textbooks that are either a source of tension from a cultural point of view or from an Islamic point of view, such as, the mention of the drinking of alcohol. Considering the specificities of the KSA culture and the way Islam is understood and practiced by Saudis, teachers often need to censor or edit the material they use. The experience of the participants does not seem very different to what other teachers commonly do to adapt their materials. Very similar issues have been reported by Hudson (2011) and Elyas (2011) in the KSA or Hyde (1994) in Morocco. Participants repeatedly mentioned it was important to use materials and resources

that were culturally -and “Islamically-sensitive” and appropriate.

In other words, using Anglo Saxon –i.e. Western- cultural references– can be considered as problematic for two reasons. First, beyond the relationship between language and culture, in the actual context of EIL, the Western/Anglo-American culture can no longer serve as a normative cultural reference since Anglo Saxon NSs represent a minority of English speakers, which means that most communication in the medium of English now occurs between NSs and NNSs or amongst NNSs (Badger & MacDonald, 2007; Crystal,, 2003; Jenkins, 1998, 2006, 2007; Phan, 2008). Owing to that, the question of culture in ELT appears particularly problematic when English language can easily be associated with a multitude of cultures (Alptekin, 1993, 1984; Badger & MacDonald, 2007). Second, this issue once again relates to another fundamental point raised by the study; that is the appropriation of the English language on the part of Muslims.

Based on these premises, the study argues that participants seemed to be engaged in teaching “English with an Islamic culture”, as Adam suggested. As mentioned before, Islamic culture(s) are part of the English language and should not be juxtaposed as an alien entity; Muslims use English on a daily basis in many parts of the world and in turn, their culture has affected the language (Mahboob, 2009). Also, introducing Western references in EFL materials in the KSA largely contributes to presenting Muslim students with stereotypical cultural references of Western societies, as it has been suggested by Brown (1990), which seems to contradict the idea of cross cultural understanding and gap bridging between Islam and English. Likewise, John Gray’s (2000, p. 279) work on ELT materials shows that a number of teachers may be concerned “with stereotypical representations, especially of L2 cultures” contained in textbooks in addition to the implicit acceptance of certain behaviours that could be deemed as culturally blameworthy by students.

5.5.2 Ideological Representations

Moreover, other images and iconic figures have been used to signify another aspect of TEFL and the global spread of English that have been broadly described as value laden. This suggests that participants are not only showing a significant level of awareness and concern regarding the implications of TEFL and the global spread of English on their professional as well as their personal lives, but also concerning the complexity of the issues related to these processes. To illustrate this point, Nasser mentioned “President Obama” as an example of how the mass media were becoming “part of the TEFL arrangements” by introducing language and ideas that “creep into normal everyday society”:

These are words that are being sprouted out by the media. Media is now becoming quite a large part of the TEFL arrangement. It forms a study now. Everything is media-related. Textbooks refer to news, this and that. They pick on special people. Obama – people know about him because he’s a famous person. What does he say? What does he do? The jargon creeps into normal everyday society.

Once again, the choice of this figure is powerful to represent the close relationship between the global spread of English and the political, military and cultural power of the USA and their influence on today’s world. Likewise, Abdullah alluded to “George Washington”, another iconic figure of American history, to criticise the presence of American references in the EFL materials while, according to him, Saudi students ought to be referred to famous Islamic figures:

It comes up in the course of the lesson in the textbooks [...]. So I always try to reframe or refer them back to their own culture and the Islamic values that are found in their own culture...for example I have a student who daily asks about American heroes. People like George Washington [...]. He has such a strong interest in the language that he is also taking on a love for the American history and the culture and the values that come along with that...so with this sort of student, when he asks me these questions, I ask him about Islamic heroes in Islamic history. When he asks me about certain values or western ideas, I refer him back to those same principles that exist in Islam.

These two examples can be related to what other participants reported regarding the role of TEFL and the spread of English in reproducing Western hegemony, particularly American hegemony. The findings showed that some participants viewed the global spread of English as a manifestation, or as Osman metaphorically described it, as a “symptom” of Western hegemony and that TEFL, the spread of English and the domination of the West were closely connected:

Let’s face it [...], I wouldn’t have a job here if they didn’t want to learn that language. But the spread of English as a symptom of hegemonic power is my only negative concern in that I feel that the powers that have got a stranglehold on this world and they’re advancing a Western agenda and the Western agenda is dressed up as speaking English.

This is consistent with Phillipson (1992a; 1992b) who views ELT as a tool of neo-colonialism whereby “the dominance of English [is] asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstruction of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (1992b, p. 47). It is important to note that, like Phillipson, the participants questioned the functions of the English language rather than its intrinsic nature. Thus, these examples illustrate how ideology can be transmitted through TEFL and how language can

be associated with religion, culture, morals and ideology, which suggests that the global spread of English is problematic not because of the nature of the language, but because of the nature of Western imperialism and its perceived dangers.

5.6 TEFL, Islam and “the Empty Vessel”

TEFL was metaphorically described by some participants as a “tool”, a “vehicle” or a “symptom” of ideas spreading and “creeping” into the Muslim society, which could “erode” people’s faith. Furthermore, participants made connections between TEFL and globalisation referring to the “global village”, “McDonalds’ fast-foods” and “Apple Inc.” and metaphorically describing the EFL classroom as a “manufactured” version of EFL. Hence, TEFL was depicted as a “product” or a “by-product”. Finally, participants implicitly referred to the modes of learning associated with TEFL and one metaphor guided the discussion of this point: the “empty vessel”. Finally, other metaphors were used to describe the relationship the participants had with their students whom they described as “brothers” or “sons”. Based on this, it seems that the participants viewed TEFL and the global spread of English as relating to worldviews issues rather than simply language issues. Most specifically, guided by the rhetorical analysis of the participants’ metaphors, the discussion argues that TEFL is perceived as a process of de-Islamification and as an agent of Western educational values.

