UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

A CASE STUDY OF OMANI ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH AND TOWARDS NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH IN AN OMANI UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Interaction with a second or foreign language is often assumed to necessitate exposure to the socio-cultural values associated with that language's dominant social group/s. Such interaction may therefore be experienced as a means of expanding an individual's worldview. However, it may also lead to a sense of tension or even alienation for those who find the values transmitted by the new language incongruous with their own. Within the context of the six current member nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a number of theorists maintain that learners of English within the region may experience negative responses and attitudes based on a supposed incongruity between the Western values associated with the language and Arab-Muslim identity. Research into the attitudes of Gulf citizens towards the English language and its native speakers, however, suggests a far more complicated picture. The current case study of Omani English-language instructors of English at a university in the Gulf nation of Oman, therefore, investigated participants' attitudes towards the English language, their attitudes towards the place of English in Oman, and their attitudes towards native speakers of English. A mixed qualitative-quantitative research design, incorporating documentary analysis of government-produced texts regarding English in higher education in Oman, a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 21 Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors and semi-structured interviews conducted with eight such participants, was employed. Findings suggested that participants held somewhat positive attitudes towards the English language and its place in Omani society, with emphasis often placed on the way access to the language can be a source of empowerment. Moreover, results indicated that participants largely believed English allowed them to express their own individual values and concerns, and thus their knowledge of English was not incompatible with their Arab and/or Muslim traditions and beliefs. However, attitudes towards native speakers of English were far more mixed, with neutral attitudes in this area characterising questionnaire responses and slightly more positive attitudes typically emerging from the semi-structured interviews.

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

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Signature of Candidate Date

ENDORSEMENT

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Signature of Supervisor/s Date

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Chapter 1. Introduction.

1.1 Introduction.

The attitudes of Gulf citizens towards the English language and its native speakers is an area that has received an increasing amount of investigative attention in the past several years. In particular, the central role English plays in the private enterprises, education systems and, often, government-funded institutions, of the Gulf region means that English now, perhaps more so than during any time since the days of British rule, is increasingly positioned as a gatekeeper to social and economic success for many Gulf citizens. Even as English continues to see its status as either an unofficial second language or lingua franca of the Gulf States re-enforced (Charise, 2007; Randall & Samimi, 2010), there are those who claim that the Western worldviews associated with the language may be incompatible with more traditional Arab Muslim worldviews due to opposing cultural and religious values (Asraf, 1996; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b). This incompatibility, therefore, could be assumed to be a cause of potential conflict for Gulf citizen users of the English language, with negative attitudes towards both the language itself and its speakers being one potential result of such tension.

Until recently, however, very few studies about Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language and its speakers have been conducted. Moreover, although research interest into the nature of these attitudes has been steadily increasing in recent years, many of the Gulf studies have been conducted either in the relatively liberal emirate of Dubai or elsewhere in the United Arab Emirates, with almost all of these studies sharing a common focus on university students. This dissertation, therefore, sought to move the research beyond these parameters by conducting a case study of Gulf citizen attitudes in the often-overlooked Sultanate of Oman. In doing so, it explored the attitudes towards the English language and its native speakers of Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors.

Chapter 1 details some of the important background factors associated with the current research. It starts with a number of definitions, such as attitudes, culture and worldviews, that form the foundation of the current study. It then explores the research context in more depth through an examination of the Gulf States and Oman's somewhat unique position within them. The chapter goes on to discuss the roles that both English and Arabic often play across the nations of the Gulf, before

outlining the need for the current research and the research questions that have guided the study. Finally, the dissertation outline is offered.

1.2 Background.

The relationship between language and identity is an intricate and mutually-informing one, with a speaker's mother tongue vital in both shaping and representing perceptions of their inner and outer worlds. These perceptions constitute a speaker's worldview – the way one negotiates a range of factors including principles, values and social norms, in addition to issues of morality and religion. Learning a second or foreign language such as English has the ability to enhance this worldview. However, exposure to another language also comes with a set of risks. These risks are often associated with a language's transmission of worldviews incongruous with the learner's own, and may result in students experiencing a sense of tension and disinterest in their studies, or, in a worst case scenario, cultural alienation and even economic and political marginalisation (Sinno, 2008). These outcomes are a possibility in any situation where second or foreign languages are encountered. However, it is in those contexts where the new language is perceived as more capable of dealing with the demands of the modern world that such negative outcomes are most likely to occur (Asraf, 1996).

Within the context of the Gulf nations of Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, English is often associated with new technologies, ideas and access to the potential economic benefits of globalisation. This association, often reported as a result of British imperial rule and current American hegemony, has allowed English to assume a central role in many facets of Gulf life, including in the realms of business and education (Charise, 2007). This latter fact is witnessed by the number of prestigious universities across the region where the language of instruction is primarily English, and has lead to a situation in which English proficiency assumes a role as gatekeeper of social status and economic success (Pennycook, 1994).

Of course, unlike a number of other nations where English also plays an important societal role, the Gulf may claim a buffer against the full force of English's expansion in the spiritual force of its dominant religion, Islam, and its intimate ties to Arabic (Mazrui, 2008). It is perhaps due to the centrality of Arabic to Islam that concerns about the negative effects of English's increasingly central

position within Gulf societies have until fairly recently remained relatively mute. This is especially the case when the Gulf is held against other non-Arabic speaking members of the Muslim world, such as Malaysia, Brunei, and certain nations and regions of Africa and the Indian subcontinent, where the potential downside of English's status within their respective societies has long been a cause of investigative concern (Dan, Haroon, & Naysmith, 1996; Karahan, 2007; Mazrui, 1968; Ozog, 1989).

The relative lack of region-based investigations into the attitudes of Gulf Arab Muslims to English and native speakers of English was partially redressed in the debate accompanying post September 11, 2001 pressure on Gulf nations to reform local education systems. The American-led call for "less Islam and more English" (Glasser, 2003, p. A20) in the region's schools and universities excited the attention of certain religious leaders, politicians, academics and other professionals across the region. Their warnings about the potentially "de-Islamising" effects of increasing English's already significant role in the Gulf (Karmani, 2005a) have been challenged by those who support reformed educational policies by arguing proficiency in English is in no way incongruous with Arab Muslim identity (Kabel, 2007). Within the framework of this debate, a small but growing number of studies have begun to examine the attitudes of Gulf citizens to English, their attitudes towards the place of English in Gulf societies, and their attitudes towards native speakers of the language.

1.3 Problem Statement.

Of the research related to Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language and towards native speakers of the language to have thus far emerged, the vast majority has been conducted in the relatively liberal and Western-oriented emirate of Dubai, with developments in peripheral Gulf regions seldom reported in internationally-available English-language journals. Moreover, of the research that is available regarding the attitudes of Gulf citizens involved in what Malallah (2000) terms the "contested ground" of tertiary-level education in the region, most tends to take an almost exclusive focus on students, with very little investigative work directed towards the attitudes of those Gulf citizens whose professions involve teaching the English language at university level to their compatriots. Conceivably, however, these participants' attitudes towards English and its native speakers could

be argued to be even more informative than those of their students as it is these citizen-instructors who are at the forefront of the interaction between the English language and Gulf Arab identities as it is played out within this contested ground of tertiary-level education in the region on both personal and professional levels.

Moreover, while the Omani tertiary-level English-language instructor participants of the current research undoubtedly have a vested interest in the promotion of a privileged role for the English language within Omani society and therefore could be reasonably assumed to hold positive attitudes towards the language, similar assumptions about their attitudes towards the increasingly central role the language has continued to assume in their society, and towards native speakers of English, are far more difficult to make. In fact, attitudes towards the place of English in Oman and towards native speakers of English could be argued to be rather complex, especially given the place of these participants in the vanguard of a national "Omanisation" program which seeks to replace foreign workers with Omani citizens (Razavi & Kirsten, 2011; Winckler, 1997), and the fact that there exists some evidence of an increasing level of mistrust of the West in certain segments of Arab societies which is often reported as a response to American and British historical and contemporary influence in the region (Alkire, 2007; Burkholder, 2007; Lewis, 2002).

Despite the potential complexity of these attitudes, however, much of the Gulf research currently available tends to report attitudes towards the English language and its native speakers that align with Rahman's (2005) responses of rejection and resistance, acceptance and assimilation, and pragmatic utilisation. While such a conceptualisation of Muslim attitudes towards English and its speakers is no doubt informative, it could, nonetheless, be viewed as lacking the necessary level of nuance for dealing with the complexity of attitudes towards English and its speakers that has been informed by a number of personal, professional, socio-cultural, political and religious factors.

The current case study, therefore, examined the attitudes of Omani citizen tertiary-level English-language instructors towards the English language, its place in Oman, and towards native speakers of English through a conceptual framework formed by Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and informed by Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi's (1990) four senses of language learning which highlights the aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic aspects of learning a second or

foreign language (See sections 2.6 and 2.8). In doing so, it sought to address the research problem of discovering more about the nature of these attitudes given both participants' somewhat unique position in Omani society in relation to the English language and its speakers and some of the many socio-political factors that may have influenced the formation of their attitudes. Research questions are outlined in Section 1.7.1.

1.4 Definitions.

Any research dealing with issues of attitudes, culture and identity must necessarily acknowledge the fact that such terms are, by their very nature, associated with complex, latent constructs, constantly being defined and redefined as they evolve in an almost continuous state of motion. Added to this, defining the boundaries of the greater "Muslim world" (as opposed to the fairly congruous geographical entity that is the Gulf) in physical and ideological relation to the Anglophone "West" is also a challenge worthy of far greater space than is available here. The definitions below, therefore, are meant to serve primarily as a guide to some of the complexities conveyed by the terms as employed throughout this dissertation, and in no way claim to comprehensively represent the many intricacies, nuisances and dynamics associated with many of the concepts.

1.4.1 Attitudes and responses.

The term "attitude" is defined here as a psychological tendency expressed through the evaluation of a particular idea or object (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Evaluations inherent in attitudes range from positive to negative, and may involve responses that are affective, cognitive and/or behavioural (Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000). Participants' attitudes towards the English language, towards the place of English in Omani society, and towards native speakers of English form the primary concern of this research. However, these will be viewed from a post-positivistic paradigm which allows for an explicit acknowledgement of their potential variability across time and context and of the consequent difficulties associated with their measurement (see Section 3.3 for more details about the research paradigm adopted for the current research).

1.4.2 Native English speakers.

Although Talbot's (2009) definition of a native speaker of English as someone whose first language is English is tempting in its simplicity, it must be explicitly acknowledged that categorising who is and who is not a native English speaker is a much more complex process. This issue becomes even more involved when, as in the current research context, the assumptions of non-inner circle (Kachru, 1985) participants are involved.

Javier (2010) states that the assumptions about who is and who is not a native speaker of English made by people from non-inner circle nations are often tied to the race and ethnicity of the speaker as well as their ostensible country of origin. That is, native English speakers are often perceived to be Caucasians from the "norm-defining" Anglophonic countries of the USA, the UK, Canada and so on. Moreover, Javier continues, they are also assumed to be foreigners in the host country (in this case, Oman) and to therefore be different from local people. Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) state that the term native speaker is not a linguistic categorisation at all, but is rather best viewed as a socially-constructed identity based on the cultural assumptions and preconceived notions of others.

Within the current research, the definition of native English speaker cannot be separated from participants' assumptions. For this reason, the definition of "native speakers" in both the interviews and questionnaire was left deliberately vague, with participants free to interpret this term in ways that were meaningful to them rather than being forced to accept the researcher's own definitions.

1.4.3 Culture.

The term culture as it best applies to the current research can perhaps be most appropriately understood in terms of subjective and linguistic elements. Subjective elements of culture relate to those attitudes, values, beliefs, orientations and categorisations that underlie the assumptions often prevalent among a particular people, group or society within or across time (Huntington, 2000; Triandis, 2003). The linguistic elements of culture, however, refer to the place of language within a given group or society as a symbolic system allowing these attitudes, values and beliefs to be created, transmitted and shared (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2009).

1.4.4 Identity.

Identity is defined here as the way people understand and interpret their relationships to the world, how that interpretation is constructed across time and space, and how individuals understand their sense of efficacy and future possibilities both within their reference group and in society at large (Kim, 2003; Norton, 1997). Therefore, an individual's identity is not entirely within their control, but must, to an extent, rely on the perceptions of others. In particular, it is highly contingent on context and socio-economic circumstances. In this way, identity is a multifaceted and dynamic construct ranging across a number of areas including class, ethnicity, race, religion, gender and sexual orientation (Taylor & Spencer, 2004). The self-understandings an individual gains within and across these areas act as a guide for behaviour as well as a basis from which new activities, understandings and ways of being are devised (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). The most important application of the nature of identity to the current research relates to potential influence of Gulf Arab identity, and its associated dominant worldview (see Section 1.4.9), to the attitudes participants display.

1.4.5 The Gulf.

Officially denoted as the Persian Gulf, "the Gulf" is, in a strictly geographical sense, the 241,000 square kilometre crescent-shaped waterway in the Middle East boarded by Iran to the north and east and the Arabian Peninsula in the south, southeast, and west. The Gulf opens through the Straits of Hormuz, via the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, into the Indian Ocean, of which it is considered a marginal branch (Persian Gulf, 2009).

For the purpose of this research, the terms "Persian Gulf" and "Gulf" will move beyond this strict geographical definition and be used exclusively in reference to the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). These current members are the kingdoms of the Arabian Peninsula bordering this waterway which are: Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (see Section 1.4 for more details).

1.4.6 The Muslim world.

Although consisting entirely of Islamic nations, the Gulf forms only a small part of the much larger "Muslim world". Muslims make up around 22% of the

world's population living in more than 80 countries worldwide, with this figure expected to continue increasing at a rapid rate (Elyas, 2008; Mazrui, 2008). Each of the populated continents can claim significant Muslim communities, though Africa and Asia have the vast majority with over 1.1 billion followers and the three biggest Islamic nations – Indonesia, Pakistan, and India - in terms of number of followers. However, even within these regions Muslim communities and countries are often geographically, culturally, politically, and socially varied. Some examples of this vast and diverse "Muslim world", on top of the nations already mentioned, include Malaysia, Iran, Bangladesh, Comoros, Morocco and Egypt.

1.4.7 The Anglophone West.

Like the "Muslim world", the Anglophone "West" is not a coherent geographical or political entity, but rather refers to those English-speaking, first world, democratic nations with similar sets of customs or values derived primarily from British or American influence or heritage (Bennett, 2002). The Anglophone West, therefore, primarily refers here to the nations of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the United States.

1.4.8 Islam.

Jordan (2005) warns against a presentation of the terms "Islam" and "Muslim" as instantly recognisable referents conveying notions of uncomplicated entities. And, of course, any religion with well over a billion followers drawn from all walks of life in every corner of the earth cannot be viewed in simplistic, static terms. With this caution in mind, the following description is offered as a brief overview of some of the tenets and important events in one of the world's largest, and still rapidly growing, religions.

As a widely-followed Semitic and monotheistic religion, Islam is not only a system of beliefs, but also a religion pervading every part of a Muslim's life (Esposito, 2000). Essentially, the religion calls for individuals to live in a manner prescribed by Shari'a and Islamic political theory, arising from the first five centuries of the Islamic era (Lewis, 1988), in working together to build an ideal society on earth. It is a religion with its roots in seventh century Mecca, where, in 610, the Prophet Muhammad began preaching a series of revelations Muslims attribute either directly to God (Allah) or the archangel Gabriel. The Muslim

calendar begins in 622 with the hegira, when Muhammad was driven from Mecca by local authorities and resettled in Yathrib, present day Medina.

After his death in 632, Muhammad's followers compiled the revelations they considered to be directly from God in the Holy book of the Qur'an ("the recitations"), which acts today as the holy scripture of Islam. Other sayings attributed to Muhammad but not forming part of his revelations were recorded in the Hadith, while the precedent the Prophet set in his life is detailed in the Sunna. Together, these three books form a detailed guide to the spiritual, ethical and social life of a devout and orthodox Sunni Muslim (Metz, 1993). As each of these sacred texts was originally recorded in Arabic, and, as Arabic was the language of Muhammad and his followers, the language is subsequently considered by Muslims all over the world to be the holy language of Islam, and thus is inseparable from religious life (Omran, 1988).

Although all devout Muslims share a similar set of beliefs and place a high value on the five major pillars of their faith – an affirmation of their beliefs (*shahada*), daily prayer (*salat*), the giving of alms (*zakat*), fasting (*sawm*), and making a pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) within their lifetimes – since the death of Muhammad, Islam has split into a number of different sects and sub-sects. The two most prominent of these are Sunni and Shia. While the nature of their political and eventual spiritual divide is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to note that it is the Sunni religion which dominates the Gulf States, with the exception of the Shia majority though Sunni-ruled Bahrain (Blanchard, 2006). It is also important to note that two important sub-sects of Sunnism are also influential in the region. Wahhabi, native to Saudi Arabia but also influential in neighbouring Qatar, is based on a strict interpretation of Islam and has traditionally opposed both unorthodox religious practice and foreign influence in the region. The Ibadi sect, extremely influential in Oman and practised by the majority of that country's people and its ruling family, eventually forewent its fundamentalist roots to focus on the benefits to be gained from living a righteous and pious life within close-knit communities (Metz, 1993).

1.4.9 Worldviews.

Note (2007) conceptualises worldviews as maps that allow people to orient their lives through the creation of categories for, and the assigning of meaning to, the elements and events that surround them. Note states that this process of assigning meaning is underlined by an essentially moral purpose, or the "need to know what is considered right and wrong" (p. 84). It is this judgement that acts as a function allowing people to fulfil the basic human aspiration of being in contact with what is perceived to be good or of value. The value-laden nature of these "first-order categories", therefore, is highly contingent on culture, and will vary from one group to another and also across time. It is these first-order, or pre-conceptual, categorisations, Note states, that become the building blocks of the second-order categories that act to form an individual's understanding of the world and the phenomena it contains.

In relation to the current research, this conceptualisation is especially important due to the posited relationship between worldviews and the language, institutional structures, and cultural practices, that a given group or society develops. Tuivavalagi (2003) builds upon this idea by offering a model in which the culturally influenced concepts, or categorisations, on which an individual's worldviews are built act to influence both an individual's attitudes and actions.

Tuivavalagi's (2003) model suggests that any examination of Gulf Arab citizen attitudes must necessarily seek to describe the cultural concepts that have acted to inform them and, no less importantly, the predominant worldview/s associated with the nature of the dominant discourse of Gulf-Arab identity.

1.5 The Research Context: An Overview of the Gulf and Oman.

1.5.1 An overview of the Gulf.

The Gulf countries of the Arabian Peninsula are the group of nations comprising of Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They were all formal or, in the case of Oman, informal British protectorates, and today share not only the political, economic and military ties attached to membership of the GCC, but also a common sense of identity derived from the use of Arabic as a language native to the region and the centrality of Islam to almost every aspect of daily life (Charise, 2007). Each of these states gained independence from Britain between 1932 and 1971, and, since attaining nationhood,

has worked hard to define their own identities in the context of the often overlapping concerns of the region.

From a historical perspective, the Gulf has long been a meeting point of cultures and civilizations (Soucek, 2008). At the crossroads of Africa, India, and the Mediterranean, and given its proximity to both Mesopotamia and the Nile River valley, the Gulf has witnessed a long line of merchants and invaders stretching from the Hellenic outpost of Failaka established in the fourth century BC in modern day Kuwait, to Portuguese domination of key ports during much of the 16th century. However, it was the Ottoman Empire which managed to hold sway over much of the region of sparsely populated lands of the Gulf and the greater Middle East until its collapse in 1922 (Quataert, 2005). The Ottomans, like the Persians and Portuguese, largely focused their attentions on the economic benefits of controlling key Gulf ports on the India-Mesopotamia trading routes, and built forts, outposts, and customs houses to this end.

However, with the gradual crumbling of the Ottoman Empire beginning in the late 19th century, the British were quick to extend the influence won in the region two hundred years earlier when they joined Persian forces to expel the Portuguese from the strategic Hormuz Island at the Gulf's mouth. However, unlike earlier invaders, the British now entered a region largely in economic decline. Increasing competition from the Red Sea and overland trade routes, as well as the eventual death of the East African slave trade due largely to British intervention, meant the Gulf began to rely more on the exporting of pearls than customs collection for its economic well-being (Metz, 1993).

The British largely moved into the region to both protect India's western flank, and to ensure no other foreign power exerted influence there (Ferguson, 2003). Initially, British moves were aimed at eliminating piracy from the Gulf waterway. As such, between 1820 and 1916, the modern nations or emirates of Oman, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar signed treaties with the British initially providing for anti-piracy measures and earning much of the region the title the "Trucial States" (Charise, 2007). Subsequent treaties were to give British control over the foreign affairs of the majority of the Gulf sultanates. The nature of British domination in the region is perhaps typified by the Exclusive Agreement of 1882, in which the emirates of the Trucial Coast were forbidden from making any

international arrangements with foreign powers without British approval. British influence soon moved beyond the coast and into the interior of the peninsula itself.

In 1915 the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, occupying the vast majority of the Arabian Peninsula, entered a similar treaty with Great Britain. The Anglo-Saudi treaty called for the Saudi emir, Ibn Saud, to accept British protection of the other Gulf territories in exchange for some military and financial assistance and British recognition of previously disputed Saudi lands (Bowen, 2008). This move proved immensely popular with the rulers of the other Gulf kingdoms, as Saudi designs on territorial expansion were finally held in check. With almost all the Gulf now securely part of the British sphere of influence, the treaties between Britain and the regional monarchies began to provide for the establishment of fully-fledged protectorates. Unlike elsewhere in the British Empire where foreign rule was often experienced as a mixed blessing at best, this relationship held some distinct advantages for both the local Arab rulers and their subjects.

Foremost among these advantages was the military, diplomatic and financial clout the British could call upon to protect the Gulf monarchies from rival regional and international states. This protection was largely viewed by the Gulf monarchs as offering a barrier between their kingdoms and those of their giant and often bellicose neighbour, Saudi Arabia, although it also offered a shield against Persian expansionism and the Ottomans still entrenched until the end of the First World War in the Levant, Yemen and Kuwait. This guarantee of security against more powerful players was matched by an investment in infrastructure, even if insignificant when held against the development continuing apace in British India and Malaya, previously unknown in the region (Charise, 2007). Moreover, British assistance also came in the form of quelling internal unrest in certain Gulf kingdoms, with the British army and navy helping prop-up the Omani ruling family through military campaigns aimed at bringing the restive tribes of the interior under the Sultan's rule.

The cost of British assistance, then, must have appeared small to the majority of the rulers of the Gulf monarchies, for, apart from a few areas of discord and sporadic disputes, the British displayed little interest in occupying the Gulf protectorates as colonies proper and largely left the local monarchs to rule according to tradition. Even if events in the Levant following the Arabian uprising against the Ottomans there proved British interests to be largely self-serving (Lawrence, 1962),

the Gulf rulers were, nonetheless, largely better off with British rule than at the mercy of rival regional, and foreign industrial, powers.

Following the Second World War and Indian Independence in 1947, the British Empire entered a long period of economic and military decline. The rhetoric of liberty espoused for so many years as a defining characteristic of the British people, combined with growing calls for self-determination and the economic drain of maintaining an extensive empire, resulted in the inevitable process of decommissioning colonial possessions (Ferguson, 2003). Moreover, with India no longer under the British Raj and the newly discovered oil fields of the Gulf already largely controlled by British or European and American backed concessions, the Gulf States held few incentives to tempt the British to linger. The former protectorates of the region, with the exception of Saudi Arabia which was granted independence from Britain as the Kingdom of Hejaz and Nejd in 1927, gained their independence between 1951 and 1971.

It is often claimed it was this relatively amicable process of disengagement observed in most of the Gulf protectorates – perhaps best attested to by the fact the only country to experience pro-independence protests was Bahrain, the centre of British administration in the region – alongside the lack of direct interference experienced during colonial rule, that contributed to the high level of esteem the British and their language were accorded in the post-independence era (Charise, 2007). For example, the influence of the British could still be seen in requests from a newly independent Kuwait for troops to dissuade Iraqi aggression in 1961, and in British assistance to put down the Dhofar rebellion in Oman arising in 1964 and not successfully contained until the mid-1970s (Metz, 1993).

Unlike most former colonies in which the language of the old imperial masters is often vilified in the post-independence era, English's status was largely enhanced during these years as it became tied with continued military assistance, as well as joint British, American and European ventures to explore the region's massive petroleum reserves. The discovery and/or development of these reserves often involved the importation of the foreign expertise, capital, technology and labour necessary to effectively exploit them, and therefore contributed to the continued presence of the English language in the Gulf States.

Since the immediate post-independence era, English has continued to act as the language of trade and also as a bridging language between the Arab locals and

the host-workers and expatriates employed in the region's private industries (Peel, 2004). English has accordingly been formally integrated into the public school system in all GCC countries, with instruction starting in primary school for all students and continuing until graduation. To highlight the emphasis placed on gaining proficiency in the language, many of the region's most prestigious universities – including the United Arab Emirates' Zayed University, Saudi Arabia's King Fahad University, and Oman's Sultan Qaboos University - consist largely or even exclusively of English-medium colleges (See Section 1.6 for a more detailed discussion of the place of English in the Gulf).

1.5.2 A case for Oman's "uniqueness".

Despite the social, historical, and economic similarities presented above, any of the Gulf nations could make a legitimate claim to possessing a relatively unique socio-cultural identity. What sets these nations apart, for example, could be based on the kind of Islam worshipped as is the case of the Shia majority in Bahrain, recent suffering at the hands of an aggressive neighbour witnessed in the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990, or, in the case of Saudi Arabia, the unique geography of covering almost eighty percent of the entire Arabian Peninsula landmass. Even when taking these factors into account, however, the sense of similarities between the Gulf nations is still exceptional with this fact witnessed by pre-independence talk of forming a single Arab state along the Gulf's shores, or, more recently, the economic and military ties promoted by the founding of the GCC in 1981 (Ramazani & Kechichian, 1988). However, as this study takes as its focus Omani nationals, it is necessary to not only acknowledge this overarching system of concordance, but also to highlight some important areas of divergence. Any number of superficial differences do exist between Oman and its neighbours, of course, though the areas which may influence the outcomes of this study can be summarised in three groups: linguistic and racial composition, continued British influence, and lower levels of oil revenues encouraging less reliance on the rentier system of economic development.

First, the linguistic landscape of the Gulf is often far more complex than is widely acknowledged, with languages such as Hindi and Urdu spoken by large percentages of the expatriate populations, alongside the official tongue of Arabic and the lingua franca, and arguably the unofficial second language, of English. This diversity is also true of Oman. However, when viewing the languages common

among Omani nationals, the situation becomes more complex than in most neighbouring states. For instance, not only does Oman boast domestic languages like Kumzari, the Arabic-Farsi-Portuguese creole of the northern enclave of Musandam, but also, in the Dhofar region at the opposite end of the nation, the ancient tongue of Shahri (Peterson, 2004a), known locally as the "language of the birds". As intriguing as these two languages are, far more influential is the presence of large numbers of Swahili and Balochi-speaking Omanis (Baker & Jones, 1998), a result of Oman's once powerful Indian Ocean empire.

At its peak, this empire supported one of the largest merchant fleets in the world. It was this fleet which carried ideas and goods throughout the Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and even reached ports as far away as Canton in China. One of Oman's major maritime trades, however, was in slaves (Metz, 1993), and by the time the British brought this industry to a halt in 1900, Muscat already controlled key territories throughout the Indian Ocean, including Gwadar in modern day Pakistan, the Zanzibar archipelago, and large parts of Africa's East Coast (Peterson, 2004b). The extensive nature of this empire, the forced relocation of up to 14,000 slaves a year from Africa to ports farther north, and, by way of contrast, the freedom with which ordinary citizens could move throughout Oman's territories, significantly contributed to the current racial and ethnic diversity apparent in Oman today. This diversity is difficult to match in the native populations of the other Gulf States.

When the British orchestrated the division of Oman and Zanzibar into separate sultanates in the Canning Agreement of 1861 (Kechichian, 1995), thereby sowing the changes that would eventually bring the East Africa slave trade to a halt, Muscat found itself denied the very source of its economic prosperity. To make these economic matters worse, the introduction of the British India Steam Navigation Company to the Gulf in the latter half of the nineteenth century rendered Oman's large merchant fleet all but obsolete. With few items left to trade and much of its vast empire already stripped away through British and European intervention despite the ostensible recognition of Oman's "special" status during the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 (Maina, Obaka, & Makong'o, 2004), the sultanate began to fall into economic malaise. This resulted in the weakening of the Sultan's military and political power in Muscat, and a subsequent reliance on British military strength and financial loans to maintain domestic control (Allen & Rigsbee, 2000).

This reliance was apparent in the use of a British naval force to keep the interior tribes from sacking the coastal cities, and in direct British involvement in containing at least the first stages of the Dhofar rebellion in the early 1960s (Peterson, 2004a). This involvement proved a double-edged sword, of course, for when the then British administration expressed displeasure with the country's governance under the previous ruler – a situation brought about by a number of factors including interruptions to foreign oil explorations in the independently-minded interior – they sponsored a siege of the royal palace in 1970 and forced the unpopular Sultan Said bin Taimur to abdicate. The current leader of Oman, Sultan Qaboos Bin Said Al-Said, the deposed sultan's son, graduate of the British officer training centre, Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, and former staff member of the British military (Townsend, 1977), took his father's place. Since then, the British have been instrumental in reforming the Omani military, and have also been allowed use of their former airbase on Masirah island during regional operations.

This heavy and continued British influence is related to the final important area of divergence between Oman and the majority of its neighbours – oil. Perhaps due to the size of the country and the need to control the interior before furthering exploration, oil reserves in Oman were commercialised at a later stage than in most neighbouring countries, and have thus far proved fairly modest by comparison. For instance, by some estimates, oil contributes around six billion American dollars a year to Oman's GDP, compared with 149 billion for Kuwait and 582 billion for Saudi Arabia (Central Intelligence Agency, 2009). A consequence of modest oil reserves has been a moderate implementation of the rentier system of economic development underpinning so much of the apparent "progress" seen elsewhere in the Gulf.

The rentier system has allowed the once poor nations of the region to develop at a vertiginous rate. However, it has come to be characterised by hidden unemployment in the form of bloated and inefficient government bureaucracies (for example, according to Walker, Gordon, Carter, Dunston, & Butler (2007), some 94% of Kuwaitis are employed by the government), a lack of incentives for citizens to join the private workforce due to cradle-to-grave social security, uneven levels of development in which the glamour of new and exciting city skylines, exemplified by Dubai, is often unmatched by progress in civil institutions, and, most damaging of all, a top-down government approach where the ruling families determine the

appropriate course for a nation without any real form of public consultation or the existence of established channels for dissent (Karmani, 2005b). Therefore, while a lack of oil has in a number of ways made Oman's path to modernisation more difficult, it has also allowed for a greater participation by citizens in the economic and social development of the country, and has thus operated in conjunction with the astute form of Ibadi Islam, practised by the county's ruling family and the majority of its people, to encourage the preservation of a more traditional society.

1.5.3 Gulf and Omani identity

Karmani (2010) states that, within the context of the often overlapping political, religious, economic and military concerns of the GCC nations, the discourse of a unique Gulf Arab identity began developing at the turn of the twentieth century as a sub-expression of pan-Arab nationalism. Essentially, Karmani continues, this collective sense of regional identity, known in Arabic as *al-hawiyyah al-khalijiyya*, is often associated with the assumption that a shared and homogenous set of values and characteristics, with its roots in a common cultural and social heritage, is an overriding point of identification for citizens of the Gulf States.

Fearon (2003) reminds readers that, while demographics pointing towards a high level of ethnic and religious homogeneity may be a hallmark of Gulf citizens, in almost every Gulf state this group is augmented by a significant number of ethnically diverse non-citizen workers. The current research, however, seeks to investigate only the attitudes of Gulf citizens who here, given the dominance of Islam and Arab ethnicity in the region, will also be referred to as Gulf Arab Muslims.

The ethnic homogeneity both Fearon (2003) and Karmani (2010) posit as a defining feature of Gulf citizens is also, perhaps not surprisingly, often ascribed to Oman and its people. However, within the Sultanate of Oman, Peterson (2004a) states that, despite the majority of the population being both Arab and Muslim, there exists a relative degree of cultural diversity due to the country's once extensive Indian Ocean empire. In terms of religion, 95% of Omanis are either Ibadi or Sunni Muslims, with the remaining five percent being Shi'ite Muslim or Hindu. However, in terms of ethnicity, Peterson acknowledges the existence of several important minority groups with historical roots from beyond the immediate GCC region.

The most numerically significant of these are the Baluch, descendents of an Iranian-Pakistani people who often entered the country through Oman's former subcontinental port of Gwadar. Although no government records of the nation's minorities are maintained, most estimates suggest this group makes up around seven percent of the population. While the Baluch language is still widely spoken, this group is often posited as sharing in the Arab Muslim dominated narrative of "Omani identity" which has, somewhat interestingly, sought to accommodate their non-Gulf roots through claims of the tribe's Arab ancestry (Valeri, 2009).

Even if the veracity of these claims can be challenged, Al-Rasheed (2005) states that Oman's ethnic minorities have spent hundreds of years intermingling in the workplace, the military, residential areas, and, more recently, education, with the result that they are, according to Peterson (2004a), "more or less woven into the social fabric of the country" (p. 32). Therefore, although the Omani citizen participants of the current study are, like other GCC citizens, described here as Gulf Arab Muslims, it must be acknowledged that the referent "Arab" carries with it a certain level of ethnological complexity.

1.6 Arabic and English in the Gulf.

Although the languages of Arabic and English in many ways dominate the linguistic landscape of the region, it is important to note that a number of other languages and dialects also assume different functions. The prevalence of these languages largely reflects the ethnic-composition of the expatriate workers which, in some cases, represent up to 80% of the local workforce (CIA Factbook, 2009). As such, the languages of Hindi, Urdu and Pashto all enjoy a degree of prominence in the region (Gordon, 2005), especially within those fields where sub-continental and/or Persian workers are concentrated, while different varieties of Malay and Tagalog also boast significant language communities. It should also be noted that apart from the Standard Modern Arabic often used in the media across the Gulf, regional dialects of Arabic are also spoken (see Section 1.6.1).

Despite the linguistic diversity this picture presents, it is Arabic and English that play the most prominent roles in Gulf societies. Charise (2007), in her overview of the status of both languages in the region, applies Cooper's (1989) framework of officially-mandated and emergent language functions to the Gulf States. These functions are: official, wider communication, mass media, international and school

subject. These are presented below as a guide to the place of English and Arabic relate in the region.

1.6.1 Official functions.

Arabic belongs to the central Semitic group of languages, including Hebrew and Amharic, and, with its Afro-Asiatic roots, came to be associated with the nomadic Bedouin people who have traditionally inhabited the Arabian Peninsula. As such, it is recognised in each of the Gulf States as the official language, a status which English does not share. Arabic is best viewed as a diglossic tongue, and can be divided into the "classical" language of the Qur'an and of serious religious scholarship, the Modern Standard Arabic of journalism and literature, and the multiple regional spoken varieties employed right across the Arab world for everyday functions (Al-Mamari, 2011; Kees, 1997). Despite the many varieties of these spoken forms across the GCC, Charise (2007) notes that Gulf media and government officials tend to emphasize the uniformity inherent in Modern Standard Arabic, hence accentuating its importance as a marker of Arab identity and pan-Arab sentiment.

Another, and arguably stronger, element of pan-Arab unity is that of religion. And here it is important to recall that Arabic is the language of the holy scriptures of Islam, including the Qur'an, and hence of religious guidance and devotion. As highlighted in Section 1.4.8, Islam reaches into almost every facet of life within the region, including that of governance. Although the separation of state and church is a strict point of political principle within the majority of Western nations, such a situation is almost unthinkable in the Gulf for not only did Muhammad hold both spiritual and temporal power within his lifetime, but the cultural and political practices of the region are largely based on Shari'a in which no such separation is mandated (Coulson, 1964; Lewis, 2002). Hence, from an orthodox Muslim point of view, separating Arabic from government, or indeed from Islam or even day-to-day existence, is inconceivable. It is this state of affairs that ensures Arabic plays a crucial, and largely unchallenged, role as the official language of the GCC.

1.6.2 Wider communication.

A part of Arabic's role as an official language within the region is to facilitate communications between the Gulf monarchies, as well as between these

nations and the other sixteen states of the Arab League. However, it is interesting to note that when operating outside of the Arabic-speaking sphere, government ministers and representatives are often capable of producing flawless, and, perhaps not surprisingly, markedly British English, hence presenting a bilingual face to the world. This bilingual communication some claim to be even common to local households, where families communicate with each other in Arabic and with their foreign-born domestic help, a common feature of life in the region, in English (Malallah, 2000).

Moving away from governments and the household, daily communication within the workforce across the GCC could be assumed to involve a number of the diverse languages contributing to the region's linguistic landscape. Despite the fact that languages such as Hindi and Urdu are spoken by significant language groups both within the Gulf and in nearby nations, it is English that is employed as a link-language to facilitate communication between these diverse linguistic groups, and even between these groups and their Arab hosts. In fact, in the same way Arabic dominates inter- and intra-government departmental communication in the region, it is English that dominates the world of private enterprise (Findlow, 2006).

That English and not Hindi, for instance, has been chosen for this role may reflect the high status with which English has traditionally been viewed in the Gulf, or, perhaps is a result of the seemingly often-posited link between English and American-inspired globalisation (Roshid & Chowdhury, 2010). However, when examining the dominant place of English as a link-language within the region, it is important to note that a significant proportion of Gulf expatriates and host workers are drawn from countries such as Pakistan, India, Malaysia and the Philippines, all former Western colonies where regional variations of English are entrenched in many parts.