5.6.1 Globalised TEFL and the Perceived Process of de-Islamification

The findings highlighted that the role and functions of the English language were being questioned rather than its intrinsic nature. Some participants, Nasser and Osman for instance, referred extensively to what they perceived as the intrinsic neutrality of the English language by metaphorically describing it as a “tool” or a “vehicle” of extrinsic processes and phenomena such as hegemony or imperialism:

It’s a tool. You can choose to do it if you want to, and you can choose not to [Nasser]. I think that what I want to make clear is that the tool is essential but it being English is not. That’s the key. Therefore, the spread of English is [and] the use of [the] language is [a] necessary tool and it happens to be English. [Osman]

This further suggests that the relation between power and language cannot be studied from a purely linguistic lens; rather, wider socio-cultural and political aspects intertwined with the global spread of English should be taken into consideration (Kachru, 2007), hence the participants’ references to the powerful influence of the UK and the USA in the role played by English globally.

In addition, as suggested by Osman's use of the "global village" metaphor when discussing the various processes linked to the global spread of English, it appears extremely difficult to isolate TEFL and the spread of English from the phenomenon of globalisation:

There's lots of people who seem to want English for that. Using it as a lingua franca so that you can engage with people because world business has come... the global village – whatever they call it – we've come together that much more. We need to have a means of speaking to each other.

This also indicates that this "global village" was perceived by this as another facet of the Western political, economic and cultural influence over the world (Nielsen, 2009). Nasser made an interesting comparison between the education system and "McDonalds' fast-foods" and "Apple Inc." (the high-tech multinational corporation) to talk about the dominant values in the West and the role played by globalisation:

Just the educational system now is geared towards consumerism. I don't want my kids to fall into that trap. You get McDonald's crayons and this and that... Apple, Mac and everything else.

Both references suggest two important ideas. First, it seems that TEFL was perceived these participants as another consumer's good from the West, which indicates that it occurs within the wider process of westernisation of societies, Americanisation or "coca-colonisation" (Flusty, 2004, p. 2; Mooney & Evans, 2007, p. 29). A very similar idea has been developed by Holborow (2006) who depicts English education as being "branded" (p. 90). It is also interesting to note that these examples closely relate to the ideological and cultural representations mentioned by the participants earlier (see 5.5 above) whereby world celebrities and Hollywood figures are being used in textbooks as vehicles of a neoliberal outlook that ELT publishers commonly refer to as 'aspirational content' (Gray, 2012). This idea is very present in Adam's critique of the language presented in the EFL classroom that he metaphorically described as a "manufactured" version: "Look at the books. Nothing relates to students' life. The books are manufactured versions of language." Hence, TEFL was depicted as a product or as a "by-product" by Osman: "The spread of English in other domains is incidental and probably an inevitable by-product." Furthermore, this can be related to the numerous references to "Hollywood" and the "pop culture" as it has been shown elsewhere in the findings and discussed earlier. Thus, what seems significant is that these metaphors point to the fact that English is not only the language of scientific and technological knowledge and economy, but also at the forefront of the Western consumerist culture as stated by Graddol (1997, p. 14) and Barber (1996, p. 84) in his description of the relationship between global –American– culture and the English language:

The global culture speaks English [and] American English has become the world's primary transnational language in culture and the arts as well as science, technology, commerce, transportation, and banking.

This suggests that the language has become an object and a product of trade but not only a medium of trade. By using such evocative figurative language to describe TEFL, participants expressed the idea that “corporate consumerism and U.S. lifestyle are thus wedded to the learning of English” (Phillipson, 2008, p. 10). It is worth bearing in mind that the TEFL industry generates significant profits to the US and UK ‘educational firms’ in terms of published materials, examination or ELT expertise. Furthermore, Global English and its subsequent by-products such as TEFL or EMI have become consumers’ goods that are being exported across the world, and particularly in the oil-rich Gulf countries like the KSA relying on the fact that English has undeniably become a *de facto lingua franca* in academia. Recently, a number of American or British universities have started exporting their ‘savoir-faire’ and expertise beyond their frontiers to establish their programmes abroad and take part in this “educational gold rush” (Lewin, 2008, p. 1).

The second point I wish to raise is that the above-mentioned terms used by the participants suggest that TEFL is now deeply intertwined with the phenomena of globalisation by being not only the result of this process but also an active facilitator. As briefly addressed in the introduction, the concept of globalisation can be perceived from very different perspectives because of its multidisciplinary nature as it is a multifaceted notion intertwined with economic, sociological and political implications; however, the role played by the English language in this process is not only instrumental. The language has also become the result of globalisation and acts as a “medium of globalization [...], a tool that facilitates and finally brings about more facets of globalization” (Zughoul, 2003, p. 18). In other words, the English language has not only become a facilitator of globalisation, but is at the forefront of globalisation. Likewise, this idea of the English language being intertwined with globalisation has been further developed by Phillipson (2008, p. 4) who views global English as a multi-dimensional entity composed of three interconnected features: product, process and project:

‘Global English’ can be seen as a product (the code, the forms used in a geographically diverse community of users), as a process (the means by which uses of the language are being expanded, by agents activating the underlying structures, ideologies, and uses), or as a project (the normative goal of English becoming the default language of international communication and the dominant language of intranational communication in an increasing number of countries worldwide). The processes and project are dependent on use of the product, and on ideological commitment to the project

Therefore, instead of acknowledging their “complicity with English and globalisation” (Karmani, 2005b, p. 163), the Western Muslim teachers who took part in this study expressed their critique of the insidious links between TEFL and globalisation, which certainly denotes a certain fear, mistrust or suspicion towards TEFL that they might deem as a source of tension with Islam –this appears to be true in light of some of the participants’ responses pointing to the possible tensions between TEFL and Islam. It can be argued that this criticism seems to stem from the belief that the spread of the English language in Muslim Countries in general and particularly in the KSA is viewed as a possible source of a de-Islamification, or as Fareed metaphorically put it, as a means by which one’s faith might be “eroded”. This mistrust may have caused them to reject certain aspects of TEFL they might consider as inappropriate for their students and refuse to be agent and complicit to this process, to which TEFL would be one of the open “doors”. They seemed to fear, notably, the effects of globalisation and the global spread of English on the use of Arabic, as also pointed by Morrow (2007), Zughoul (2003), Guttenplan (2012), Al-Jarf (2008) or Al Tuwaijri (n.d.). In that regard, as discussed earlier in the literature review, it is essential to bear in mind the status of the Arabic language in the Islamic religion that is widely accepted by Muslims as closely connected with and inseparable from Islam. Therefore, it is as if this process of de-Islamification was perceived as occurring through diminishing the importance of the Arabic language that would be gradually replaced by English. The findings suggested that participants expressed concerns regarding the use of Arabic in the KSA and it is interesting to note that Saudis themselves have raised similar concerns. For instance, Abu Zayd (2000) expressed his fears for the Arabic language and considers that EMI leads to instilling “foreign” ideas into younger generation’s minds. According to him, the negative effects of EMI can be perceived in three different ways. First, interestingly, like the participants of the study, Abu Zayd uses a metaphorical expression and describes the Arabic language as “the fortress of Islam”. He considers that the adoption of EMI in education instead of Arabic will “demolish the fortress of Islam” and ultimately diminish its status as a symbol of Islam in the eyes of the Muslims. Abu Zayd, as some participants seem to concur, explains that creating a separation between Muslims and the Arabic language, which is the language of the Quran, will in turn Muslims away from their Holy book and their religion. Secondly, as mentioned by Abdullah who explained how some youth might end up perceiving Islam as “not being functional” as a result of the spread of English, Abu Zayd believes students might feel that their language is inefficient in acquiring knowledge in general and in the field of modern technology in particular. Thirdly, he explains that replacing the language of

instruction stains young Muslims' sense of pride in their language who will gradually feel scorn towards the Arabic language. This last point has been emphasised by Abdullah and Ali who respectively used very strong words to describe this feeling: "humiliation" and "shame". For Ali, the global spread of the English language and Western culture and values in Islamic countries is a sign of "humiliation" while Abdullah believes it is "shameful" for a Muslim, but more importantly for a Muslim Arabic speaker, to feel "inadequate" or "deficient" for not being able to speak English. Similar concerns have been raised by others, including Morrow (2007), McLaren (2011), Troudi (2009) or Phillipson (2009) to cite but a few. Similar to the current findings, all the aforementioned studies concur to the fact that the spread of English is a source of concern at multiple levels, such as language policy or cultural identity.

5.6.2 TEFL and Western Educational Values

What seems particularly interesting in the findings is that participants were not only referring to the spread of the language but also to the spread of certain educational values and pedagogical approaches, which reinforces the idea that this spread occurs at multiple levels, cultural, ideological, political but also educational. Once more, the participants' use of figurative language provided an interesting lens to help understand some of the most salient issues that emerged from the data. The spread of English in education, with the use of EMI for instance, shows how, as pointed by Osman, the language can be used as a "legitimisation of the West":

I don't think there are many people who are completely unaffected, except for maybe the oldest generation. I think that to some extent the culture has encroached it, so seeing English taught in schools is a legitimisation of the West and of the language. These things probably, at least on a subconscious level and possibly more than that, do affect your culture.

Furthermore, according to that same participant, good education is commonly conceived by people in the medium of English or reflecting Western models of education:

When the word education comes, I don't know how that conflicts with Arab sensibilities and even the definition of the word education in Arabic. I don't know how that maybe conflicts with it, but certainly when you talk about a good education and you talk about it in English, you have a very clear idea that what good education means is what I would expect to see in an objectively functional classroom in England or America or something like that.

Beyond the ideological features carried through the language, TEFL seems to be embedded in certain Western educational values and pedagogical models. For instance, TEFL was described as closely connected to a Western concept of education that would be reflected in

the adoption of EMI at university. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that some participants depicted TEFL as firmly embedded in Western modes of learning that *they* also seemed to reproduce in their daily practice.

In that regard, Osman metaphorically described the Arab-Islamic way of learning as the “empty vessel” model whereby students, who are “in search of knowledge”, have come to the class to learn from the teacher:

I suppose the model of teaching, [...] is possibly still slightly more towards a historically Arab teaching style – more didactic, the values that I was taught when I was trying to be a teacher which is far more student-based and creative thinking-based supposedly. I don’t know if that’s absolutely the case, but the answer lies with the student, whereas I think maybe tradition here is it’s more the answer is with the teacher. Respect your teacher because the teacher has the knowledge and you don’t. It’s far closer to the empty vessel model, I think. We’ve come in search of knowledge. I don’t think that is wrong, but we’ve been taught that it’s wrong by the Western idea of education.

This metaphorical representation of the KSA education practices seems to be consistent with a certain conception of Islamic religious knowledge and Islamic religious education mainly “concerned with the progressive initiation of pupils into the received truths of the faith” (Halstead, 2004, p. 519). The representation of a learning model can also be related to the participants’ understanding of the Arab culture in general and the KSA culture in particular. As reported in the findings, some participants referred to traditional Arab and Bedouin values as being the bedrock of Saudi society. Moreover, Osman’s description seemed to correspond to what traditional Islamic education is based upon in terms of the status of the teacher and the student in the learning process. Students are seen as, first and foremost, recipients of knowledge from a teacher by “listening attentively, willingly, and exclusively to him” (Elyas & Picard, 2010, p. 138). This is to a large extent inspired from Islamic religious education where the teacher, usually an Imam – a learned religious figure, literally a *guide*–teaches, instructs and educates young people. This grants the teacher a status of “preacher-like image” (2010, p. 138), which is also largely inspired by the fact that Prophet Mohammed is described in the Quran and the Islamic tradition as a teacher and as an example to be followed, as the two following Quranic verses illustrate:

There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often (33:21). Just as We have sent you a Messenger from among you reciting to you Our verses and purifying you and teaching you the Book and wisdom and teaching you that which you did not know (2:151)

Moreover, within the Islamic conception of education, imitation seems to be a key feature

in the learning process and the teacher is viewed as a “transmitter of (religious) knowledge [and] an authority figure worthy of respect” (Halstead, 2004, p. 525).