1.6.3 Mass media.

Both Arabic and English are commonly found in the newspapers, magazines, radio and television broadcasts of the Gulf. Charise (2007) mentions the BBC international news as being a popular English-medium service in the region, though both Al-Jazeera, the Qatari based "Muslim" news channel, and the American CNN, provide Arabic- and English-language services in what Pennycook (in his 2003 interview with Karmani) claims to be part of a "language war". While the particular

challenges of transliterating Arabic, combined with government restrictions on the flow of information achieved through censorship and telecommunication monopolies in many Gulf nations, may be held responsible for the relatively limited popularity of internet use (Alqudsi-ghabra, Al-Bannai, & Al-Bahrani, 2011), Peel (2004) notes the use of English for the internet in the region is often tied to university study, while Arabic is employed to find information related to popular Arabic culture.

1.6.4 International communication.

Since the so-called "oil-crisis" of the 1970s, in which the Arab member states of OPEC increased the price of oil by up to three hundred percent and thus precipitated one of the most dramatic forced redistributions of wealth in history (Gilpin, 1981), most of the Gulf States have placed the exportation of oil and petroleum at the very centre of their continued economic development. Although control of the foreign-run oil concessions, responsible for exploring and exploiting large quantities of the oil reserves discovered in the years immediately prior to and following independence have largely been wrested back into the hands of regional governments, significant joint-ventures with European, British and American companies are still responsible for much of the wealth flowing into the region. Furthermore, the technological know-how required to make these projects successful has also meant the importation of foreign, almost exclusively European or American, equipment, knowledge, and expertise, all of which has made English vital for both the maintenance of the region's rapid oil-driven industrialisation and for the maintenance of international relations between the Gulf States and their customers outside the region.

Added to this reliance on oil is a realisation that, despite the steps the GCC has made towards military independence from Western powers, much of the region still owes its security, and hence economic well-being, to Anglophone British and American forces. Although this was most dramatically witnessed during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, when regional powers called upon American forces to liberate the oil rich monarchy, foreign protection of borders and shipping lanes was also provided during the Iran-Iraq war dominating the region in the 1980s (Metz, 1993). Moreover, this military dominance can still be seen in the continued existence of American and British military bases in Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and

Bahrain, with the basing of the American Navy's 5th Fleet in Manama (Burfeindt, 2012) perhaps being the most visible example.

As more theorists begin to acknowledge some of the damage an over-reliance on oil, not to mention on the foreign powers often needed to buy and protect it, may have caused to the social and political fabrics of Gulf societies (Noreng, 1997), a number of nations, exemplified by the UAE, have begun to diversify their economies through a new focus on tourism, foreign property ownership, international investment and even, in the case of Qatar, international media services. Taken together, oil, its foreign-backed protection and related international corporate investment, imply English will remain closely tied to the region's international relations well into the foreseeable future.

1.6.5 School subject.

Arabic is the language of instruction for subjects in both primary and secondary state schools in the Gulf, while English has long been an area of study in both primary and secondary school for most Gulf nations. Although the number of hours devoted to English per week and the grade in which lessons commence varies from country to country, recently regional governments have made efforts to increase the role of English instruction at the school level. This has often come at the expense of religious instruction (Glasser, 2003), with the underlying belief that access to English will assist in both future participation in the international arena as well as allow for the expression of Arab concerns to the wider world (Al-Issa, 2005). In addition, the rapidly growing number of private schools across the GCC nations, ostensibly bilingual but often, in reality, predominantly English-medium institutions, also ensures that the English language is increasingly assuming a central role in students' primary and secondary educational experiences.

When these students enter either one of the privately- or government-run universities in the region, the language of instruction they are exposed to largely depends on their selected university and majors. For instance, for students studying in colleges of science, engineering, medicine and commerce, English is often the dominant, if not sole, language of instruction. Students in colleges devoted to more "public service" professions such as teaching, government administration and Shari'a (Islamic law), however, usually pursue their studies in a mostly Arabic-medium environment. Post-graduate study options follow a similar pattern. Given

the status English enjoys as the lingua franca of private enterprise, foreign government-sponsored English instruction institutions like the British Council and United States' Office of English Language Programs continue to play a prominent role across the Gulf (Hadley, 2004).

1.7 The Need for the Current Research.

With reference to the social and political context outlined above, it was deemed important to understand Omani university-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language, about its place in Oman, and towards native speakers of the language for a number of reasons. First, despite, or perhaps because of, the central role English and Western technology, expertise and military bases continue to play in the GCC, a number of writers claim many Arabian societies are marked by the prevalence of an open and growing hostility towards the West (Lewis, 2002; Smith, 2011). Added to this, the anti-Western sentiment associated with some of the events of the protests and riots starting in Oman in the spring of 2011, combined with increasing government-sponsored efforts to hasten the pace of Omanisation by replacing foreign workers with Omani nationals across both the private and public sectors (Valeri, 2005), has recently brought many of these attitudes about non-Arabs in Oman into sharp focus.

However, even as the pace of Omanisation quickens and anti-Western and/or anti-foreign sentiment is increasingly reported across the country (Clayton International, 2011; Katzman, 2011), English continues to increasingly be the lingua franca and/or de facto second language of the Gulf States. The situation described in Section 1.5 is no different in Oman, which, despite never being formally brought into the fold of the British Empire, was nonetheless primarily funded and run by British administrators and protected and/or controlled by their armed forces, at least until the time when the former sultan was deposed and exiled to London in a British-backed and executed military coup in 1970 (Allen & Rigsbee, 2001).

This historical and contemporary dominance the Western powers and the English language have played in the institutions of Oman and the other Gulf societies, therefore, could be conceived as placing the citizens of these nations in a dilemma. That is, in their everyday lives, the vast majority of Gulf citizens must engage with the English language and, often too, native speakers of English, across a wide variety of domains. Perhaps more importantly, however, those Gulf citizens

who wish to either maintain or improve their economic and social standing often have little choice but to actively engage with the English language as part of their educations and professional careers. This is especially true of the participants of the current research: Omani tertiary-level instructors of English.

Most of these instructors, like other students across the country, studied English as a second language from around the third grade of primary school until graduation from high school. Upon entering university, all of these teacher-trainees then undertook more training in the English language as part of an entry-level academic preparation course, before beginning their studies in education in the medium of English with, as a rule, foreign native English speakers as their professors. Following successful completion of their undergraduate degrees, those graduates that were selected to join the Language Centre at their alma mater as instructors of English then spent a further two years working alongside their colleagues – the majority of whom, again, were native English-language speakers – before receiving scholarships to complete their masters- and, if accepted, doctoral-level degrees usually in Western nations like the UK, the USA and Australia. (As an example, of the three Omani staff of the research site currently in receipt of scholarships for postgraduate education, all are studying in universities in the UK.)

Therefore, Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors represent a select group that has engaged both personally and professionally with the English language, both here in Oman and in Western Anglophonic nations abroad, and foreign native speakers of English, for the majority of their lives. They are at the very forefront of Omanisation and have direct experience of what Smith (2011), building on the analyses offered by Huntington (1997) and Ahmed (1992) of Arab-West interactions, terms "one of the great cultural fault-lines of recent human history" (p. 12).

What makes the study of these instructors conceivably informative is the fact that they have experienced what could be described as the contested ground of tertiary-education within the GCC from a number of perspectives, including as undergraduate and graduate students, teacher-trainees and employees, in addition to being colleagues of non-Omani instructors. Moreover, they represent the very example of well-educated and internationally-looking Omani citizen-employees that are publicly and officially heralded as an important part of the country's medium- and long-term workforce plans.

With direct reference to higher education in the Gulf, Findlow (2006) paints an informative picture of the "contested ground" within GCC universities. To begin, she notes that Arabic is often considered the "culturally weaker" partner in the Arabic-English dual-language infrastructures which exist both within the Gulf and around the Arab world. This is due, Findlow claims, to decades of marginalisation across a number of domains, but perhaps most notably in education, in which "modernisation" has often been sought through the imitation of foreign – especially British and French – models. Arabic's relegation to a secondary language within higher education in public universities across the Gulf, Findlow contends with a specific reference to the UAE, is more than a simple response to the availability of foreign teachers, materials and market demands. She states that the choice of a foreign language of instruction like English can be viewed as a "tool for controlling how approved cultural norms are reflected, communicated and shaped" (p. 22). Within this context, Findlow claims language teachers act as "teachers of culture", or what Edge (2003) more vividly portrays as a "second wave of imperial troopers" (p. 10) whose job is to pacify local resistance to Western influence and domination.

If Findlow's (2006) claims that teachers of English within Gulf universities act as teachers of culture could be assumed to be true for at least those classrooms where the communicative approach to language learning dominates, then one of the primary roles of the Omani English-language instructor in the classroom is to impart information about Western culture/s to their fellow Omani-Arabs. This is especially the case when these instructors utilise ESL textbooks and other learning materials that usually originate from the Western inner-circle nations of Britain and the United States, and may contain information or references that are widely considered culturally and religiously taboo in the Gulf (Hudson, 2011). However, a number of scholars have questioned whether Western culture/s should, in fact, play a central role in the learning of English in the Arab Muslim world, and claim that it is the responsibility of the language instructor within this context to "shield" learners from potentially harmful foreign values and beliefs through teaching English in an "a-cultural" way (Asraf, 1996; Karmani, 2005a).

Learning about the attitudes towards English and its speakers of Omani university-level instructors of the language may reveal a great deal about the results of the interaction between what some would describe as "traditional" Arab Muslim cultural identities and those "modern" values and beliefs espoused in and by

English-medium education and the teaching and learning of English as a second language. Moreover, it also allows some insight into how these instructors interpret and deal with the idea of their professions necessarily involving the promotion of Western cultural values. If Omani tertiary-level instructors of English do, as Smith (2011) claims, exist on the fault-lines of Western-Arab interaction, then it could be assumed that their attitudes towards the English language, its place in Gulf societies, and towards its speakers, may potentially be quite complex. Learning about their attitudes in these areas not only tells us more about the nature of these attitudes within the contested ground of the research site, but also provides an insight into the ways those involved in this context interpret and respond to the greater political and societal forces which are associated with issues of power and education in the region.

1.7.1 Research questions.

In order to better understand the nature of the attitudes of Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors towards English, their attitudes towards the place of English in Oman, and their attitudes towards native speakers of English, the following research questions have been addressed:

1. What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?
2. What are their attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?
3. What are their attitudes towards native speakers of English?
4. What relationship, if any, do the variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained, have with these attitudes?

To address these questions, a mixed qualitative-quantitative case study approach was employed. The research involved three phases: documentary analysis of government-produced and published documents pertaining to the place of English-medium higher education in Oman, the administration of a twenty-eight item Likert-response scale questionnaire to 21 Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors based on a questionnaire devised by Malallah's (2000) and featuring a scale from Gardner's (2004) International Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (IAMTB), and

eight one-on-one semi-structured interviews with Omani tertiary-level English instructors.

1.7.2 The research site.

The current research was conducted in the Language Centre of Oman's only publicly funded university, Sultan Qaboos University. The centre, like the university itself, was founded in 1986, approximately sixteen years after the country's current leader, Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said, came to power. Upon the instigation of the new regime in 1970, the Sultanate of Oman had only three primary schools for male students and no secondary or tertiary educational facilities (Bernard, 1988). The expansion of the education sector was one of the priorities set by the new government, and the foundation of a national university was one of the core platforms in realising a comprehensive national educational policy.

Sultan Qaboos University currently consists of nine colleges: Agriculture and Marine Sciences, Arts and Social Sciences, Law and Islamic Studies, Education, Commerce and Economics, Engineering, Medicine and Health Sciences, Nursing, and Science. Of these, the first four offer primarily Arabic-medium instruction while the remaining colleges primarily provide courses in English. Upon entering the university, all new students sit an English-language placement test to determine proficiency in the skill areas of reading, writing and listening. Results on the test have been determined to correlate to IELTS scores, with those students receiving the equivalent of an IELTS five or above not being required to study foundation-level English, while those who fail to reach this "exit" level enter the Language Centre's English-language foundation program in a level between one (the lowest) and six (the highest). Students progress through these levels and are required to achieve around 65% on required assessment items and the heavily weighted (often around 80% of students' final grades) mid-term and end-of-semester exams.

Upon achieving these results, students progress to the next level until graduating from the foundation English program at the end of level six to enter their colleges. Once in their colleges, students studying in an English-medium major are still required to take academic English classes with instructors from the Language Centre that contribute to their final grades. Those in Arabic-medium colleges will usually have no such requirements, although English-majors from the College of

Education will continue to study English in Language Centre courses throughout their degrees.

During the academic year in which the current research took place, teaching faculty at the Language Centre consisted of more than 200 instructors with over 25 nationalities. The vast majority of these instructors have post-graduate qualifications related to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. However, as stated above, the primary focus of this research is on the Omani English-language instructors employed at the Language Centre.

As these instructors are part of the government's continuing efforts to "Omanise" (Kapiszewski, 2001) the country's workforce, they are often identified as potential teaching staff during their undergraduate studies in education and are then offered "demonstrator" jobs during which they act as language teacher "apprentices" for two years. After this period has finished, the demonstrators are required to pursue higher level degrees in English-language teaching or an associated area in a government-funded scholarship program that usually take these demonstrators to Western universities in countries such as Australia, Britain and the United States. Upon their return, they are then expected to take on a full-time teaching role at the Language Centre, with those who display high levels of commitment and dedication selected for a government-funded doctoral-level scholarship again almost always completed in Western nations.

During their working lives, these Omani instructors are employed as civil servants and therefore enjoy a relatively high status job with a fairly high income by local standards. They work alongside native speakers of English and near-native speakers of English from all over the world, with Omanis instructors in the academic year in which the research was conducted representing around twenty-five percent of the Language Centre's teaching faculty.

1.8 Dissertation Outline.

In order to explore the research questions outlined in Section 1.7.1, this dissertation has the following structure:

Chapter 2 Literature Review begins with an examination of the historical and contemporary roles that the English language and Western powers have played in Arab Muslim lands. In doing so, it makes particular reference to Phillipson's (1992) "Linguistic Imperialism" and explores the place of the Gulf States within Kachru's

(1985) language circles. Following this, the potential for conflict between the Western values often assumed to be transmitted by the English language and more traditionally Arab Muslim values is explored, while the place of culture in English-language teaching and learning in the Gulf is also discussed. Finally, research into Muslim participants' attitudes towards English and its speakers from both the greater Muslim world and the Gulf itself is offered.

Chapter 3 Methodology provides an overview of the data collection and analysis techniques employed to address the research questions. After framing the current research in a post-positivistic paradigm, the chapter presents the ways in which documentary analysis, a Likert response key questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. It then details how thematic analysis, cluster analysis and Fisher's exact tests for *r x c* tables were applied to the data derived from the differing collection techniques to address each of the four research questions, and how results from each method were triangulated again with specific reference to the research questions guiding this study. The chapter ends with a discussion of some of the ethical and political concerns of the research and, in keeping with the post-positivistic paradigm, offers some details about the researcher that may have had a bearing on the way the research was conceived, conducted and reported.

Chapter 4 initially offers the results from all analysis techniques as they apply to the four research questions. After discussing the results obtained from analysis of data from documentary sources, the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the chapter then features the outcomes of a triangulation of emergent themes from each data source with reference to the first three research questions.

Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusions begins with a summary of key findings in relation to the areas of attitudes towards the English language, attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society, attitudes towards native speakers of English and how these attitudes relate to the demographic variables highlighted in the fourth research question. It then explores a number of implications of the research, before suggesting some of the contributions the study has made to knowledge. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and potential areas for future research.

1.9 Conclusion.

Chapter 1 began by offering a number of definitions of key terms that form the foundation of the dissertation. Following this was an overview of the Gulf region and Oman's place within it, before exploring some of the functions of both English and Arabic in the GCC with special attention paid to Charise (2007). The chapter concluded with a discussion of the need for the current study, a more specific examination of the current research context and an overview of the dissertation's structure.

Chapter 2 features a literature review that presents some of the factors associated with the place of English in the Muslim and/or Arab worlds and how the historical and contemporary factors associated with its use may lead to conflict between the cultural values often associated with the language itself and those that are commonly assumed to be held by Arab Muslims. This potential for friction is then related to the teaching and learning of English in the region. Research regarding attitudes towards English and towards native speakers of English from both the greater Muslim world and the Gulf region itself are also offered, with these viewed through a conceptual framework formed by Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English as informed by Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning.

Chapter 2. Literature Review.

2.1 Introduction.

The current chapter is a review of the literature related the privileged position English has assumed in a number of Arab Muslim societies. It begins by offering an examination of the literature related to the role English performs as the world's dominant international language with specific reference made to some of the historical antecedents of this unique position as offered in Phillipson's (1992) "Linguistic Imperialism". After viewing some of Phillipson's contentions within the light of a number of studies about English and imperial education policies during British rule in former colonies including Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, the focus is then narrowed to the Arab Muslim world with a discussion of the positioning of the Gulf States within Kachru's (1985) language circles. The possibility for tension between Western worldviews and more traditional Arab Muslim worldviews within this context is then examined, before attention is given to the place culture plays within English-language learning and teaching within the GCC.

Following the presentation of literature related to the above areas, a discussion of some of the education reforms seeking to create a greater role for the English language within the schools and universities of the Gulf following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States is offered. With these events foregrounded, research into Muslim attitudes towards the English language and its speakers from the greater Muslim world is reviewed with a focus on studies from those Muslim-majority countries previously subjected to British colonisation. The attitudes appearing in these investigations are then interpreted with the assistance of a conceptual framework formed by Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English, with these responses then related to Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning. Finally, research into attitudes in these areas emanating from the Gulf countries is presented.

2.2 English and the Muslim World.

2.2.1 Education policies in the British Empire.

An edited version of this section has been published in Denman (2012a).

Phillipson's (1992) "Linguistic Imperialism" outlines the historical roots of English and its current status as the world's dominant international language in the

following terms: as rulers of the lion's share of the land and people of the globe, the British systematically sought to impose English upon their foreign subjects as a means of diluting local beliefs and allegiances and valorising the metropolis, thus confirming England's pre-ordained "superiority" and thereby creating and reinforcing inequalities between rulers and the ruled. This summary largely draws on the Anglicist perspective of colonial education in which the argument was proposed that English, and not local languages, should act as the medium of instruction in the schools of the dominions because:

> a thousand pounds expended for tutors, books, and premiums would do more to subdue a nation of savages than forty thousand expended for artillerymen, bullets, and gunpowder (Russel, 1801, as cited in Crystal, 2003, pp. 78-79).

Phillipson (1992) states that the linguistic and cultural processes of dominance and subjugation brought into play during the colonial period are still much in evidence today. In particular, he argues the current status of English as an international language is promoted by Anglophonic Western nations as a means of maintaining economic, if not social and cultural, control over the nations of the periphery, or what Kachru's (1985, 1992) defines as the outer and expanding circles (see Section 2.2.2). This linguistic imperialism is one of the means through which Western nations ensure the global inequalities on which much of their modern economies have been built are maintained. Pennycook (1994) supports this proposition by reaffirming the way English continues to be a powerful tool of inclusion and exclusion the world over. It is, he claims, a gatekeeper not just of individual power, but also of access to the international market and the world of knowledge and technology for entire nations.