Furthermore, the “empty vessel” metaphor relates to two fundamental ideas reported by other participants. First, this conception of education is closely related to the role model position advocated by many of the participants. As presented in the previous chapter (See section 4.8.2), the participants sometimes felt they could serve as role models and examples for their students at the social, academic or even religious level. This idea was also reinforced by the use of other metaphors to describe their rapport with the students whom they described as “brothers” or “sons”, hence putting an emphasis on the particular relationship they established with them based on their shared Islamic faith, as in the following quote by Abdullah:

I mean in general it impacts on everything that I do because it’s who I am my core values my Islamic values. The way that I deal with my students, I see them more than just students. You know, they’re my brothers. I’m trying to help them to better themselves, my sons, or whatever the case may be.

This aspect is at the heart of the Muslim conception of the teacher, based on the following premise reported by Halstead (2004, p. 525):

Since teachers have a special responsibility to nurture the young and develop their spiritual and moral awareness, their personal lives, beliefs, character and moral integrity are as important as their academic expertise.

Likewise, the above “empty vessel” metaphor seems to be consistent with a number of Saudi second language educators’ descriptions of the KSA education practices and its historical and religious underpinnings. For instance, Elyas (2010, p. 138) explains that the didactic traditional method of learning, still present in today’s KSA schools, is rooted in Arab and Islamic traditions which consider the teacher as “primary” and the student as holding a “secondary role”.

Another point that needs to be raised is that participants seem to be reproducing certain well-grounded assumptions about a presumed conflict between two conceptions of teaching and learning: the Islamic conception of learning –as described above– and social-constructivist theories of learning. The Arab-Islamic model has been implicitly described by other participants as in conflict with Western student-centred approaches to teaching and learning. As suggested by the “empty vessel” model used by Osman, this conception of education is culturally grounded in an Arab-Islamic conception of the student who is compared as needed to be filled with knowledge. This metaphorical representation of the

student reveals a particular conception of the role students are playing in their learning whereby learners would be passive waiting to receive knowledge from the teacher. According to many participants, on the contrary, TEFL follows a very different approach based on the social-constructivist idea that learning is considered as not only a one-way transmission process from the teacher to the learner, but as a shared experience where learners take an active role in their learning. It is also worth noting that many of the principles of CLT are largely inspired by this conception of teaching and learning where students are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities to experience and communicate with the language in an effective and meaningful way among their peers or with others. A number of participants referred to the need for Saudi students to gain “study skills” and that “rote learning” and “memorisation” were not sufficient. Like Shaw (2006, p. 44), they seemed to point to the lack of “readiness” of the Saudis to adopt Western approaches to education.

The above suggests that the participants’ conception of Arab/Islamic culture is also embedded in a Western, neo-colonialist, essentialist worldview that looks at the *other* as “culturally deficient” or as culturally “exotic but equal” (Holliday, 2007, p.21). This was not a unanimous view among the participants; however, this metaphorical representation and the references to “study skills”, “rote learning” and “memorisation” from other participants also suggest a certain incompatibility between the two cultures of learning, as in the following quote from Adam:

There is more in English than just memorising. [...] They have to start thinking for themselves, solving problems in all kinds of skills. We’re not saying that memorising is a bad thing but that they need a lot more. One of the reasons why they’re learning in English is to make this country stronger [in] communication, business with the world, that’s the whole idea. They’re going to need a lot of other skills.

Nevertheless, this idea of incompatibility needs to be questioned; instead, it could be argued that these differences are far more the result of the values that we, as culturally-laden individuals impose on others based on our expectations and worldviews. Nevertheless, despite the different cultural practices in terms of teaching and learning, there are indications in the findings that participants seem to be finding ways to deal with both approaches in their teaching practices. This is particularly evident in the nature of their rapport with students and the brotherhood-like relationship they seem to establish with their students or their role model status as examples to be followed. Further studies, possibly by means of classroom observations would certainly shed light on this issue.

5.7 Summary

To summarise the above chapter, it seems important to emphasise on how the application of an additional, complementary analytic framework to discuss the findings has provided an even deeper insight into the questions raised by the study. The rhetorical analysis that guided the discussion enabled me to shed light on the participants' worldviews and conceptions in relations to TEFL, the spread of English and Islam; it has also laid bare some of their deep inner feelings in relation to their faith and their profession. Finally, although rhetorical analysis is mainly rooted in realist worldviews, the chapter emphasised on the fact that my interpretations were not a reflection of the participants' original intent but plausible explanations of their intentions behind their use of rhetorical language. In doing so, I was able to relate the findings with the relevant literature, the entirety of the data and my personal experience as an EFL teacher in the KSA.

6. Conclusion

This final chapter concludes the thesis by first summarising its main contribution to knowledge in terms of theory, practice and methodology. Then, the chapter highlights the thesis' main limitations and its recommendations. Finally, the chapter ends by making a number of personal reflections highlighting how this research project has impacted on me on a personal level.

6.1 Main Contribution

To conclude the above chapters, it seems essential to emphasise on the main contribution of this study in terms of theory, practice and methodology. First, the study's main contribution relates to two essential notions that have been debated among applied linguists: ownership and appropriation of the English language. There are clear indications that Western Muslim EFL teachers throughout this study have claimed ownership of the English language in a way that has not yet been addressed in the literature. Indeed, Islam is being used as a distinctive element of this process of appropriation and ownership, hence the idea of 'Islamic TEFL'. The English language is being described in terms of belonging and not as an alien entity although TEFL sometimes confronts them to ethical dilemmas; Western Muslim EFL teachers did not simply oppose English but instead, appropriated 'English for Islamic purposes'. In other words, they are advocating their belonging to the language by affirming its belonging to their religion. Most importantly, the main novelty resides in the fact that the study adds another layer to the issue of ownership, so far founded on geographical or linguistic principles –e.g. world Englishes– by integrating religion as a determining element of ownership, hence, the concept of 'Islamic English' or 'Islamic TEFL'.

Furthermore, the concept of 'Islamic TEFL' demonstrates that language-teaching issues are inextricably intertwined with broader issues such as religions, culture or politics. In doing so, the study dismisses the value-free technical conceptions of language teaching as they are commonly instilled in many academic institutions in the world and particularly in the KSA. The study has shown that the links between Islam, politics and language need to be explicitly addressed within the ELT arena. The Muslim professionals that participated in the study, in their own way, showed how they managed to combine their Islamic faith with their profession by adopting 'Islamic TEFL' and reconnecting their profession with their faith. The idea that 'Islamic TEFL' is present in different forms that include, for instance, the

awareness of the complex ideological issues surrounding the global spread of English, the idea that the Islamic faith can inform and shape TEFL in terms of work ethics, pedagogical approaches or relationship with students. Throughout the research, the participants explicitly or implicitly described their role as EFL teachers as guided by a flexible framework anchored to fundamental guiding principles derived from the Islamic faith.

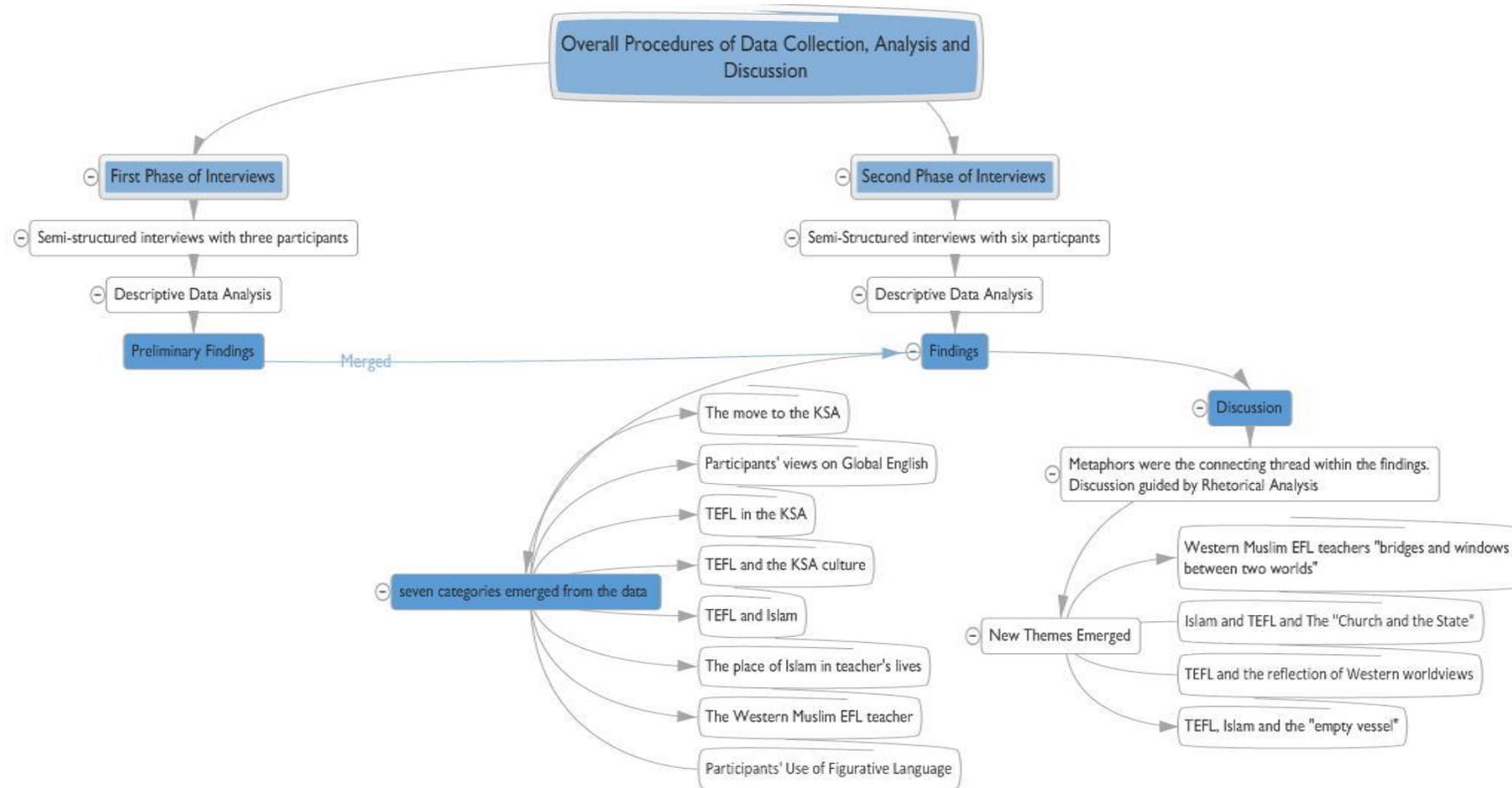
Also, participants were generally-speaking quite critical of the global spread of English, which they depicted as a process and a product of consumerism with TEFL and EMI as “by products” and consumer goods from the West exported to the Arab world. In addition, the global spread of English in the KSA was seen as a possible source of tension with the Islamic faith. This criticism seems to denote a certain fear and suspicion towards the spread of the English language in Muslim countries in general and particularly in the KSA; this sentiment also reveals that participants viewed TEFL and the global spread of English as a possible source of de-Islamification.

Moreover, the spread of English within the education arena in the KSA –of which EMI is a clear manifestation– seems to reflect Western models of education. Likewise, the study showed that the ideological features to which language seems to be the vector, demonstrate that TEFL is embedded in Western educational values, such as social constructivist theories of learning that sometimes appear in conflict with the traditional, more pupil-centred approaches derived from the Arab-Islamic culture. Nevertheless, the study questions this idea of incompatibility between both approaches and suggests that although there are fundamental differences between these two conceptions of learning and education, there are clear indications in the findings that the participants are finding ways to deal with both approaches in their teaching practices. This is particularly evident in the account of their relationship with students, the rapport they manage to establish with them, the brotherhood-like relationship and their role model status as examples.

Furthermore, the study made a significant contribution with the use of a creative approach to discuss the findings guided by figurative language as a window to the main themes that emerged from the data; it appeared powerful to further the understanding of the issues raised by the study. To a greater extent, it was argued that, in conjunction with descriptive analysis, rhetorical analysis can be an effective analytical tool for the study of social sciences in general, but most particularly in qualitative research. This type of analysis is inherently interpretative and subjective and shifts from truth claims proper to quantitative, scientific research by investigating a range of plausible interpretations for the use of the participants’ language. In

addition, it considers language as a central aspect in the researcher's analytical approach since it acts as both a vector but also a shaper of thought. The figurative language present in the participants' responses was used as a connecting thread between the three voices present in this study: the participants', the literature's and the researcher's. Thus, I was able to tell their unique stories, without isolating them from the relevance of the issues that were investigated in the study. The figure on the next page summarises the overall approach that was followed for the collection and analysis of the data as well as for the discussion of the findings.