This position could be argued to have found support in figures on the current reach of English around the globe whereby it is estimated some 1.4 billion people live in countries where English acts as a first or official language and one in every five people speaks the language with some degree of competence (Sinno, 2008). That these figures roughly correlate to the percentage of the earth's population under British rule at the height of the empire (Ferguson, 2003) appears more than a coincidence, and offers support for the belief the current state of English's international dominance has direct roots in British education policies.

Although Phillipson's (1992) sketch offers one way in which to interpret the historical and contemporary factors compelling the English language into its current world dominant position, it could be argued that this portrayal tends to ignore the complex and decentralised nature of the education policies enforced throughout the British Empire. For instance, although Phillipson's conceptualisation of linguistic imperialism maintains English was imposed as a central and inseparable part of British rule, evidence from colonies as physically and culturally disparate as Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Lestholand and Brunei (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Evans, 2006; Powell, 2002; Saxena, 2008), to name a small selection, suggests most colonial authorities were more concerned with curtailing the spread of the English language than encouraging it.

This objective mostly sprung from a widely-held fear among colonial administrators that access to English would diminish the willingness and effectiveness of the masses to participate in colonial economies. Brutt-Griffler (2002) states that the British dominions were, first and foremost, financial concerns. Therefore, whatever leanings administrators may have had to the social "betterment" of their subjects came secondary to maintaining the socio-economic stratification that supported colonial production.

Examples of the fear that access to English would upset the financial functioning of the colonies abound, though Brutt-Griffler (2002) offers the particularly illuminating example of Ceylon where mother-tongue or vernacular education was provided free of charge to those parents who could physically gain access to a school and afford to have their children away from work, while an education in English was priced beyond all but the upper-middle classes. In her detailed examination of Ceylon's colonial education policies, Brutt-Griffler describes the provision of an "industrial education" (p. 207) preparing students for the life of farmers and labourers as being the best the vast majority of Sri Lankan children could attain. This style of education was an unabashed form of social control, with students prepared to follow the footsteps of their parents as either farmers in the labour-intensive agricultural sector, or, for the Tamil minority, by learning the rudiments of hygiene and arithmetic that would allow them to perform their tea-estate duties most efficiently. In meeting these industrial goals, English was deemed not only unnecessary and counterproductive, but also potentially threatening to the status quo.

The place of English education in colonial societies was generally reserved for two main groups: children of the local elites and of the urban middle classes. The first group was especially important to colonial designs as they were seen as a buffer between the foreign overlords and the local population; a means to avoid widespread resistance to imperial rule and support for democracy which would, it was feared, lead to "premature" calls for independence (Powell, 2002). Complementing this group were the English-literate middle classes who held roles in private trading houses and the lower rungs of colonial bureaucracy. This latter group is perhaps best represented by members of the uncovenanted Indian civil services - the English-speaking army of Indian bureaucrats that allowed a relative handful of British officials to administer the width and breadth of the subcontinent from modern day Myanmar in the east to Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the west and south (Ferguson, 2003).

As these groups demonstrate, those with access to English during the British colonial era did, generally, have opportunities for social mobility and access to varying degrees of societal power. The colonial authorities were cognisant of the mobility proficiency in the language allowed, and by-and-large recognised that it was in their best interests to limit such access. Therefore, contrary to Phillipson's (1992) depiction of the status of education in the colonies, it was often the deprivation, rather than imposition, of the language that allowed English to act as one of Britain's tools of colonial control.

In the post-war era, it was the United States that assumed the role of the world's policeman, economic powerhouse, and, eventually, sole superpower. In this environment, it was a combination of the emergence of transnational companies adopting English as an official working language, alongside increases in the pace of globalisation due largely to the development of new communication technologies, that re-enforced the status of English as the world's lingua franca (Sinno, 2008). This status is evident today in the dominant position of English across a wide range of domains including international organisations and conferences, science and technology, banking, tourism, higher education, audio-visual cultural products and so on (Graddol, 1997). The extent of this spread can be seen in the set of "privileges" (Coulmas, 1992) English is assumed to hold over other languages, such as being the world's most taught foreign language, the most popular source for "loan words" into other languages, and the language of "higher communication" associated

with science, technology, government and the law in the developing world (Sinno, 2008; Zhughoul, 2003).

English's penetration into this wide array of domains is claimed by a number of scholars as a result, if not an act in itself, of Western neo-imperialism (Canagarajeh, 1999; Cooke, 1988; Crystal, 2003). Fears of this form of cultural and linguistic assault hold that the promulgation of English is associated with the transmission of Western cultural values and ideas capable of alienating learners from the values of their own speech-groups. This risk is viewed as being especially apparent in the developing world where English-language audio-visual cultural products, including movies, television programs and internet pages, often present materially-abundant, relatively promiscuous, "modern" lives based on or around the nuclear family to which people are encouraged to aspire.

To confound the issue, it has also be claimed vested interests in a number of developing nations have adopted policies of English as an official or second language that exclude or marginalise the majority of citizens in a way that mimics the British exclusionary policies presented above (Bamgbose, 2000). That is, the local English-speaking elites from these nations were largely encouraged to adopt the language for government bureaucracy and international trade in the dying years of the British Empire (Powell, 2002). Although many no doubt greatly benefited from the unequal access to the language within their societies they still found themselves held against Western normative values of language use and accepted communication patterns (Cameron, 2002; Kachru, 1998;).

It should be noted, of course, that not all theorists agree that the process of linguistic and cultural imperialism exists in the form described above, with some even claiming the widespread use of English is more a benefit than a threat to other cultural identities. Widdowson (1997), for instance, claims the distribution of language cannot be controlled, with a language appropriated by its speakers in ways allowing them to resist efforts at manipulation. Moreover, it is claimed English is desirable to so many people worldwide precisely because it can be a tool of empowerment, with some questioning whether policies that seek to "protect" other cultures and languages from Western influences are not themselves harmful and paternalistic or even an abuse of individual linguistic rights (Brutt-Griffler, 2002).

Graddol (1997) supports this argument by noting English is now spoken by a far greater number of non-native speakers than native speakers, thus allowing the

nations of the outer and expanding circles to not only to be influenced by, but also in turn to influence, the uses to which the language are put. This has lead to a situation, according to Graddol, in which linguistic interchange between the centre and the outer and expanding circles has become bi-directional, thus allowing ideological representations and normative standards to be determined by nations other than the United States and Britain. While other scholars claim the West's cultural hegemony is currently being challenged by the process of localisation in which Western cultural patterns are adapted, rather than adopted, to represent the needs and identities of local communities, or replaced altogether by alternative patterns emanating from the emerging economies of India and China (Appardarai, 1996; Graddol, 2006; Widdowson, 1997).

Whether the spread of English across the globe is beneficial or detrimental to other languages, cultures, and ways of being, remains an important area of debate. With reference to the Gulf, however, regional government education policies have largely focused on the positive outcomes of the de facto adoption of English as a second language and as the dominant language of higher education (Charise, 2007).

2.2.2 The Gulf States and Kachru's language circles.

The central role English plays within Gulf societies, even though it is nowhere in the region officially recognised as a second language, leads to questions about the positioning of the Gulf States in Kachru's (1985, 1992) "language circles". According to Kachru, nations around the world can be classified in terms of their relationship to and use of English through an examination of their historical and political relationships with Anglo-American hegemonic power. Kachru defines the possible relationships between the positioning of English within a given country and the language itself in terms of inner, outer, and expanding concentric circles.

Inner circle nations include the states portrayed here as the Anglophone West. As such, they may be conceived of as the "traditional bases" of the English language, or what some historians have labelled the "white colonies" of the former British Empire (Ferguson, 2003). These include, in addition to the nations of the United Kingdom itself, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. However, it is also possible to add Anglophone South Africa, Malta and some Caribbean and other Atlantic territories to this list.

It is from these inner circle nations that the vast majority of the world's printed (28% compared to around 13% for Chinese, the nearest rival) and electronic (around 80%) material originates (Graddol, 1997). And it is also from this base of linguistic power that the norm-defining "English standards" of, among others, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are devised and enforced (Zughoul, 2003).

The outer circle, Kachru (1985, 1992) continues, comprises mostly, though not entirely, of the other Commonwealth nations. These outer circle countries are all former official or unofficial British dominions where English is today still widely employed as a second or common language. As the British Empire at its peak covered some two-thirds of the world's landmass, the countries of this circle are many and varied. However, indicative of these are the multicultural, multi-religious, and multilingual modern day states of India and Singapore, where English acts as a bridging language between diverse groups.

Narrowing the focus to the Muslim world, the outer circle may be said to claim Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives and on the subcontinent, in addition to Malaysia and Brunei in South East Asia, and northern Nigeria and the east coasts Kenya and Tanzania, in addition to the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar, in Africa. In relation to non-GCC Arab nations within this circle, Jordan, Egypt, northern Somalia and the Sudan could readily be included.

Krachu's (1985, 1992) expanding circle, on the other hand, covers those nations of the world without direct experience of British rule or "protection" though where English now plays a significant role. The number of English speakers within this circle is notoriously difficult to define, with Crystal (2003) offering a range of anywhere between 100 million to one billion, compared to his 470 to 680 million estimate for the first two circles. Taking into account the difficulties of defining and measuring what is an "English speaker", there still can be little doubt that millions of English users exist in nations such as Germany, Brazil, China, Japan, South Korea and Indonesia, with the popularity of the language in this circle often attributed to the economic benefits gained by active participation in the American lead process of globalisation (Hadley, 2004).

Given the newly-independent Gulf kingdoms' reluctance to seek membership in the British Commonwealth, and the failure of English to be recognised as an official second language in any of the region's nations, a case could be made for placing the nations of the GCC within this expanding circle. However, it is

important to note here that under the terms of the Edinburgh criteria for membership in the Commonwealth of Nations (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007), all but Saudi Arabia of the Gulf States would be eligible to join. Moreover, given the clear and important role English has continued to play in the Gulf, especially since the large-scale commercial production of oil, combined with the history of British imperial domination and current Anglo-American political and military influence outlined in Section 1.5, it would perhaps be more informative to view these nations as sharing more characteristics with outer than expanding circle nations.

In a general sense, the challenges outer circle nations face in reconciling post-colonial identity with the position the language of their former colonial rulers plays within their academies, media, businesses, hospitals and, quite often, ministries and parliaments, are significant. These include issues of cultural preservation and identity, access to education, employment and social mobility, the heightened risk of individuals without access to the English language becoming marginalised within their own societies, and the potential for losing native languages and cultures (Jenkins, 2007; Omoniyi & White, 2006). Reports of the nature of these challenges abound in the literature, with a great deal of writing on the topic coming from Britain's former African colonial territories.

For example, proponents of the continuing role of English within post-colonial outer circle societies often quote the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe's (1975, p. 62) succinct account of linguistic appropriation and transformation:

> I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surrounding.

Those who claim the relationship between English and local identity within post-colonial contexts is a potential source of cultural deracination, on the other hand, include the Kenyan writer and dissident, Ngugi, whose 1981 "Prison Diary" offers an account of government officials awarded office based on little more than an ability to approximate the received pronunciation of the "Queen's English". To confound the situation, Ngugi states these same officials are prone to deride a colleague's solecisms in English usage, though, at the same time, find their own inability to produce error-free sentences in their native tongue a matter of amusement and pride.

Ngugi's (1981) example contrasts sharply with Achebe's (1975), and speaks of English's potential to alienate people from their own cultures and beliefs while simultaneously defining those who have access to social, economic and political power. As vivid a warning as Ngugi paints, however, with reference to the Gulf States, there are some who would claim the central role Islam and, by extension, Arabic plays in the region may operate as a foil to the realisation of such eventualities (Charise 2007; Karmani 2003). Despite the supposed "buffer" Islam may provide against the cultural deracination often evident in other expanding circle countries, the very centrality of religion to life in the region does, in itself, open Gulf societies to a different, and perhaps in some ways more problematic, set of challenges.

2.3 The Potential for Tension between Western and Muslim Worldviews.

The Muslim philosopher al-Attas (1980) gives voice to some of the challenges associated with the central role of English in Muslim societies by expounding the concept of basic Islamic vocabulary. According to this theory, the languages of the Muslim world are infused by a basic understanding of ideas and constructs in which key concepts, including God, knowledge, happiness, truth, education and freedom, and so on, have become imbued through association with the beliefs and traditions underlying the religion with an essentially Islamic meaning. These same concepts in English, according to al-Attas, are influenced by secular, non-religious traditions, and hence fundamentally differ from their Islamic counterparts, even if they occasionally display points of convergence.

Asraf (1996) provides an example of al-Attas's (1980) theory by exploring the concept of "happiness". From a Western perspective, Asraf states, happiness implies something fleeting and difficult to grasp. By way of contrast, from an Islamic worldview, happiness is defined as a permanent state of the soul, achieved when one has attained certainty regarding important matters of existence. That this noun might be uttered by Muslims in any number of tongues, from Arabic to Malay and Kiswahili, does not remove it from the lexicon of basic Islamic vocabulary, as those languages used by Muslim people around the world have become "Islamised" through exposure to the comprehensive network of beliefs, values and principles espoused in the holy scriptures.

Pennycook (1994) expands upon this idea by highlighting the way the potential for latent tension between Islamic and Western worldviews can be seen in fundamentally different approaches to epistemology. Pennycook states that from an Islamic perspective, the concept of "knowledge" consists of two integrated parts – revealed knowledge expressed through the Qur'an and the Sunna, and acquired knowledge gained through an understanding of the external and internal worlds. Knowledge for devout Muslims, therefore, cannot be separated from divinity, and its pursuit is regarded as a lifelong process and act of divine worship. Such a conceptualisation, of course, stands in marked contrast to the secular nature of knowledge espoused by Western ideologies, with its focus on the objective and the empirical, and thus is a potential cause of tension, according to Pennycook, for Muslim students exposed to English-medium instruction.

Al-Attas (1980) elaborates this potential area of tension by defining language acts as a carrier of a worldview expressed by a certain religion, civilisation, or culture. According to the author, the worldviews expressed in English and Arabic are, despite occasional areas of commonality, fundamentally different. Therefore, from al-Attas's perspective, it is likely that a Muslim learning English may find that language's underlying values to be in opposition to their own values. In this sense, English emanating from the inner circle is assumed to express a worldview drawn from Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian origins, though which can now be readily characterised as secular in nature (Harrell, 2003).

A "Western" worldview, moreover, is not only commonly associated with an ostensible commitment to the values and principles of human rights, democracy, freedom of the press, non-discriminatory practices, and the ascendency of common law, but also can be said to encompass more tolerant attitudes towards alcohol, drugs and overt or alternative sexualities (Charise, 2007). As such, it is often at odds with Arab Muslim ideals and religious beliefs, not to mention the law in a number of Gulf States, and hence a potential source of tension and even conflict for Muslims exposed to such diametrically differing perspectives.

2.4 Culture and English-Language Learning and Teaching.

Despite this potential area of conflict between Western and Arab Muslim worldviews, successful English-language learning is often associated in the literature with the assumption that gaining proficiency in another language requires, to an

extent, the adoption of favourable attitudes towards the culture/s associated with the target language (Ennaji, 2005). This view has its foundations in Gardner's (1985) seminal work on integrative orientation, which claims learners seeking to integrate into the target language culture will be more successful than those who view language acquisition as little more than a key to material or social success. Although this belief has been challenged on a number of grounds, it has, nonetheless, lent itself to a recognition of the importance of understanding the target language culture in achieving language proficiency. The target language culture within the English-language classrooms of the GCC, therefore, is often described as being transmitted in a number of ways. These include through the dominance of Western instructors, pedagogies and textbooks (Charise, 2007; Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

The domination of Anglo-American English-language teachers within Gulf classrooms, for example, is a trend Karmani (2005b) claims as part of a widespread linguistic "apartheid" in which local, Arab teachers of English, or non-local instructors from the larger Arab or Muslim world, are largely relegated to the fringes of the English teaching industry. As such, these non-native teachers often assume the role of supporters or assistants to their Western, native-speaking counterparts. Of course, the debate about the efficacy of local versus Western language instructors is far from peculiar to this part of the world (Braine, 1999), although the extent of this discrimination within Gulf classrooms, Karmani states, results in a number of undesirable outcomes.

As al-Attas (1980) attests in his theory of basic Muslim vocabulary, the most apparent of these outcomes is the possible tension to arise from student exposure to the often-contrary cultural values and beliefs of Western teachers. The potential downside inherent in this "clash" of values is often confounded by teachers apparently unaware of their role in promoting Western outlook in their classrooms (Asraf, 1996) and who rarely display any real knowledge of Arabic or of their learners' cultural and religious backgrounds. Less apparent, though perhaps more damaging is the way the skills and experience of students' closest language models in the classrooms, that is their Arab Muslim English-language instructors, are often dismissed as generally insufficient for the task of educating a younger generation (Karmani, 2005b). It is perhaps no coincidence that this is a model in which students can find many parallels in Gulf societies, with "Western" technology and know-how often promoted as superior to the local product.

To compound the situation, many Western English instructors have been trained in "communicative" approaches often directly opposed to the traditional teacher-centred classrooms of the Gulf. In an attempt to improve the communicative proficiency of students, these instructors may promote rhetorical patterns and standards of politeness and directness at odds with students' own beliefs about appropriate social interaction. Asraf (1996), for instance, offers the hypothetical example of the male teacher offering a compliment to a female student about her dress. In this scenario, Asraf states the student is most likely aware of the expected response - a thank you or a nod of appreciation. However, as complimenting the appearance of a member of the opposite sex is unacceptable in Muslim tradition, Asraf notes the female student here would most likely respond with an embarrassed silence or through deflecting the comment with information about the dress's provenance. Hence, from a communicative perspective, the student has failed a basic task within the classroom and, moreover, has experienced a potential negative reaction to her English learning due primarily to a lack of awareness on behalf of her instructor.

Going hand-in-hand with this issue of pedagogy is that of textbooks. In line with the domination of the printed and electronic press by Anglo-American organisations, the vast majority of textbooks used within English Gulf classrooms originate from the inner-circle countries of Britain and the United States. As such, many of the assumptions and situations presented in these books reflect Western norms, and subsequently have the potential to cause tension for Arab Muslim students and teachers. Added to this, portrayals of Muslims in the Western popular press today are often negative and reductive. That is, Muslims, especially Arab Muslims, are often sketched as dangerous, anti-Western agents subjugating women and living in backward, primitive societies (Ameli, Marandi, Ahmed, Kara, & Merali, 2007). While such a portrayal is unlikely to find its way into textbooks aimed at a foreign education market, Arab Muslim students and teachers may nonetheless find representations of Arabs within these texts to be stereotypical, simplistic, or even inadvertently negative, and in this way will be forced to view themselves and their society through the eyes of a "Western lens".