Figure 3: Overall procedures of data collection, analysis and discussion



6.2 Limitations and Recommendations

This qualitative study aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the views, beliefs and opinions of the participants and did not seek to generate objective knowledge or generalise findings. Owing to this, and due the rather small size of the sample, the study is limited to the experiences of these particular individuals. Therefore, among the main limitations of the study is its particularity and specificity. Although with such a small sample the study revealed a great richness and variety in the participants' views, the results may not reflect the reality of all Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA. Likewise, the findings are merely the stories of nine participants and do not reflect a true reality 'out there'. Secondly, despite the rigour of the analytical tools employed, the nature of the study being inherently subjective, qualitative and interpretative, different tools may have yielded different results. The study only explored plausible, possible meanings and did not claim to reach an objective truth about the participants; therefore, no claims of generalisation or transferability are being made. Thirdly, another limitation of this study is the absence of three voices: Saudi students, non-Western Muslim EFL teachers and female voices. There is no doubt that investigating their views would enrich and deepen our understanding of the process of TEFL and the global spread of English in the KSA in relation to all the complex issues raised by the study.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

I believe the nature of this study to be quite personal as throughout this doctoral journey, I shared a part of myself and my experiences with the participants and they likewise did the same with me. Indeed, throughout this research, the participants shared with me some of their fundamental beliefs in regard to the role played by TEFL in very complex issues and how it relates to their faith. In particular, all the participants addressed how their faith was inextricably tied with their professional practice and how it affected it. I also repeatedly emphasised on the personal, subjective nature of the study that was particularly evident in the way the findings were discussed. Moreover, as explained earlier, I share many characteristics with the participants of the study, and I have always considered myself as playing an active role in this research. I did not claim objectivity but exerted every possible effort to maintain a sound balance between my participants' voices and my personal voice and experiences as a researcher, notably by carefully listening to what my participants were sharing with me and trying to understand their individual stories from their own personal perspective rather than from mine.

Postscript

Just like I have attempted to tell the stories of Ahmed, Ali, Adam, Abdullah, Fareed, Mohammed, Nasser, Osman and Sami, by way of sealing this thesis, I would like to briefly discuss the tenth participant of the study: me. Throughout this research, I have not only benefitted from reflecting on my own views, beliefs and ideas, but also from listening to my participants whom, I hope, the discussions helped reflect on their role as Muslim EFL teachers and its implications. I have personally been quite affected by this doctoral journey, both professionally and also personally as beyond the challenges I encountered, what seems to be most important is that I have come to realise that many of my initial views, assumptions and opinions have changed. The encounters with these participants have enabled me to ponder some of my views on our position as Western Muslim EFL teachers in Muslim countries. Our profession does really seem to expose us to value conflicts but our faith can be a powerful source of inner conflict resolution. I have gained a much greater awareness of the fact that as Muslim EFL teachers, the Islamic faith can help us relate the macro-level discourses to the micro level of classroom realities. In addition to immersing myself in the relevant literature, what has helped me the most is to listen to my participants' unique individual stories. Their stories have somewhat reflected on my story and have helped me understand my own. I certainly feel much more at ease with myself, my faith and my profession as I have come to realise that despite the evident complex issues tied up with the nature of our profession, reconnecting TEFL with Islamic values and principles can be a way of appeasing these tensions, at least from my own perspective. This exercise was, I would hope, most useful for my participants but above all, for me since I feel confident that I have acquired a great deal of information from their reflections and observations on the way our shared Islamic faith informs our professional practice and how it shapes our perceptions on the wider complex issues intertwined with our profession. Through formulating the research questions, reading the literature, listening to my participants and attempting to make sense of their responses, I believe have been able to answer some of the questions asked by many Muslim EFL professionals, not only in the KSA, pertaining to professional issues, ethical issues, faith issues and also political or ideological ones. Sadly, some of the issues raised in this study –particularly the relationship between TEFL and Islam– have seldom been addressed in TEFL/TESOL or applied linguistics circles; therefore, it is hoped that the stories of Ahmed, Ali, Adam, Abdullah, Fareed, Mohammed, Nasser, Osman and Sami –and my own– find resonance in academic circles, including research, conferences or perhaps TEFL courses.

Appendix 1

MSc, PhD, EdD & DEdPsych theses.



Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

MSc, PhD, EdD & DEdPsych theses

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications> and view the School's Policy online.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Ismael Louber

Your student no: 590045323

Return address for this certificate: 18 Magdalen Rd, Flat 2, Exeter EX24TD

Degree/Programme of Study: EdD TESOL

Project Supervisor(s): K. Walshe & R. Freathy

Your email address: il213@exeter.ac.uk

Tel: 07455727378

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my thesis 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 form.

Signed: Ismael Louber

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ismael Louber', written over a horizontal line.

date: 21/01/2014

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
updated: March 2013

Certificate of ethical research approval

TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT:

TEFL and Islam in Saudi Arabia: perspectives from English as a foreign language Western Muslims teachers (tentative title)

1. Brief description of your research project:

EFL: English as a foreign language

TEFL: teaching of English as a foreign language

KSA: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

There has been a growing demand for EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia due to the recent implementation of English as a medium of instruction at university. Most universities have established foundation year programmes to offer intensive English instruction to Saudi students to enable them reach satisfactory levels of proficiency in the English language in order to pursue their studies in the medium of English.

Many Western Muslims are employed in KSA especially in the TEFL field. However no empirical study has been carried out to gain a greater insight and understanding of these teachers.

TEFL in the world has been perceived differently by applied linguists and some have adopted a very critical stance towards the global spread of English. Some critical thinkers have labelled the global spread of English as imperialist and consider TEFL as an instrument of hegemony while others view TEFL in the world as a neutral activity and consider the spread of the English language as a positive phenomenon facilitating international communication and a tool to access or disseminate knowledge of all kinds.