Despite these potential areas of tension within the English-language classrooms of the region, a number of scholars nonetheless maintain that it is not desirable, or, indeed, even possible, to separate Western culture from English-

language teaching. This view is perhaps best encapsulated by Pesola's (1991) belief that, as culture acts to shape the development and use of a language, "cultural insight is bound to be transmitted, more or less automatically" (p. 331). However, this perspective has been challenged by commentators such as Bayyurt (2006) who state that, while culture may be an integral part of successful language learning, "local" cultures should be foregrounded in the process while inner-circle Western cultures can be positioned so as to receive little to no attention. This course of action has been taken one step further by certain commentators who state that it is the responsibility of the English-language instructor in the region to teach English in either an "a-cultural" or "Islamic" way (Asraf, 1996; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b).

These controversies and potential sources of tension (and many others besides considering the evangelical nature of the enterprise) have no doubt been evident in the Gulf since the group of American protestant missionaries known as the Arabian Mission set up the first "modern" schools in Kuwait, Bahrain, Basra and Muscat around the turn of the twentieth century (Al-Misnad, 1985; Scudder, 1998). Moreover, the post Second Gulf War push by regional governments, lead by the newly liberated Kuwait, to increase the role of English in their public schools (Zughoul, 2003) highlighted concerns about the relationship between English and Arab Muslim identity. However, debate about the direction of these educational reforms remained relatively stifled until the September 11, 2001 attacks on American soil. In the aftermath of this event, with pressure on local governments to increase English's presence in the Gulf applied from the United States and Anglo-American agencies and media organisations, the debate about the place of English within the academies of the region finally became an issue of wider concern.

2.4.1 "Less Islam and More English" in Gulf education.

The potential for tension between the increasingly central role of English in Gulf societies and educational facilities and the traditional religious values associated with Arab-Islamic identities (Harris, 1991) has been a fascinating feature of the literature since the American-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 respectively, and concomitant US pressure on Gulf and other Muslim governments to reform their education and political systems. Such pressure could be said to originate from the "preventive war" put forth by the Bush administration's National Security Strategy (Karmani, 2005a), and is perhaps best evidenced in

contemporary US government reports and media stories claiming education systems within both the Gulf and the larger Muslim world acted as breeding grounds for potential anti-American terrorists (Washington Times Editorial, 2003).

For instance, in a resolution appearing before the House of Congress in June 2002, it was claimed that some textbooks in Saudi Arabia fostered a "combination of intolerance, ignorance, anti-Semitic, anti-American, and anti-Western values" (House of Congress Resolution 432, 2002), in a way that threatened the peace and security of Saudi Arabia, the Middle East, and the world itself. Similar claims were levelled by the centre-circle press at governments across the Muslim world, with the Gulf monarchies for the most part responding through the implementation of wide-reaching changes to public school and university curricula. These reforms were intended to promote a broader and more "secular" worldview than one available through extensive religious and Arabic study (Glasser, 2003).

This overt American pressure, presented in the form of education aid, hastened a process of educational reform across the region which has come to be summarised by the "less Islam and more English" phrase of Glasser's (2003) account of American-designed Qatari reforms. In the Washington Post article entitled, "Qatar reshapes its schools putting English over Islam", Glasser reports moves by Qatar's ruling family, the al-Thanis, not only to rewrite textbooks to remove any trace of "violence and fanaticism" (p. A4), but also to completely overhaul the nation's education system by employing the services of a conservative American think tank, the Rand Corporation. Glasser reports supporters of this major overhaul as quoting a new, modern education system in the kingdom, with English playing a central part, would enhance citizen participation in Qatari society. It would also, according to the author, increase opportunity and encourage the individual entrepreneurship increasingly demanded by globalisation.

Of course, Glasser (2003) was far from alone in her favourable appraisal the Qatari reforms. Across the border in Saudi Arabia, for example, Friedman (2002) reports the introduction of English at a younger age for primary school students, coupled with major reforms to the Islamic studies oriented university system, as a potential countermeasure to the poverty and militant indoctrination assumed to have driven the Saudi hijackers of September 11. Moreover, perhaps most notably in the Muslim world, the Washington Times (2003) offers the central role of English in reforming the quality of education available in Pakistan's vast network of madrassas

or religious schools. According to the editorial piece, such reforms are necessary to wrest control away from mullahs preaching violence and intolerance.

A striking feature of all the stories cited here is the way English has been promoted as a means secularising Muslims and thus removing them from the potential pool of "Islamic terrorists" across the region while simultaneously opening doors of global economic opportunities. Questions about these assumptions and the apparent English-led push for cultural pacification have, perhaps predictably, remained absent from the mainstream Western press. However, such pieces have nonetheless had the effect of returning the spotlight to the relationship between English and Arab-Islam identity in the Gulf itself.

In the face of this pressure to decrease the role of Islam in Gulf institutions in favour of English, debate emanating from the region has remained relatively stifled. Although the proposed and duly implemented "reforms" were greeted with petitions and public denunciations by Muslim clerics and like-minded professionals in Saudi Arabia (Azuri, 2006), and even resulted in a hotly contested political debate in Kuwait's national assembly (Glasser, 2003), it appears as though the majority of Arab scholars and officials either approved of the changes or, at least, were reluctant to publicly express their grievances to the world at large. Given this relative silence, opposition to the post-2001 push for an increased role for English within Gulf education has largely been taken up, at least in the English language, by foreign academics, including Pennycook, Edge and, most notably, the British founder of *TESOLIslamia*, Sonhail Karmani.

Karmani (2005a) argues that the American-backed spread of English is part of a greater geo-political agenda propagated by the United States to neutralise Islam, and thus gain greater influence in this strategic oil-producing region. He argues that as the English language necessarily embodies the Western cultural values of its home countries, these values are often at odds with those of Arab Muslim identity. As such, learning English is an act fraught with peril, including the danger of becoming alienated from one's own cultural and religious identity. Given the high status often given to English as the language of technology, trade, education, and the internet, Karmani warns exposure to the language may act as a coercive or alluring force drawing learners away from their own, presumably perceived "inferior", language and culture. Although al-Attas (1980) claims it is only those who are poorly versed in Arab-Islamic identity who are vulnerable to this alienation,

Karmani offers no such caveats, thus presenting the increased role of English in Gulf education as a very real "de-Islamizing" force.

In this position, Karmani (2005a) finds supports in Edge's (2003) rather vivid notion of English-language teachers acting as a "second wave of imperial troopers" (p. 10), whose job it is to pacify local resistance to Western influence and domination once the soldiers and tanks have gone. Pennycook (in his 2003 interview with Karmani), too, supports Karmani's protests. Although Pennycook dismisses fears English may act to sever the relationship between Islam and Arabic or that the syntactic system of English itself may undermine an Islamic worldview, he nonetheless states that English is so intertwined with social, cultural, political and economic relations that by offering a more secular curricula in the Gulf with promises of material gains, family and religious life in the region may experience serious disruptions. Such concerns are echoed by Zughoul (2003), who fears the prominence of English worldwide will only benefit the upper echelons of any given society, and thus will be instrumental in creating a class of frustrated, English-educated consumers.

The legitimacy of these arguments about the disruptive forces of English within the Gulf has been challenged from a number of sides. These challenges include arguments about the "ownership" of English and its apparent value-free nature (Seaton, 1997; Wardaugh, 1987) and its role in opening, rather than limiting, opportunities to people the world over (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). However, perhaps the greatest weakness in arguments about the invidious nature of English's encroachment upon the Gulf can be seen in Karmani's (2005a) own rebuttal of American linguistic policy in the region. By denigrating the "driving belief" of the American-led education reforms by suggesting "that a certain dosage of teaching English can supposedly help suppress a latent radical Islamic disposition" (p. 265), Karmani acknowledges that a) learning a foreign language does not necessarily dictate an abandonment of learners' cultural and religious values, and b) it is possible, as in the case of the English-speaking Saudi hijackers Karmani cites to support his argument, for learners to appropriate English for their own purposes.

Achebe's (1975) concept of a new English to suit its new "African surroundings" immediately springs to mind here, and it perhaps is far from coincidental that Kabel (2007) quotes the African author in his response to Karmani's (2005a) concerns. In making his rebuttal, Kabel suggests Karmani's fears

of English-language learners in the Gulf becoming de-Islamised is based on a conduit metaphor of language learning in which "ideas are objects, language is a container, communication is sending" (p. 137). Kabel states that this conceptualisation of the process of acquiring another language is simplistic, and, more importantly, ignores the value of human agency in deciding in which ways a language will be used. Kabel acknowledges that language use is indeed value-laden and ideological, though states learners are capable of applying their own agency, or "power potential", to not only resist attempts at domination and alienation, but also, like Achebe, to create a new reality in which the language is at the call of the user. Such claims find support in al-Attas' (1980) contention that learners are capable of "Islamising" Western concepts at odds with their basic Islamic vocabulary, thus making the language no longer incompatible with a Muslim worldview.

The debate between those who view English as a source of potential tension or alienation for those exposed to the language in the Gulf, and those who see it is a tool capable of being appropriated and used in ways compatible with Muslim-Arab identity, continues. And it seems as though this area of contestation offers a rich and pressing field of research for Gulf academics. However, as highlighted in Section 2.7, the amount of research emanating from the Gulf itself regarding GCC citizens' attitudes towards the English language, its place within Gulf societies, and towards native speakers of the language, has, despite renewed interest during recent years, remained relatively modest. Therefore, in seeking to place these attitudes within a broader context, it is necessary to first examine the literature drawn from the wider Muslim world.

2.5 Attitudes towards English and its Speakers in the non-Gulf Muslim World.

Muslim people's attitudes towards the English language and its speakers have been topics of considerable research interest for a number of years, with the literature covering almost every corner of the Muslim world. By way of comparison, however, research emanating from the Gulf itself has, until fairly recently, been somewhat rare – a phenomenon which may be attributable to the relatively late start to the region's higher education sector, a lack of academic freedom experienced in certain Gulf nations, or even a possible slow rate of translation of Arabic academic works into English. For whatever reason, however, placing the available Gulf research within a larger context necessitates reference to developments in the

broader Muslim world. The literature reviewed in this section, therefore, cover more than forty years of writing and research from non-GCC, mostly outer-circle, Muslim countries and regions. In light of the large number of studies available, the featured research has been divided below into the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South East Asia, and the Middle East and Turkey. Research conducted in Anglophone Western nations, due to potential confounds with issues of assimilation, linguistic maintenance and so on, has been excluded.

2.5.1 Sub-Saharan Africa.

One of the first theorists in post-independence British Africa was the Kenyan Muslim scholar, Ali A. Mazrui. Mazrui's (1968, 1972) historical analyses and personal accounts of the relationship between English, religion, and African cultural and tribal identity in Britain's former African territories provide an informative portrayal of differing responses to the place of English within various African societies. In examining the nature of these responses in Uganda and the Muslim regions of northern Nigeria and coastal Kenya, Mazrui identifies major themes of responses to the encroachment of English upon African cultural, linguistic and religious values.

The first response Mazrui (1972) details is that of outright rejection of English due to either its associated religious or secular values. As a case in point, Mazrui offers the emirates of northern Nigeria where protocols of indirect rule prevented the encroachment of missionaries and their European language of education and "enlightenment". Without an English-speaking populace from which to draw for minor clerical, administrative and commercial undertakings, however, Mazrui claims manpower was imported by the British from the south and east resulting in a "foreign" minority of Westernised Nigerians holding positions of power in the Islamic north. The local Muslim population was, through a lack of exposure to English, thus marginalised economically and socially within their homeland, with the resulting social tension eventually precipitating the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. Mazrui also notes an outright rejection of English as one of the reasons the Muslims of littoral Kenya, of which he counts himself, were also left behind by the rest of the country both educationally and financially.

In the territory of what is now modern-day Uganda, on the other hand, Mazrui (1972) highlights the emergence of an English-speaking subculture around

the centres of missionary and educational activity. This subculture displayed a propensity to reconcile traditional African and Western ideals. Mazrui claims English here acted to foster a pride in indigenous culture and renewed interest in tribal languages while, at the same time, allowing for the imbibing of Western cultural values "without straining their indigenous cultural attachments" (p. 58). At first glance this statement might appear irreconcilable with Mazrui's (1968) earlier claim that the term "black European" was once considered a compliment among the African elite, or, more importantly, the widespread adoption of missionary religions came at the cost of traditional spiritual and religious practices in Uganda. However, Mazrui claims at least the culturally imitative style on show in colonial Africa was not simply a case of mimicking a "superior" Western way of life it initially appeared, but rather a means of showing the colonisers and the wider world the fallacy of their beliefs in African intellectual and moral weakness. As such, Mazrui continues, this imitation could be considered an early example of African cultural nationalism.

This assertion is, of course, readily contestable, with differing interpretations of this imitation of white Europeans to be found in the work of other scholars focusing on pre- and post-colonial British Africa. The Zanzibari scholar Ismail (2007) is notable among these. In her collection of narratives of former students and teachers in the predominantly Muslim and former Omani Zanzibar archipelago of East Africa, she quotes one respondent as claiming the Kiswahili term "mzungu mweusi" - a "black person who pretends to be white and English" (p. 6) - to be one of the highest compliments a child could receive during the era of British rule.

However, unlike Mazrui's (1968) contention that the imitation of European ways was an example of cultural appropriation, Ismail (2007) paints this response in a different light. In noting that both Arabic and English served official language roles within the archipelago until independence in 1963, Ismail states that, while Arabic received a sudden reversal at the hands of Kiswahili after the British withdrawal and subsequent uprising against the ruling Omani sultan and the Arab elite, English continued to be viewed by many as a passport to economic success and social advancement. This attitude towards the English language, according to Ismail, is not only present in the upper echelons of Zanzibari society to this day, but is widely accepted by people from all walks of life with the rationale that, even if English offers no direct benefit to those in the villages, it has the potential to open doors of opportunity for their children.

Ismail (2007) notes how the positive attitudes towards English associated with this acceptance of its instrumental value have come to be associated with what Prah (2003) labels "collective amnesia". That is, the predominant place English has continued to play in pre- and post-independence Zanzibar has become associated with the devaluation of Kiswahili as a language of education, as evidenced in the continued popularity of English as the primary medium of instruction in Zanzibar. Such devaluation of indigenous languages, Ismail continues, is also associated with the lessening of the value of indigenous knowledge, and thus opens the local culture to the threat of language loss and cultural deracination.

Ismail's (2007) collection of narratives from the former Omani territory of Zanzibar, therefore, both support and build upon Mazrui's (1968, 1972) writing on the relationship between English and cultural-religious identity in mid-twentieth century Africa. This work, therefore, provides at least two potential responses to the prevalence of English in pre- and post-colonial societies: the dichotomy of rejection and resistance, on the one hand, and adoption and assimilation on the other. These points can be said to form the extremes of a continuum of Muslim responses to English, including the affective, cognitive and behavioural responses that Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler (2000) claim largely define a person's attitudes (see Section 1.4.1), still widely adhered to today. Researchers that followed tended to adopt these responses and their associated attitudes as a matter of course, even if some of Mazrui's finer points of distinction were not to be theorised until many years later (see Section 2.6).

2.5.2 South and South East Asia.

Seventeen years after Mazrui's (1972) work, Ozog (1989) investigated the possible tension raised by the interplay of English language learning and Malay-Muslim identity in the rapidly developing, multicultural, post-colonial society of Malaysia. A group of 50 undergraduate students in the nation's International Islamic University were administered a survey and interviewed. Of these respondents, Ozog reported 22 wanted Arabic to be raised to equal status with English as a compulsory tertiary-level subject, while the remaining 28 went even further by demanding Arabic replace English altogether as the university's prescribed second language. Although the lack of detail regarding the nature of Ozog's research, coupled with concerns about his position as instructor-researcher and the influence of the

university's then policy-driven push for increased Arabic achievement outcomes, open these findings to concerns of validity, Ozog nonetheless details an open resistance to English in Malaysia due to its links to Western ideas and practices that are fundamentally *kafir*, or non-Islamic, in nature.

Jones, Martin and Ozog (1993) took their research outside the classroom in an investigation of Bruneian citizens' attitudes towards English, the official language of Malay, and the national tongue of Brunei Malay. They administered an unspecified survey to 570 randomly selected respondents in the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam in 1989/1990, with the only apparent criterion for selection being national citizenship. The survey sought to investigate language attitudes across six domains: home, friendship, employment, commercial transactions, government business, and private sector affairs. From these six areas, findings from the use of English in the home domain are especially significant here.

Jones et al. (1993) remind readers that the home as an institution in Brunei is the centre of Malay culture and Islamic faith. As such, the authors assumed English would have little to no currency within this traditional sphere. However, Jones et al. report the "domain promiscuity" seen in English's encroachment on other traditionally Malay and Brunei Malay spheres, including intra-cultural friendships and official government business, was also witnessed in the home with 18% of respondents claiming to use English for domestic purposes. Leaving aside those respondents who use English to interact with their foreign maids, Jones et al. found English was employed in the home as a tool to exclude older family members from sibling-sibling conversations, as well as for parent-child and entire family discussions on the exogenous topics of work and school.

Jones et al. (1993) reported English use in the home was seen as a mixed blessing by respondents. On the one hand, parents saw their children's proficiency in the language as a sign of academic success with its suggestion of future material benefit. On the other, older members of the family feared English was the avenue through which foreign values entered the traditional cultural, religious and social environment of the home. Although unfortunately not delving into the topic at any great length, Jones et al. note the Bruneian government's then mooted introduction of a *Melayu Islam Beraja* (Malay Islamic Monarchy) school course to promote national identity as a counter-balance to such Western influence. The underlying logic of this course, according to the researchers, is that a strong sense of religious

and cultural values is the best check to an unquestioning acceptance of foreign influences among young, and supposedly impressionable, Bruneians. It is noteworthy that similar beliefs are also reported in several other studies presented here.

In Malaysia, Dan et al. (1996) conducted one of the first investigations to explicitly focus on students' attitudes towards the English language and its place in Malaysian society. Dan et al. carried out an investigation in two Malaysian religious high schools in the mid-1990s. In seeking to directly address whether English was seen as a threat to students' identities, in addition to exploring participant attitudes towards "Western" values, Dan et al. administered a questionnaire to 200 male respondents aged either 16 ("form 4" of secondary school in the Malaysian system) or 19 ("upper 6"). Twenty-six respondents were then selected for follow-up interviews based on their questionnaire responses.

According to the researchers, students were mostly drawn from the state of Melaka in which the two schools are situated, though a substantial proportion also came from the neighbouring states of Johor and Pahang. Both the schools featured had reputations for "good academic performance" (p. 225), and differed mainly in terms of cultural composition. That is, the first school was more ethnically homogenous "Malay", while the second reflected Malaysia's cultural diversity with Indian, Chinese and other ethnic minorities present. Two versions of the questionnaire were available, with students in the "Malay" school administered a Malay-language version, and students in the second site offered a choice of either Malay or English. The response rate for the first school was 92.6% compared to 80.43% for the second. Follow-up interviews were held exclusively in Malay.