The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of Western Muslim EFL teachers' perceptions of the spread of English globally with particular reference to TEFL in KSA. Also, I would like to study how they view the relationship between TEFL in KSA and their Islamic faith and how they manage this relationship in their lives as teachers.

2. Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

- The study will involve ten participants in total purposefully selected based on three criteria: Participants are Muslims, English is their first language and they are or have been employed in KSA as EFL teachers. Snowball sampling strategy has also been used in order to select participants for the study. Contacts in the form of emails have been made with former colleagues who contacted other potential participants. Participants are all EFL instructors/lecturers at KSA universities, in various locations of the country

Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:

3. Informed consent: Where children in schools are involved this includes both headteachers and parents). Copy(ies) of your consent form(s) you will be using must accompany this document. a blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-line documents: Each consent form **MUST** be personalised with your contact details.

Consent: Informed consent from all participants in the interviews will be sought. Participants will be made aware of how the research finding will be used. Throughout the research, they will be

reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed

4. Anonymity and confidentiality

Confidentiality: data collected (transcripts and all digital audio recordings) will be stored in a secure and safe place. All electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password and stored in the researcher's personal computer with a secure virus protection. Data will be coded to ensure anonymity and will remain anonymous in the write up of the research. All participants will be referred to as "teacher 1, teacher 2" (or equivalent labeling) and any written information collected will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposed when it is no longer needed. Likewise, any audio recording will also be destroyed upon completion of my Doctorate

Respect: The views of teachers will be a priority in this study and I will respect individual differences.

Storage: audio data will be downloaded from recording devices at the earliest possible opportunity, and then deleted immediately from those devices

5. Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

- The data collection comprises two stages:

The Pilot study.

Four participants will take part in the pilot study. Interviews will be face to face and via SKYPE. The same sampling strategy will be followed for the pilot study. The data collected will be transcribed and analysed for an initial thematic analysis in order to inform the main data collection stage.

The main data collection stage will start once the pilot study has been successfully completed. Interviews will all be conducted face to face.

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. This will involve ten participants and the interviews will be digitally recorded and electronically transcribed with their consent. The data obtained will then be coded thematically

6. Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project - e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires, or

During the data collection phase, data analysis and write up, data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a secure building. Any electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password from their personal computer on a secure virus protected system and any unwanted data will be destroyed securely. All audio data will be downloaded from recording devices at the earliest possible opportunity, and then deleted immediately from those devices.

7. Special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.

8. Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

The issue of the relationship between TEFL and Islam and the global spread of English are issues that are addressed freely and openly in KSA and they are by no means controversial issues. They have no direct political implication, that is why, they are addressed publicly at conferences or lectures. The study relates to their views regarding their own faith and do not attempt to have a critical look at political decisions. In the event that participants address issues that may have the potential to be controversial, they will be assured that their views will be strictly protected; no names of people or institutions will be explicitly mentioned. The full interview transcripts will be sent to the participants.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

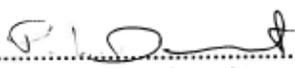
This project has been approved for the period: January 2014 until: December 2015

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): Karen Walshe

date: 14/1/14

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.

GSE unique approval reference: D/13/14/11

Signed:  **date:** 20/1/14
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

Appendix 2

Participant Informed Consent Form



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Title of Research Project: **EFL and Islam in Saudi Arabia: perspectives from EFL Western Muslims teachers (tentative title)**

CONSENT FORM

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 and may also request that my data be destroyed

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 or academic conference or seminar presentations

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): (UK) +447455727378/ (KSA) +00966542329976

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

Ismael Louber, il213@exeter.ac.uk
OR

.....
* when research takes place in a school, the right to withdraw from the research does NOT usually mean that pupils or students may withdraw from lessons in which the research takes place

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.
Revised March 2013

Appendix 3

Participant Information Sheet



EdD Research Study

Information to participants

I am currently investigating the views of Western Muslim EFL teachers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) regarding the spread of English in the KSA with particular reference to TEFL. In doing so, I am conducting interviews with Western Muslim EFL teachers in the KSA. I am particularly interested in your views and perceptions of:

- TEFL and the global spread of English in the KSA
- The relationship between your Islamic faith and your role as EFL teachers

Your contribution is very valuable and I appreciate your cooperation.

Should you need any further details, please do not hesitate to ask me. Please, feel free to visit my e-profile at the University of Exeter.

Thank you very much for your participation and your contribution

Ismael Louber

EdD TESOL

lj213@exeter.ac.uk

<http://eprofile.exeter.ac.uk/ismaellouber/>

Appendix 4

Interview Protocol

#	Questions/probes/prompts		
1	Can you tell me more about yourself and your personal and professional life before coming to KSA?		
2	What do you think are the positive or negative impacts of the spread of English globally and in KSA?		
	What do you think are the main aspects of Saudi Culture?		
3	Do you believe TEFL in the KSA has affected these aspects of Saudi culture?		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>If so, has it had a positive or negative influence? Can you give me examples? Has TEFL affected the Saudis' beliefs for example?</td> <td>If not. Do you believe it may affect it in the future and why?</td> </tr> </table>	If so, has it had a positive or negative influence? Can you give me examples? Has TEFL affected the Saudis' beliefs for example?	If not. Do you believe it may affect it in the future and why?
If so, has it had a positive or negative influence? Can you give me examples? Has TEFL affected the Saudis' beliefs for example?	If not. Do you believe it may affect it in the future and why?		
4	How do you perceive the relationship between TEFL and the Islam?		
5	How (if at all) does your role as an EFL teacher impact on your faith?		
6	How (if at all) does your faith impact on your role as an EFL teacher?		
	Positively/negatively? Do you recall particular examples?		
7	As I told you My research is about how people like you perceive the spread of English and TEFL in the KSA but also about its relationship with Islam, and how you manage this relationship. Is there anything else you wanted to say that you think should be addressed in relation to that?		
Notes:			

Appendix 5

Coded transcript using Excel for one subcategory (first phase)

Subcategory	PID	Quotes
Religious Motives	MAS	I came to study Quran and other religious subjects. Before coming we had the notion that we'd probably stay in this part of the world because it is more conducive to our way of life.
		So this is when I started to realise that I needed to pursue some kind of further education in teaching English...then I came to the KSA
		You know, to be in a better environment as far as my way of life is concerned...Well, being Muslims...It's more conducive I guess to the way I practice Islam
		You know being able to ...for myself to without being...I mean feel strange...I mean in ***** sometimes I felt strange because I don't shave my beard
		That's why I'm here...because where I go to work most people are Muslims. And that's the reason why I am here. You know being in an environment being with Muslims.
	GAB	Because I wanted to live in KSA because it would be easier to practice my religion and bring my children up in an Islamic environment and work in that whole environment.
		I wouldn't say I couldn't do it but...obviously in KSA everything is in place...You do not have to do that much effort. You got mosques everywhere Ramadan is easy obviously.
		You have to make that initial move which can be quite difficult. You leave your house your friends your family behind.
		but your life's going to be easier you can practice your religion more without having that worry that someone's going to throw eggs at your wife or spit on your kids, you know things that can happen in places that haven't big Muslim communities. It's still England at the end of the day
		Well I would hope so...Yes kind of...but Hijrah means that we will never go back but I don't know whether that is really the case because we're guests here really.
		Obviously here in Saudi Arabia we are in a very religious environment even if the students are not, you know, your lessons are based around the next prayer, you have to stop or whatever...The term is based around the Islamic calendar. It's not like you enter into the classroom and you forget Allah and your religion and everything you know
		I mean you know...hajj and you just drive to Makkah or go to Medina they're always there although you might not be in those cities you're still in the country aren't you? Just go and make OMRAH when you want. And even like, when you think of summer holidays colleagues will go to all over the place. But we're quite happy to spend a few days in Khobar and it's not like bikini in the beach. You are still in KSA although it might be different than other places in KSA. you can have some decent holidays without seeing stuff like you know, you probably don't want to see

Coded transcript using Nvivo (screenshot)

The screenshot displays the Nvivo software interface. On the left, a tree view titled 'refined categories' lists various nodes with their respective reference and source counts. On the right, a transcript window shows a conversation with highlighted segments corresponding to the categories in the tree.

Name	Reference	Sources
ISLAM IN TEACHERS LIVES	0	0
impact	29	8
no impact	7	2
proselytism	9	6
unconscious impact	10	4
Work ethics	1	1
MEMORABLE QUOTES	9	4
PERCEPTIONS ON GLOBAL ENGLISH	2	1
Global English and TEFL	6	5
linguistic Imperialism	34	8
neutrality of the English language	24	6
the advantages of GE	27	9
Western culture	47	9
Western values	48	8
SAUDI CULTURE AND IDENTITY	0	0
Participants' Understanding of Saudi Culture	31	6
the KSA culture has been affected	36	9
the KSA culture has been affected by other than language	25	7
the KSA culture has NOT been affected	13	8
TEFL IN KSA	0	0
curriculum issues	28	8
English as imposed	9	4
the need for English	14	6
the use of English in KSA	5	3
TEFL ISLAM	8	6
coexistense	14	5
complementary relationship	10	7
Conflict management	13	6
conflictual relationship	28	8
Islamic English	23	8
religious ruling	3	2
THE MOVE TO KSA	5	3
family motives	22	6
financial motives	12	6
religious motive	42	9
TEFL as a tool to come to KSA	14	7
THE MUSLIM EFL TEACHER	3	2
bridge between West and Islam	9	5
Helper and Protector	14	5
positive aspects from the West	4	3
rapport with students	12	7

NR-NASSER [Click to edit](#)

Respondent: First of all, you're coming to Mecca and Medina, the two holiest places in Islam. You are doing this fisabil illah for your family. You want to spend time with your family. You want to educate your family in Islam and give them an Islamic environment. This is number two because these two things, I think, take priority. Number three: I had a skill set which is useful for our Muslim brothers over here. I can pass on a lot of my knowledge and also help the systems over here because I think some of the systems, in terms of organizational things... I'm not perfect on that, but I'm not bad. I can see places where things can improve. I think that I achieved those goals and I'm achieving those goals when I'm here. You can see the benefits of that. So those are the three, in a nutshell, targets that I had.

Researcher: You said teaching English is your career. Obviously, you've made it your career. You've studied how to teach that language. You've seen what's happening with this language. I'm not trying to...

Respondent: To lead. I understand.

Researcher: There are negative and there are positive impacts, I suppose, in the way English is being used globally now. According to you, what are the main positive aspects of the spread of English in the world and here, with particular interest in Saudi Arabia? And possible negative effects as well.

Respondent: This is a very good question. For me, English – it's a useful language to study. I think so. But I think the main drawback for me is that the students here don't get a choice. They don't get a choice. If you're going to study whatever you need to study, you've got to go through English. In fact, in some of these cases in humanities, for example, where they're going to go on and study Sharia and Qur'an, they're forced to study English. I don't see the point of them doing that. But if you're going to study science, engineering, medicine and all that, we all know that now...

Researcher: You need English.

Respondent: You need English. The fact of the matter is that all the research which is being done and which is being published is being done in the Western countries. If you want to keep your fingers on the pulse of all these new developments, you've got to know some English...

Researcher: Even in non-Western countries, it's in English, as you said.

Respondent: Everywhere in the world, globally, it's in English now. Maybe there's a global agenda. You could go back in the day and say Islam was spread through Arabic. Even though... Whatever you want to say about that, Arabic was the dominant language. If you wanted to learn about Islam, it's still the case. You can learn about the basics in English or everything else, but if you want to go deeper into Islam, you've got to learn Arabic. This is just a fact. So I don't see English as a kind of language of... it's creeping insidiously around the world or anything like that. It's a tool. You can choose to do it if you want to, and you can choose not to. Then, questions pop up with that. Why are they studying, for example, engineering in English if this is an Arab country, or medicine? Because I know in Syria, they do it in Arabic and they've got a very, very good medical system. And all of these other countries that they... In Iraq, before it was unstable, it was the best country in the Muslim world in terms of education.

44 Items | Nodes: 83 | References: 332 | Read-Only | Line: 126 | Column: 34 | 100%

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