In basing student attitudes on Gardner and Lambert's (1972) concept of language orientation, in which a continuum can be drawn between those who study a language due to the material benefits or other advantages it can bring (instrumental orientation) and those who pursue their studies from a desire to understand, and perhaps even integrate into, the target language group (integrative orientation), Dan et al. (1996) report participants displayed primarily instrumental motivation towards learning English. In this respect, respondents held positive attitudes towards the language based on its positioning as a gatekeeper to a world of wider knowledge and personal development. Moreover, attitudes towards Arabic as the language of the Qur'an, and therefore central to participation in religious life, were deemed to mix

instrumental (giving access to Islam) and integrative (gaining awareness of a central part of religious culture) orientations.

The significance of these findings is that they echo reports from elsewhere in the Muslim world suggesting English is often viewed positively as an instrument of access to employment, wealth and status (Mostafizar Rahman, 2008; Wagi'alla, 1996). However, of greater relevance here are those questions more directly related to student perceptions of English as a threat to Muslim identity. Dan et al. (1997) report an "open" attitude towards English in the two schools studied. That is, English was given an equal footing with Malay and Arabic in these schools, and its use, in line with government policy, was actively encouraged by school administration. In this facilitative environment, the researchers noted that while students stated an instrumental preference for English for the "here and now" - that is, they associated it with academic success and other potential benefits - they displayed a high level of selectivity in regards to what aspects of the language they used. For instance, a common response featured in the follow-up interviews was that, although every culture contains both good and bad elements, "it's up to us to choose the good and reject the bad" (p. 230).

Other comments focus on students' beliefs their English could be used for not only personal progression, but also as a means to further their country's development. Moreover, as might be expected from prestigious religious schools, a number of respondents also moved beyond the conceptualisation of English as simply a gatekeeper of material and academic success, to suggest it their responsibility as Muslims to learn another language. Here, Dan et al. (1997) elaborate upon the belief that a responsibility of every Muslim is to seek knowledge, "be it as far as China" (p. 229). The researchers state learning another language for this purpose, or, indeed, the purpose of gaining a greater understanding of another cultural or racial group, can be interpreted in Islam as an act of devotion.

In this way, the students in Dan et al.'s (1997) research display both an awareness of the Western values transmitted through English and an ability to recognise and reject such values when deemed incongruous with their Malay Muslim identities. Participants were so confident of this, they claimed an ability to exploit, rather than be exploited by, the English language, and demonstrated a heightened awareness of the way their English studies can enable them to access a world of information and technology necessary for their personal progression - be

that material, mental, or spiritual - and the development of their nation. Moreover, these students furthered their claims by expressing doubt about the "ownership" of English by Western inner-circle nations, and thus deemed concerns about the supposedly intractable relationship between English and Western cultural values as of little consequence.

Despite a number of shortcomings, such as the implied exclusion of non-Malay speakers from the interview process, the way those participants selected may have responded to their teachers' interviews and identifiable questionnaires by providing answers more in keeping with official school and government policy than their own beliefs, the disparate response rates between the two schools and the failure of the researchers to provide an analysis of the differences between the Malay and culturally-mixed participants, Dan et al. (1997) still offer a significant piece of research into the relationship between attitudes towards English and learners' Islamic identities. Their suggestion that both students and teachers be aware of the potential tension between English-language learning and Muslim values is based on the belief that awareness is the first step towards empowerment. And scholars in the field, including Asraf (1996) and Karmani (2005a, 2005b) agree, acknowledging that this issue in the classroom may be an important move for practitioners working in an Islamic context. However, despite these calls, findings here suggest that students held predominantly positive attitudes towards English as they were, even at a relatively young age, aware of some of the risks associated with exposure to a foreign language and culture and were thus able to counter these through their own sense of efficacy.

Subsequent studies within Malaysia itself include Kim's (2003) examination of the relationship between the use of English within Kachru's (1992) outer circle of former British dominions and the construction of socio-cultural identities. Kim interviewed fourteen female English-language majors from the English-medium Master of Arts programs of two Malaysian universities. As their enrolment in these programs attest, all fourteen participants were proficient in English, and between them also boasted knowledge of a number of different languages and dialects including Brunei and Kedah Malay, Tamil, Cantonese, Hakka (a Chinese dialect), and even the Malaysian indigenous language of Iban.

Through individual interviews and coded-analysis of the women's reflective journals over a period of two months, Kim (2003) discovered a common belief

among participants that negative attitudes towards English still do exist in certain segments of Malaysian society. This conviction was supplemented by respondents' claims that using English was associated by some within their social and familial circles as boasting or "showing off". Moreover, using English was considered by acquaintances within some of the women's reference groups as a sign of Westernisation and was, therefore, viewed as incompatible with being a dutiful Muslim. As Azlina, one of Kim's participants, states, some Malays hold negative attitudes towards English as they "associate English language as not being Muslim. You know they associate English with religion. That's why they resent English. From their point of view, English equals to 'Other' than Islam" (p. 145).

This belief among others within their social and familial circles that knowledge of English is incongruous with Malay-Muslim identity was also reported by some participants in Dan et al. (1997). Much like respondents in that study, Kim (2003) also found widespread disagreement among participants with the notion. For instance, a number of the post-graduate students Kim interviewed noted how English did, in fact, expose them to new ideas and worldviews, and that these different perspectives did encourage them to move beyond a single "cultural lens". This process, however, was seen by participants as empowering rather than disenfranchising, and is perhaps best exemplified by Azlina's claims that, although she has become aware of feminist writers through exposure to English, she made the choice not to support the ideology because she deems it incompatible with her Muslim identity. Thus, exposure to Western ideas has not harmed her sense of identity, nor has it made Azlina any less Muslim according to her own perception. Rather, following Asraf's (1996) belief that a strong Islamic worldview acts as a filter to the encroachment of foreign values, such exposure has helped strengthen her sense of self through re-affirming the boundaries of her identity. Faith in the strength of her own cultural and religious identity has allowed Azlina to explore Western ideas without any subsequent loss of self, and has therefore allowed her to maintain positive attitudes towards English, even if her views on the Western culture/s associated with the language are necessarily more complex.

What this research implies, then, is a process in which the ambivalence felt towards English within Malaysian and, to a lesser extent, Bruneian society in the post-independence era has decreased with the passing of the years. One of the respondents in Dan et al.'s (1997) research of around fifteen years ago, for instance,

claims, “Malays are changing from having negative attitudes [towards English] towards a more positive attitude” (p. 233), and of a society realising English is, “no longer the language of the non-Muslims” (p. 233), but the property of the world. It can clearly be seen that six years after Dan et al.’s study, Kim’s (2003) graduate students acknowledged attitudinal resistance in some segments of Malaysian society, though held none of these negative attitudes towards English based on a fear of losing their culture or religion themselves. This apparent trend is confirmed by prolific writers in the area such as Mohd-Asraf (1997, 2005) who states that within her twenty years of research interest in the topic, she has noted a definite positive shift in the attitudes of Muslim-Malays towards English and its place within Malay society.

Since research in the area first became more prominent in the country some twenty years ago, Mostafizar Rahman (2008) notes the Malaysian government has again decided on the importance of promoting the one-time official language through the reintroduction of English as the medium of instruction for scientific and technical subjects at the tertiary level in the mid-1990s. This was followed, in 2002, by the introduction of English-language maths and science classes for all students from the first year of primary school and up. Mostafizar Rahman sought to investigate undergraduate students’ responses to these somewhat dramatic changes, and, in doing so, to examine attitudes towards the place of English within Malaysian society. To achieve this, the researcher administered a short (approximately 15 item) Likert-scale questionnaire to 228 undergraduate students at the University Putra Malaysia. The majority of these students were Malay Muslims (60.7%), although Chinese (29.5%), Indian (8%) and other (1.8%) ethnicities were also represented. Results support the shift to more accepting attitudes towards English noted in the above studies.

First, Mostafizar Rahman (2008) found almost full support for the Malaysian government’s language policy of reinstating English in a central role in formal education. Around 86% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the decision to make English the medium of instruction for all levels of tertiary study. Furthermore, another 75.3% supported the English-medium teaching of mathematics for first year primary school students, even though the sample were too old to have experienced such instruction themselves. Furthermore, a full 60.3% of participants preferred to read academic texts in English, as opposed to a mere 9% stating a

preference for these texts in Bahasa Malaysia. This latter finding in particular stands in sharp contrast to the majority of Ozog's (1989) undergraduates who wanted English to be replaced altogether by Arabic in Malaysian universities.

Another rebuttal of earlier evidence of negative attitudes towards the place of English within Malaysian society is perhaps evident in the widely reported belief among Mostafizar Rahman's (2008) students that speaking English is a sign of an educated person (58% agreed while only 11.6% disagreed) and, perhaps consequently, assumes an important role as creator of a good impression on others (67.6% and 8.1% respectively). This finding again stands in opposition to beliefs reported by participants in earlier investigations that English was a *kafir* (non-Islamic) language, and proficiency in it thereby associated with a lack of religious piety.

An intriguing part of Mostafizar Rahman's (2008) work is the widespread support (around 80%) among the study's Malaysian undergraduates for the standardisation of a Malaysian variety English. Such a variety, states the author, would stand alongside accepted Australian, British or even Singaporean English varieties, in encapsulating the richness and diversity of the country it represents and would also, it is assumed, play an important part in defining the nation and the people within it. This preference for the establishment of a standardised Malaysian English is notable in that it seems a natural extension of the questioning of the ownership of English raised by Dan et al.'s (1996) participants, and seems to speak of the success these Malays feel they have had in co-opting the erstwhile "foreign" language to such a point that it is capable of representing the many-voiced complexities of their society. In such an environment, negative attitudes towards English based on fears of losing a Malay-Muslim identity to its "foreign baggage" seem to have been almost completely discarded.

Most recently, in Bangladesh, Mamun, Mostafizar Rahman, Rahman and Hossain (2012) investigated the attitudes towards English of 79 undergraduate students of the government-funded, English-medium Khulna University's Life Sciences School. Respondents, whose demographic details outside of area of specialisation remained unspecified, were administered a 17-item 5-point Likert response key questionnaire adapted from previous studies including Hohenthal (2003). Possible responses ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree with a middle option of neutral.

Mamun et al. (2012) report almost universally positive attitudes towards the English language among participants. For example, around 97% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I like speaking English". In addition, participants also displayed favourable attitudes towards speakers of the language, with more than two thirds expressing some form of agreement with the items "When someone speaks English I think he is educated" (67.09%) and "When someone speaks English it creates a good impression for him" (69.62%). Moreover, more than 82% of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "I dislike people who speak to me in English".

Perhaps not surprisingly, given their status as students enrolled in the compulsory English language preparatory course of an English-medium university, Mamun et al. (2012) state that participants displayed a high level of awareness of the instrumental value of the English language at both personal and international levels. For instance, more than 96% of the undergraduates surveyed agreed that English is "an important lingua franca in globalization" and that "knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs".

However, unlike a number of the studies cited thus far in which respondents recognised the instrumental value of English though often attempted to limit the extent of its cultural influence on their lives, the Bangladeshi students studied by Mamun et al. (2012) stated a preference for increasing their encounters with English-language cultural products such as TV and radio programs (77.22% agreed they would like more exposure to these media in English) and magazines and newspapers (81.02%). Moreover, more than 86% of participants believed that all official documents should be produced in both English and Bangla, with around 75% also agreeing that "If an academic text is available in English and BM [Bangla], I will read the text in English".

Mamun et al. (2012) view the overwhelmingly positive nature of the attitudes suggested by these findings to argue that respondents "like the English language and they like those who speak English" (p. 207). The authors argue that much of this esteem is due to an acknowledgement of the advantages English offers in the age of globalisation, such as finding good jobs in an increasingly competitive local labour market and obtaining a higher social status. It is due to this awareness of the instrumental value of the language that Mamun et al. claim respondents would like English to be raised to the equivalent status as that of an official second language in

Bangladesh, as evidenced in the number of participants who wished to see both Bangla and English used together in official communications, street signs, maps, the media and education.

However, while Mamun et al. (2012) state that this preference for giving English a greater role within Bangladeshi society is based almost exclusively on an awareness of the social and material benefits access to the language can confer, it could also be possible to argue that these leanings are perhaps indicative of an openness towards Western culture/s and cultural products that Mazrui (1968, 1972) described as an expression of assimilation into a more Western worldview. Although Mamun et al. don't examine the point in their research, it would be interesting to examine, much like Jones et al. (1993) in Brunei or Sinno (2008) in Lebanon (see Section 2.5.3), to what degree English has permeated participants' home lives, intra-cultural relationships and other more personal domains.

Despite this omission, however, and taking into account the lack of detail about the demographic features of the sample and the absence of the questionnaire's psychometric details, Mamun et al. (2012) nonetheless provide an insightful account of the apparently very positive attitudes towards the English language, its speakers, and even its associated culture/s, shared by the majority of undergraduate Bangladeshi students of life sciences in an English-medium university.

2.5.3 The Middle East and Turkey.

Positive attitudes towards English coupled with the belief that the language does not present a threat to Muslim religious and cultural identities were also reported by Karahan (2007) in Turkey. The study features a survey of a group of 190 grade 7 learners in a private primary school with an intensive, ten hour a week, English-language program. Karahan's sample represented "one of the most advantaged groups learning English in an environment equipped with psychological, physical and social support" (p. 83), with the implication English was central to the learning environment. This privileged access lead Karahan to assume participants would not only be able to readily identify the value of English in Turkish society, but would also show strong positive attitudes towards the language. A two part, 21-item questionnaire with a three point response scale (agree, disagree and neutral) was designed to test these suppositions.

Karahan (2007) found students were indeed aware of the social and instrumental value of English in Turkish society, with mid levels of agreement displayed for items such as, "If I use English, my status is raised" (a mean of .51 on a scale where -1 represents strong disagreement and 1 represents strong agreement) and "The spread of the use of English is one of the most crucial factors in Turkey's development today" (M = .53). Moreover, participants also displayed positive attitudes towards English-based cultures and English-speaking people – "I love talking with expatriates in English" (M = .52), and "The command of English is very helpful in understanding expatriates and their culture" (M = .77). These attitudes were accompanied by mild levels of disagreement about whether a knowledge of English would detract from a speaker's cultural identity - "When using English, I do not feel Turkish anymore" (M = −.19), and "When using English, I feel as though I am in a foreign country" (M = −.22). Strongest disagreement, however, was reserved for the item, "If I use English I am not patriotic", with female participants here displaying significantly higher levels of disagreement (M = −.79) than their male counterparts (M = −.60).

Such findings imply fairly positive attitudes towards the English language and its speakers based on both an acceptance of its utilitarian value in Turkish society and a lack of perceived cultural threat from the language towards these learners' cultural identities. Such attitudes could perhaps be accounted for by the "advantaged" social standing of these students and their implied access to education and other sources of societal power. It is conceivable, for instance, that students attending such a privileged school are drawn from families who have benefited materially and/or socially from a greater access to English, and are, therefore, more prone to positive attitudes towards the culture and values associated with it.

Within the Arab Muslim world, though owing more to the prevalence of English to American, rather than British, historical influence, Sinno (2008) carried out a qualitative investigation of 225 (109 female, 116 male) English majors' attitudes to both English and its associated target cultures in the American University of Beirut. Participants ranged in age from 18-21, with the majority of the fifty-three students volunteering for inclusion in the research interviews using either Arabic (56.6%) or English (30.2%) as a first language, and more than 75% of this number having studied in English-medium high schools. Sinno used a qualitative approach built around the use of nine semi-structured focus group and twelve individual

interviews, complemented by analysis of participant writings on the topics of perceptions of English's role in the world, and a critique of a text discussing American sentiments towards Arab people. His research was carried out during the tumultuous period in recent Lebanese history of 2004-2006, culminating in the Second Lebanon War with Israel. Data was scrutinised with thematic and discourse analysis techniques.

Sinno's (2008) findings report a complexity of attitudes towards English and the West. For example, in terms of participant attitudes to the English language, Sinno notes participants deem English to open doors of opportunity in relation to academia, personal enrichment, international communication and access to the global workforce. Moreover, they view English as an inherently "superior" language to not only the former imperial tongue of French – commonly referred to as irrelevant and even "dead" by participants – but also to Arabic itself. This belief, however, Sinno notes is tinged with feelings of guilt that in allowing English to assume a greater role in their life domains all the way from work and study to the domestic (some 83% use English as either a first or second language at home, for instance), participants are positioning themselves and their nation in a place of subordination. English, they feared, would destroy Lebanese culture and even pollute national and personal identities, though participants were still adamant overall that such risks were worthwhile in light of the potential benefits fluency in that language allows. Moreover, like participants in a number of studies thus far cited, these students state English is no longer the exclusive province of one particular country, but rather now, in the age of gloablisation, the language of the world.

In terms of participant attitudes towards the target language culture, elicited in the interviews through a free association activity with the words "America", "American", "England" and "British", Sinno's (2008) analysis reveals similarly complicated reasoning. Overall, Sinno reports his participants expressed a strong degree of anti-American sentiment based largely on the American-led invasion of Iraq and a widely held belief in an American bias towards Israel. The strength of this rejection of American foreign policy in the region was matched, however, with an apparent acceptance that American people could not be held accountable for the actions of their government. As Carole, one participant engaged in a focus group

interview notes, “It’s not about the Americans, like the American people, it’s mostly the American policies” (p. 138) that she objects to.

What Sinno (2008) presents, therefore, is a picture in which these English majors in an American university and with histories of privileged access to the language held positive attitudes towards English as a somehow politically-neutral entity. At the same time, these students disassociate the target language culture from the undesirable actions of major Western state players. However, their accepting attitudes are tinged with a fear that the growing importance of English within their nation will undermine social institutions and have an overall negative impact on their cultural identities. This fear apparent in the early years of the research presented here, though, as has been seen, has notably deceased with the passing of the years. That it is still present to such a degree in Lebanon may be due to a number of factors, although it is difficult to discount the sense of anti-American sentiment flaring up around the country in 2004, the year of the Israeli incursion into the south of the nation and the destruction of key infrastructure around the capital in the lead up to the 2006 war. Although Sinno claims he made every effort to remain neutral in the language selected for his interviews and to let the conversation run a more or less natural course, his showing of two pictures of destruction in the capital – one a pile of rubble where once a building stood displaying the sign “Made in America” – may have gone a long way to exciting some of these anti-American feelings.

Despite this caution, however, overall Sinno’s (2008) qualitative methodology does allow for a deeper understanding of the issue than perhaps the majority of the quantitative works presented here thus far. However, in gaining this deeper knowledge, questions as to the influence of the researcher on participants who also sat in his classes and completed his assessments must be raised. Added to this concern, the inevitable questions of how student attitudes may have been different had the study been conducted in a more stable period of Beirut’s history, or if, indeed, the researcher had not displayed what some may consider a lack of judgement in using provocative pictures of the carnage of what must have been a tense and uncertain time, can also be raised. Despite this, however, Sinno’s work adds a certain depth to the existing research, and goes a long way to providing a bridge between the research from the greater Muslim world and that focused on the Gulf States.

At the opposite end of Arabia, Al-Tamimi (2009) conducted research into university students' motivations and attitudes towards English in one of the Arabian Peninsula's most impoverished nations – the Republic of Yemen. Despite being at odds with the Gulf monarchies that border it on a string of political and social issues, it is important to highlight here that Yemen enjoys membership of a number of Gulf Cooperation Council authorities and has even revealed plans to attain full membership of the GCC within the near future (Ghoneim, 2006). Moreover, like the Gulf States themselves, Yemen was also considered strategically important to British interests in the East and hence the crown colony of Aden – itself the centre of the much larger protectorate of Aden occupying most of the country's current territory – was made a British dominion as early as 1838. This status was only revoked in 1967 after an uprising finally forced the colonisers out, thus making Yemen the penultimate British territory in the Middle East to win independence.

Within this context, Al-Tamimi (2009) employed a mixed research approach adopting an Arabic-language questionnaire divided into three sections. The first incorporated seven items based both on Gardner's (1985) AMTB scales regarding integrative and instrumental motivation and Cooper and Fishman's (1977) construct of personal motivation. These items utilised a five-point Likert-scale with responses ranging from very important to not important, and were complemented by one item inquiring as to whether students were interested in taking more English-language courses (part 2) and a further eight statements regarding participant attitudes to English (part 3). Respondents could express three levels of agreement (agree, disagree, or don't know) in response to these latter items. Eighty-one male Hadhramout University engineering students participated in the questionnaire phase of the research, with ten of these selected for the interview stage. Unfortunately, both the selection procedure for interviewees and the nature of the interview event (individual, group, semi-structured and so on) are not stated.

Regarding Al-Tamimi's (2009) inquiry into participant motivation to study English, the researcher discovered very strong leaning towards the instrumental value of their language studies. In fact, of the four positively-worded items directly related to students' instrumental motivation, the overall mean was 4.5 (with 1 representing "not important" and 5 "very important"). Reasons for learning English such as it will "enable me to carry out my tasks more efficiently" (M = 4.70) and "get a job easily" (M = 4.77) were all rated as either important or very important by

participants, a finding Al-Tamimi claims reflects English's status as engineering's de facto professional language. Added to this strong sense of instrumental motivation, personal motivators, including enhancing status among friends (M = 3.83) and encouraging personal development (M = 4.49), were also rated as important.

On the other hand, Al-Tamimi (2009) found little support for his single item related to integrative orientation – that of learning English to "integrate with the western culture" (M = 2.58). This item was rated by participants as holding little importance, and was, for the most part, swept aside in interviews for responses focussing on the utilitarian value of the language that allowed participants to find future jobs in foreign-run oil companies and achieve academic success.

Findings regarding participant attitudes towards the English language itself, moreover, tend to confirm these general patterns of motivation, with 79% of respondents agreeing that Yemen's development "is possible mainly by educated people who know English well". Perhaps as a result of this belief, 81.4% of participants also agreed that "English should be the medium of instruction in secondary schools in Yemen" while a 97.5% expressed a desire to attend more English classes in order to improve proficiency with the language. When taken together, these results re-enforce positive attitudes towards the language based on its instrumental value with this focus encompassing both personal (jobs, status, education) and societal (Yemen's development) concerns.

In perhaps the only apparent anachronism in Al-Tamimi's (2009) results, despite the dismissal of the concept of integrative motivation in favour of instrumental factors outlined above, more than half (55.5%) of participants agreed that "English films are more enjoyable than films in any other language". Here, unfortunately, the instrument's design does not allow room for the exploration of this seeming preference for Anglo-American popular cultural products, and, combined with the decision to employ only one item relating to integrative motivation in the first part of the questionnaire, suggests an uneasy fit in participant attitudes towards the West that raises a number of questions. The researcher, however, at least partially addresses this issue in the interview stage of the research.

In particular, Al-Tamimi (2009) states the vast majority of interviewees selected for this part of the research displayed positive attitudes towards the English language in conjunction with negative attitudes towards Anglophone Western cultures. This stance is perhaps best typified by a response of one fifth-year student:

"I don't like the western culture. I am very proud of my own. However, I like the western language [English] very much and more than you can expect" (p. 43).

Such a response sits rather neatly with the disparate levels of instrumental and integrative motivation reported here. However, it should be noted that three of the students Al-Tamimi interviewed reported an interest in Western cultures due both to the necessity of dealing with Western people in future job situations and because, as one student states, "If you understand the language of a people and culture, you can never be harmed by it" (p. 44). Al-Tamimi (2009) claims the attitudes towards English-speaking cultures displayed by these three participants are nonetheless very different from those held by the majority of interviewees. However, the belief of these students that learning about the culture of native English speakers is a way to protect them from the potential dangers of encounters with the West, appears, in some ways, to be a continuation of the belief expressed in earlier studies that English could be an empowering influence in participants' lives.

These findings, therefore, tend to re-enforce much of the research presented here. That is, students of English within Yemen are mostly concerned with the use of the English language in ways that will enrich them and will also aid in the development of their country. Combined with this interest is a rejection of the Western cultural elements often believed to accompany English-language learning. These participants, however, appear to be acutely aware of the potential negative influences of this normative baggage, and have decided to either reject foreign cultural elements (the majority view), or to familiarise themselves with those elements in order to smooth their own careers or to gain greater protection against them. This learning about the West in order to reject it is the interpretation Al-Tamimi (2009) himself offers, and it is one that seems most capable of drawing together this apparent contradiction in his findings.

As one of the few pieces of research of its kind to come out of Yemen, Al-Tamimi (2009) appears to shed light on developments in the country that in many ways adhere to reported attitudes elsewhere in the Muslim world. The one exception appears to be the vehemence with which the majority of respondents, at least in the interview stage, displayed blatantly negative attitudes towards Anglo-American culture and "western cunning" (p. 41). However, these strong negative attitudes appear to directly contradict the interest of the majority of participants in popular

Western cultural products – a trend that, despite a credible explanation by the researcher, is not fully explored in the research.

Moreover, it must be reiterated here that of all Britain's Middle Eastern possessions, Aden experienced perhaps the bloodiest struggle for independence – an occurrence that was largely absent from the decolonisation process in the Gulf States. That this hard-fought independence was won around forty-five years ago, and that the city of Al-Mukalla, in which the research site is located, was formerly under the governance of the colony of Aden, may also add credence to Al-Tamimi's (2009) assertion that students' suspicion of the West is linked to historical imperialistic ties and current American military and political influence in the country. Al-Tamimi's research, therefore, builds upon Sinno's (2008) work as a crucial link between the studies emerging from other corners of the Muslim world and the research available from the GCC itself (see Section 2.7), to which Yemen aspires.

Returning to the Levant, Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) investigated the relationship between attitudes towards learning English and the English language itself and the variables of gender, college and academic level of 200 undergraduate and post-graduate students at a university in the far northern Jordanian city of Irbid. The researchers used an adapted version of Malallah's (2000) instrument which was, as discussed in Section 3.6.2, originally developed for a Kuwaiti context. Within Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi's adaptation, the researchers employed 32 items across three "domains". These domains are: "Attitudes towards English", "Attitudes towards Learning English" and "Purposes of Learning English". A five-point Likert-scale response key, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with a middle response of neutral, was used.

Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) report almost entirely positive attitudes across all three domains. For instance, regarding participants' attitudes towards learning English, the researchers claim either positive or neutral responses to all 15 domain-related items. For example, all participants express varying levels of disagreement to the statements that learning English "is against one's religion" (a mean of 4.12 with 1, for these following reverse scored items, representing strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree), "will harm the Arabic language" (M = 3.88), "means gaining habits that do not suit us Arabs" (M = 3.74), and "threatens Arab identity" (M = 3.65).

Similarly positive attitudes were also reported in the domain of attitudes towards the English language, with slight-to-moderate levels of disagreement with the statements that "If I use English, it means that I am less patriotic" (*M* = 3.83) and "I feel uncomfortable when I hear a Jordanian speaking to another in English" (*M* = 3. 57). In fact, the only suggestion of anything other than positive attitudes towards the English language is the overall neutral rating of the item that when using English "I do not feel that I am Jordanian any more" (an overall mean of 3.12 for this positively scored item, with 3 representing neutral and 5 strongly agree).

Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) interpret these findings to suggest that there "is a definite degree of positiveness towards the English language in Jordan" (p. 632) - a conclusion they contribute to a recognition within Jordanian society of the crucial role English plays in the country's education, politics and economics. Moreover, Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) found almost no differences whatsoever in these attitudes based on the variables of gender, specialisation, and academic level. In fact, the only significant differences the researchers found were that those participants enrolled in majors in the College of Science displayed more positive attitudes towards learning English than their colleagues in the College of Arts, while post-graduate students tended to hold more positive attitudes to the English language than undergraduates.

The first of these differences Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) explain as a matter of language of instruction within these colleges. In particular, as is the case in a large number of universities across Arabia, Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi note that College of Science students, unlike those students enrolled in arts, receive their instruction in the English language, and therefore are likely to hold more positive attitudes towards the role of English in their education. The latter difference is also explained using a similar rationale, with the researchers stating that post-graduate students have had more exposure to the English language and can see a greater need for the language in their future careers, thus accounting for the higher degree of positive attitudes to the language.

However, it is important to note here that the differences Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) report in these two areas are merely differences of degree. That is, university level and medium of instruction were not associated with positive versus negative attitudes, but rather the level of positive attitudes towards either the English language or to learning English reported here. Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi explain this

level of positive attitudes towards English in terms of a recognition among participants of both the instrumental value - "Learning English makes me a more educated person" (M = 4.09) - and integrative value – "English is very helpful in understanding foreign people and their cultures (M = 4.08) - of studying English.

Again, here, this finding seems to contradict reports from other nations, such as Al-Tamimi's (2009) Yemeni engineering students, where respondents tended to highlight the instrumental value of the English language while at the same time reporting a deep resentment of the culture/s associated with it. This is especially surprising considering the proximity of the research site, located in the Jordanian city of Irbid, to the Israeli border (a little less than 30 kilometres to the west) and the popularly held assumption among many in the region that Israeli military actions in the past have been supported by the United States (Dishon, 1973; Lukacs, 1999).

Therefore, even though the lack of negative attitudes towards English and learning English reported by Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) may suggest that in Jordanain society the language is widely accepted, it would nonetheless have been interesting to see whether these positive attitudes also extended to attitudes towards native speakers of English and/or the "West". However, even though a scale like Malallah's (2000) "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English" was not employed in Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi's work, the researchers nonetheless offer a fascinating glimpse of the seemingly uninterrupted positive set of attitudes to English in an outer-circle Levantine city.

2.5.4 Summary of the research from the non-Gulf Muslim world.

As the research from the greater Muslim world suggests, the dichotomy of rejection of English on one side and its acceptance to the point of assimilation on the other, as suggested by Mazrui (1968, 1972) more than forty years ago, is informative but perhaps too broad to allow for a more complete understanding of the complexity of attitudes expressed towards the English language and/or its speakers. In particular, the majority of the research thus far presented suggests positive attitudes towards the English language and, often, its speakers, based on a growing recognition of the language's instrumental value. These largely positive attitudes, therefore, could be argued to display many of the characterisations of Mazrui's (1968, 1972) response of acceptance and assimilation. However, these positive attitudes are also often associated in the literature with a mistrust of the cultural

baggage of the English language and a suspicion of the West and its motives which could be argued to be more representative of Mazrui's description of rejection. Therefore, a more nuanced understanding of the nature of Muslim attitudes towards English, its native speakers and the West is necessary to account for this apparent complexity of attitudes. Here, Rahman's (2005) historical analysis of Muslim responses to English in South Asia goes someway towards providing a conceptual framework for understanding these attitudes.

2.6 Interpreting Attitudes towards English from the Muslim World.

Despite being primarily concerned with a call for more equitable access to English through education policy reform in strife-torn Pakistan, Rahman (2005) offers a historical analysis of Muslim responses to English in South Asia that can, in accordance with the definition outlined in Section 1.4.1, be readily applied to the attitudes appearing thus far in the literature. The three Muslim responses to English offered by Rahman are: resistance and rejection, acceptance and assimilation, and pragmatic utilisation.

The first response is that of resistance. Rahman (2005) states this form of rejection may have historically had its roots in politics. That is, local Muslims rulers at the time of British encroachment on the subcontinent were deeply unhappy about forfeiting sovereignty to the colonisers. However, Rahman continues, over time this resistance became more closely associated with concerns of religion and identity. In this sense, the author states the fear an exposure to the "normative baggage" associated with English, including concepts of individualism and the nuclear family, for instance, will alienate those who learn English from their traditional Islamic values. Resistance based on concerns of religious and cultural identity can be found in the research from a number of Muslim nations, with this resistance explicitly seen in studies including Ozog (1989) and Kim (2003).

Like Mazrui (1968, 1972), the second response to English is acceptance and assimilation. This Rahman (2005) identifies as most commonly occurring in the middle and upper classes of society. Rahman relates this response to those who initially accept English due to the material benefits it can bring, and, through this acceptance, gradually come to adopt Western values and ideas. Chief among these values, Rahman contends, is a secular, modernist mindset with an acceptance of concepts including individual rights and religious freedom, or what has been

described here as a "Western worldview". This response rests at the opposite end of the spectrum to resistance, and, in former British colonies, could be said to encompass those who benefited most from working for, or closely with, the colonial authorities. This response could therefore be assumed to account for the majority of members of local urban elites and members of traditional ruling families.

The final response, and one that is implied by Mazrui (1968, 1972), is pragmatic utilisation, in which English is accepted as useful for the access it offers to the world of knowledge and employment, and where selected elements of the language are adopted in ways that empower users. In expanding upon this response, Rahman (2005) focuses on how an appropriation of selected aspects of the English language typifies the Islamist, anti-Western, pro-militancy stance in Pakistan. However, leaving politically-imbued manifestations of the response in Pakistan aside, it is precisely this attitude that best summarises the way students, ranging from primary school to university in the above research, engage with English. It seems as though the longer nations such as Malaysia, Brunei and Jordan have been independent from Britain, the more aware people in those societies are of the potential value of accessing English, and the more capable they are, too, of determining which aspects of the language they use and which they discard.

Underlying Rahman's (2005) three responses to English, therefore, is the implication that pragmatic utilisation and assimilation into a Western worldview are separated by a fine line which is defined by the sense of agency students bring into the learning experience. This discretionary ability forms part of what the Moroccan scholar Kabel (2007) describes as "power potential", or the belief students are capable of carrying their own agendas into language learning and thus have an ability to use language for their own purposes. This agency allows students to take what they deem necessary from their encounters with English and disregard what is determined to be a threat and can be understood in terms of Adaskou et al.'s (1990) following four senses of language learning:

- aesthetic - What Adaskou et al. term "culture with a capital C" (p. 3), it is related to the literature, media, and cinema produced by the target language countries, and acts as a source of cultural information in the sociological sense.

- sociological - to do with the customs and institutions of the countries

associated with the target language. Adaskou et al. describe this as a vast field covering areas including the organisation of the family, home life, customs, traditions and interpersonal relations.

- semantic - the "conceptual system" responsible for conditioning our perceptions and thoughts. This system, therefore, can be said to include the cultural beliefs, or normative baggage, embodied by a language.

- pragmatic - the different uses the language may be put to, which involve a knowledge of social and paralinguistic skills including an understanding of intonation patterns and rhetorical conventions.

Many of the participants in the studies cited in Section 2.5 displayed a remarkable ability to view their encounters with English within a similar light to that put forth by Adaskou et al. (1990), thus enabling them to separate the pragmatic uses they hoped to achieve from their studies from the sociological and semantic values transmitted through the English-language aesthetic media of textbooks, literature, movies, the internet and so on. That this ability is often well-defined at a relatively early stage in participants speaks of well-developed critical literacy skills that have enabled them to seek knowledge and power through English while, at the same time, maintaining their identities as Muslim Malays, Bruneians, Turks and so on. Although none of the above studies explicitly states such, it appears as though these critical literacy skills may operate in conjunction with a strong sense of self, or power potential, to help students avoid the potential pitfalls of alienation often associated in the literature with English-language studies, and thus manage to have positive attitudes about the language even if their responses to Western culture/s and people are more mixed.

The strength of conviction running through these investigations, and the relative dearth of research emerging from the nations of the GCC, make it tempting to generalise the ability of students to distinguish between uses of a language, and therefore to hold favourable attitudes towards the English language and its place within their own societies. However, it should be noted that despite the apparent commonalities of religion and British domination between countries like Malaysia, Brunei, Turkey, Jordan and Pakistan and the Gulf monarchies, they nonetheless have a number of important points of difference. With these features of differing political

systems, levels of economic development, and cultural-ethnic composition taken into account, it can be seen that although the above studies offer a backdrop against which to view the Gulf research, generalising the findings outlined in Section 2.5 and the subsequent Muslim responses to English highlighted here to GCC nations can only be attempted with a great deal of care. For this reason, research into the attitudes towards English and its speakers from the Gulf region are reported below.

2.7 Attitudes towards English and its Speakers from the Gulf.

As outlined in Section 2.5, a large amount of research into attitudes towards the English language and its speakers based on the potential for tension between Muslim identity and English learning has come from the greater Muslim world where countries like Brunei, Malaysia and Pakistan endured a harsher and more direct form of colonial rule (Rappa & Wee, 2007) than those of the Gulf States. It is perhaps far from coincidental that after independence these non-Gulf Muslim-majority nations often experienced a period in which both public sentiment and government policy actively sought to expel many of the influences associated with their former colonial rulers. It may be due to this attempt at limiting British influence in these newly-independent nations that Rahman's (2005) response of rejection and resistance appeared to dominate the early research into Muslim attitudes towards the English language, even if these attitudes did tend to change more towards pragmatic utilisation as the years passed from the end of colonial rule.

By way of contrast, the Gulf nations largely did not experience such a period of post-independence ambivalence towards their former rulers. And the fact that English in the post-independence era continued to be held in relatively high esteem by the people and governments of the region (Charise, 2007) may be one reason contributing to the traditional lack of research into attitudes towards the English language and its speakers in the Gulf monarchies.

Recent related research emanating from the Gulf, however, is not without antecedent, and a number of early instructor-scholars questioned whether English instruction and Arab Muslim identity could co-exist without tension. Although these authors, much like Mazrui (1968, 1972) in Muslim regions of Africa, largely expressed their concerns without over-regard for empirical support, they did, nonetheless, perform an invaluable service in encouraging future researchers to put their suppositions to the test. While, to this day, there remains a relative lack of

research about the attitudes of Gulf citizens towards the English language and its speakers, and certainly nothing yet that could be compared to the rich tradition of literature that has emerged from a number of other nations of the Muslim world, the growing number of studies cited below still represents a period of some thirty years and are drawn from every member state of the GCC.

2.7.1 The Gulf research.

Academic interest in the issue of attitudes towards the English language and its speakers was initially raised by a number of local and expatriate scholar-instructors in the region beginning some thirty years ago (Abuhamdia, 1984; El-Sayed, 1988; Fellman, 1973; Haggan, 1998). Typical among the results offered in their works was the belief that Arab Muslim learners of English inevitably faced a vexing situation – on the one hand, tradition and religion dictated that personal values, beliefs and behaviours be born from the scriptures of Islam, itself revealed in the holy tongue of Arabic (Omran, 1988). However, on the other hand, the necessity of engaging with English for personal advancement and national "modernisation" naturally involved exposure to foreign values by their very nature detrimental to a student's own. Although such beliefs regarding the level of tension, and subsequent negative attitudes, between English and Arab Muslim identity is intuitively appealing and may "gel" with the experiences of both local and foreign instructors in the region, much of the early work in the area failed to move beyond the realm of unsubstantiated opinion, with little effort made to filter these notions through the lens of stringent investigation.

Fahmy and Bilton (1992) noted this lack of research in the Gulf; especially surprising when held against the well-developed tradition of topic-related investigations from the greater Muslim world. The researchers sought to redress this dearth through an investigation of 74 Omani English major student teachers (48 female and 26 male) conducted in Oman's national university.

Fahmy and Bilton (1992) note that the teacher-training program from which participants were drawn was a mere three years old at the time of investigation. Both the program and the university were, therefore, widely promoted as central planks in the government policy of modernising all levels of Oman's education system. As such, the student teachers participating in the investigation were thus charged, according to guidelines furnished by the Arab Bureau of Education for the

Gulf States (1983), with encouraging their future students to develop positive attitudes towards English and its speakers provided this positive regard did not come at the cost of negative perceptions of Arab and Islamic cultures.

Fahmy and Bilton (1992) adopted an ethnographic approach based on document analysis of government- and university-produced educational directives, combined with interviews of leading members of the Ministry of Education and the university's English Centre, to provide a detailed contextual analysis for their study. Participants' cultural and language attitudes were gauged through the administration of a 5-point Arabic-language Likert-scale questionnaire based on items suggested by Gardner (1985) and Oller, Hudson and Liu (1977). Demographic details elicited included parental familiarity with English, time spent in Anglophone countries, gender, and language/s used at home. The questionnaire was administered one week after an objectives-based English test (Harris & Palmer's (1986) Comprehensive English-Language Test), with proficiency in the language examined as a potential correlate of student attitudes.

The use of this combined qualitative-quantitative approach suggests the researchers adopted a rather broad focus to their investigation; understandable, of course, given its exploratory value in this "remote corner" (p. 269) of the Gulf region. However, despite this concern with exploring some of the many facets of student attitudes in the sultanate, Fahmy and Bilton (1992) claim their seemingly wide range of interest was guided by a special concern with whether the attitudes of their Omani participants "point to any hostility or suspicion towards the English language and culture" (p. 272) based on religious and cultural resistance.

Much like the majority of studies reported in Section 2.5, however, the belief that contact with English may result in negative attitudes based on cultural conflict seemed to be largely absent from Fahmy and Bilton's (1992) work. For instance, on items regarding the use and study of English in Oman, the researchers report statements such as "At times I am afraid that by using English I will become like a foreigner" and "When I use English, I do not feel that I am Omani any more" to receive strong to moderate levels of disagreement (means of 1.53 and 1.30 respectively with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree). Moreover, on items inquiring into reasons for learning English, the researchers claim participants found gaining a better understanding of English-speaking people and their way/s of life, alongside making foreign friends, to both be rated as "important"

motivators. These attitudes were seemingly unaffected by participants' demographic features.

The only "hostility or suspicion", in fact, assigned to the student teachers in their attitudes to English-speaking peoples and cultures was furnished in the space provided for participants to add their own comments. For instance, in relation to reasons for learning English, Fahmy and Bilton (1992) state being able to "defend Islam against the criticisms of English people" (written by two respondents or about 2.7% of the total sample) and to prepare their future students to make a similar defence (five respondents or 6.75%) to be the only expression of potentially negative attitudes. This overall lack of concern with the possibility of cultural deracination was complemented by a belief that English is instrumental in both participants' personal development and the continued development of their nation.

Fahmy and Bilton's (1992) study, therefore, describes student attitudes within Oman as those of a positive acceptance based largely on the language's instrumental value. The researchers claim the fact that this finding runs contrary to the beliefs of early scholars in the Gulf due to Oman's historical freedom from foreign imperial rule. (A suggestion that seems to ignore, despite the researchers' concerns with providing a thick description of the research context, British dominance in the country – see Section 1.5.) Regardless of this apparent oversight, however, Fahmy and Bilton's research is an important step from the personal perspectives offered by early scholars in the Gulf to a more rigorous and thorough examination of the GCC citizens' attitudes towards English and its speakers. Of course, the fact that participants were studying to become future English-language teachers may account for at least some of their positive attitudes, although it is interesting to note that further studies conducted with similar samples reported far more ambiguous results.

For example, four years later in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al Haq and Smadi (1996) explicitly investigated the relationship between the increasingly prominent role of English within Saudi society and local university students' Arab-Islamic identities. The authors state their research interest was guided by personal insights into Saudi society revealing negative attitudes towards English based on a general fear that the country's efforts to modernise certain industrial and educational sectors, and the import of foreign ideas and technology this involved, inevitably

entailed “Westernisation, detachment to the country, and a source of corruption of their religious commitment” (p. 307).

In examining the nature and existence of such fears, Al Haq and Smadi (1996) designed and administered a thirty-item 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire. The instrument was administered to 2000 randomly selected Saudi undergraduate students representing every university within the country. Although specific demographic features such as gender, college of study and so on are not available, the researchers state respondents were aged between 18 and 23 with an average age of 21. One thousand, one hundred and seventy-six questionnaires were completed and returned within the month-long collection period.

One of the most immediately notable aspects of Al Haq and Smadi’s (1996) results is the seemingly mixed level of concern expressed by participants about the potentially negative outcomes of their English use. For instance, of the seventeen questionnaire items specifically focused on attitudes towards Westernisation, responses to statements such as “Learning English is an indication of Westernisation” (64.8% disagreed, while only 21.5% agreed) and “My knowledge of English makes me more prestigious socially” (65.9% agreed, 25.2% disagreed) indicate that the majority of participants believe the English language is not a vehicle of exposure to harmful foreign values to the extent that it has, in fact, become a sign of social success.

However, while Al Haq and Smadi (1996) appear to focus on such responses as an indication that learning English in Saudi Arabia is “neither is an indication of Westernisation nor entails an imitation and admiration of Western cultural values” (p. 313), the almost evenly divided opinions (30.5% agree, 38.8% disagree) about the item “I believe that there are imperialistic purposes behind the spread and promotion of English in KSA” and “English language is a threat to Arabic language in various domains” (43.5% agree, 39.6% disagree), suggest the researchers’ conclusion is not that clear-cut. Similar levels of discordance are also apparent on items focusing on the relationship between national identity and English, with responses to two items regarding the use of English in both university settings and wider society as a threat to Arab identity receiving almost identical responses of around 30 percent agreement and 50 percent disagreement.

Apart from this level of disagreement about the potentially harmful effects of English on Saudi society, one of the most notable features of Al Haq and Smadi’s

(1996) research is the inclusion of eight items directly relating to the relationship between English and respondents' attitudes based on religious concerns. Among these, the almost identical level of disagreement (69% and 68.5% consecutively) to the items "Learning English makes a Muslim less pious" and "Learning English spoils one's religious commitment", suggests that while the central role of the language in the kingdom's modernisation may be deemed a threat to both the Arabic language and Arab cultural identities, that, overall, it is not generally accepted as challenging participants' religious values. Such conclusions are lent support by the 82.1 percent of respondents agreeing that learning English was necessary to preach Islam to non-Muslims.

Al Haq and Smadi's (1996) research appears to simultaneously confirm and contradict the findings reported by Fahmy and Bilton (1992). In particular, the fact that between thirty and forty-four percent of participants believed English in Saudi Arabia was an expression of Western imperialism and was, perhaps subsequently, a threat to the Arabic language, stands in marked contrast to the lack of similar concerns to appear in the Omani study. However, relatively few of the Saudi respondents interpreted this cultural and national threat as encompassing their religious lives; a result that sits comfortably alongside Fahmy and Bilton's findings. What Al Haq and Smadi's investigation lacks in detail about the nature of the sample and the psychometric qualities of the instrument employed, it makes up for with the clarity it allows in separately examining attitudes towards the English language based on nationalistic and religious concerns.

Such a division was perhaps encouraged by the "intensely religious" nature of Saudi Arabian society, in which Islam, according to the authors, has been more influential than "anywhere else in the Islamic world" (p. 307). This apparently intense religiosity may explain why the heavy focus on Islamic, as opposed to Arab Muslim, identity is for the most part lacking from the research that followed in other Gulf nations. However, even when the focus returns to a more mixed conceptualisation of attitudes based on cultural-religious identity, it is notable that the mixed attitudes to English featured here become an increasingly prominent part of the research for the next fifteen years.

In the small island kingdom of Bahrain, Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) conducted a comparative study of 65 College of Arts Arabic- and English-majors looking at, among a number of different concerns, participant attitudes to the English language

and British culture. The researchers' primary concern was a comparison of attitudes between the two majors, with the assumption that as freshmen engaged in a year of compulsory English-language studies before entering their colleges proper, extraneous variables affecting participant attitudes could be held to a minimum.

Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) report that the English-major participants had significantly more positive attitudes to both the English language and to British people than their Arabic-major counterparts. This study is therefore one of the first emanating from the Gulf to detail variations in attitudes based on future college of study. However, the real significance of this study to the current research lies beyond the strict confines of the comparison-bound methodology itself, and can be found in an area the researchers merely allude to – the nature of these attitudes themselves.

More specifically, participants in Al-Ansari and Lori's (1999) investigation were required to record responses to a series of questions regarding attitudes to learning English and foreign cultures on a five point Likert-scale. Responses ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In examining the scales in more detail, it becomes apparent the cut-off point between negative and positive attitudes for the "Attitude to Language" scale, for instance, is 15. However, on this scale the English majors reported a mean value of 14.51 (with a standard deviation of 3.09) and the Arabic majors of 12.41 (*SD* = 3.33). Moreover, the "Attitude to British Culture" scale reports a middle point of 10, with the former group's mean being 11.12 (*SD* = 3.03) and the Arabic majors with 8.41 (*SD* = 3.89).

Although Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) do not examine these findings in any way that falls outside the realm of a direct comparison between college majors, the mean values reported here suggest that the ostensibly positive attitudes the English-majors have towards the English language and British people are only positive by comparison. That is, they are, when held against the scale on which they were measured, neutral (with means ranging from around .49 below the median value to 1.11 above) or very mildly positive at best. The Arabic-majors also hold fairly neutral attitudes, though these could also be interpreted as slightly negative views of English and its speakers.

Moving beyond Al-Ansari and Lori's (1999) comparative focus to place their findings in such a light, therefore, provides support to claims by scholars such as El-Sayed (1988) that Arab learners of English naturally experience negative attitudes to

the language due to its perceived cultural and ideological dominance in the region. Although this sentiment was widely reported in the work of early practitioner-writers in the field, Al-Ansari and Lori may, if only inadvertently, offer one of the first pieces of research from the GCC to more fully support this supposition. In fact, even though the researchers themselves did not draw such a conclusion from their data, it is interesting to note the suggestion of negative attitudes towards the English language and its speakers based on its cultural and religious concomitants is one that would increasingly find support in the Gulf-based research that followed.

In Kuwait, for example, Malallah (2000) distributed surveys to 409 undergraduate participants studying at the national university's Language Centre. Participants were overwhelmingly Kuwaiti (about 94%), and predominantly female (more than 83%). Of the three colleges represented, the English-medium College of Science and the Arabic-medium College of Arts contributed 34.95% of participants each, while the remaining 30.1% were enrolled the College of Shari'a (Islamic law), naturally consisting of Arabic-medium schools. The information Malallah gathered from the Arabic-language questionnaire is wide-ranging and counts some 195 variables. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, the items of relevance refer to student attitudes to the English language and native speakers of English and whether they believe English learning to be a threat to the Islamic religion and their Arabic identities.

Malallah (2000) offers some interesting results. For instance, on the item "The English language will harm the Arabic language", a little more than a quarter of respondents stated some form of agreement, while some 57.9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. A similar level of agreement was reported in response to "Learning English will Westernise Arabs" (27.2% agree versus 56.3% disagree), although this latter result seems slightly incongruous with the mere 6.7% of participants who agreed that "Learning English means gaining habits that are not required by Arabs". Moreover, only 12.1% of students agreed with the item "Learning English will harm the Islamic religion".

While at first glance these findings might suggest the ambivalence to English within the Gulf implied by Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) may be little more than just that – an implication - when Malallah (2000) compared students' attitudes according to demographic traits, important differences began to emerge. First, in following the Bahraini research and comparing participants across colleges, Malallah reported

students in the English-medium College of Science to hold the most favourable attitudes towards the English language and native English speakers, while the "very religious" Arabic-medium Shari'a students held negative attitudes. This negativity, Malallah claims, is due to an association among these participants of English with assumed Western predilections for "alcohol consumption, infidelity, and promiscuity" (p. 36).

Moreover, when Malallah (2000) examined these attitudes in terms of the number of visits made to English-speaking countries and the amount of time spent living or travelling abroad, she found participants with a high level of exposure to Western people and cultures – that is, those who had spent between four weeks and six months in English-speaking nations (or about 13% of the sample) – to hold the strongest desire to learn English, to view the language as prestigious, and to hold favourable attitudes to the English language and its speakers. Malallah accounts for this finding by suggesting an increased amount of exposure to Western cultures offers more chances to communicate with English-speaking foreigners, which, in turn, results in a subsequent increase in student confidence levels. How this relates to the possibility of greater exposure to the Western "habits" described above, however, is not detailed.

Leaving this point aside, perhaps one of the most insightful findings to come from Malallah's (2000) research is the relationship between students' intended post-graduation plans and their attitudes towards English native speakers. It is noteworthy, of course, that although Malallah reported the negative attitudes of the College of Shari'a students towards English native speakers that, overall, these students did not display significant differences with their Arts and Science colleagues about their opinions regarding the potential harm English may cause Islam. However, when dividing respondents into those who intended to use English after graduation (that is, those who planned to take jobs requiring a knowledge of English and who wanted to pursue post-graduate studies in English-speaking countries) and those who did not, it was the latter group that displayed negative attitudes based on a common belief English will lead to the Westernisation of Arabs and will subsequently harm Islam.

This finding is significant for, in many ways, the suggestion students with greater current and intended future exposure to English tend to hold positive attitudes towards the language and its speakers, while those with the least present or

future exposure express concerns about the negative repercussions of exposure to the language, suggests a potential source of societal tension. Of course, the gender bias of the investigation needs to be taken into account, even if it could be argued to very roughly represent a general gender imbalance in Kuwaiti society. However, Malallah (2000) nonetheless presents a potential division in attitudes towards English and the West in Kuwaiti society in which some members have made an active and premeditated decision to eschew Western influence in their lives due to its potentially harmful effects, while others are willing to engage with English-speakers and associated cultures and hold little concern about the potential to alienate them from their Arab and Islamic roots.

The following year, Al-Khwaiter (2001) outlined the apparent failure of communicative teaching methods in high school classrooms across Qatar as the impetus behind an exploration of the factors associated with this lack of success. As a focal point for his wide-ranging research, Al-Khwaiter explicitly acknowledged the potential for culturally-informed mismatch between the Western ideologies underlying the communicative classroom hallmarks of more egalitarian classrooms with smaller power distances between students and teachers, on the one hand, and the more paternalistic and hierarchical orientations of Arab English-language teachers and their students on the other. Al-Khwaiter's investigation into this potential for conflict between these two disparate perspectives sought data from a variety of sources and through a variety of methods, including semi-structured interviews, closed-item questionnaires and classroom observations. Participants in the study were divided into three main groups: male and female high school students of English, male and female English-language teachers and male head teachers.

It is perhaps due primarily to this broad scope of investigative concern that Al-Khwaiter's (2001) work offers an interesting glimpse of public school English-language education in Qatar at the turn of the century. However, the applicability of this study to the current research lies not in its overriding concern with a multi-perspective evaluation of communicative English-language teaching in Qatari high schools, but rather with the attitudes towards the English language and its culture/s reported by these students, in conjunction with questionnaire items relating to Arab English teachers' attitudes towards their professions.

In specific relation to the former, Al-Khwaiter (2001) administered a 37-item 5-point Likert response key questionnaire of the researcher's own design to 587

students (298 male and 289 female) across 12 gender-segregated schools in Qatar. This student-specific questionnaire featured 6 scales, although only the three scales of "Attitudes towards the English Language", "Instrumental Motivation" and "Integrative Motivation" are of direct relevance here. Items featured on each of these scales contained a number of Qatar- and Gulf-specific references that make them especially applicable to the current research. For example, although the integrative and instrumental scales Al-Khwaiter developed owe a debt to Gardner's (1985) AMTB, items such as "Learning English will help me pursue my future studies" (instrumental), "Learning English is important since it helps me to know the culture of English speaking people" (integrative) and "Learning English is of little benefit since it is part of Western traditions" (integrative) contain references to some of the cultural and societal exigencies associated with English's widespread use in the Gulf region that have helped frame the current research.

The final scale examined here contains a number of general statements about participants' attitudes towards English, such as "I like learning English" and "Learning English is a waste of time". Although Al-Khwaiter (2001) does not offer individual analysis of items on his questionnaires, composite scores on these three scales indicate whether student participants hold positive attitudes towards the English language ("Attitudes towards English" scale), whether they value the language for the social and material benefits it can offer (Gardner's instrumental motivation), and whether they are concerned with forming a deeper understanding of, and perhaps even a stronger bond with, those who use English as a first language (integrative motivation).

Results on these three scales were examined for potential relationships with the demographic variables of gender, parents' highest level of educational achievement, school location and nationality. In addition, 66 Arab-born English-language teachers (36 male, 30 female) were also administered a separate teacher-specific 40-item questionnaire with the same 5-point response key. Unfortunately for the sake of the current research, the questionnaire these teacher participants responded to did not feature scales related to either their attitudes towards the English language or their levels of integrative motivation, instead focusing on such areas as teacher training needs and the evaluation of government-published textbooks. However, one scale regarding teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession itself, is nonetheless of special relevance here.

In relation to student results on the three questionnaire scales of concern here, Al-Khwaiter (2001) reported positive attitudes towards the English language and high levels of instrumental and integrative motivation across all featured demographic groups. For example, scores for male and female participants on the "Attitudes towards the English Language" scale (M = 4.29), "Instrumental Motivation" (M = 4.06) and "Integrative Motivation" (M = 4.12) were all above four on a scale where 1 represented negative attitudes/low levels of motivation and 5 positive attitudes/high levels of motivation. Composite scale means above four were also reported for each of the three scales according to participants' parental levels of educational attainment, school location and nationality. However, within each of these demographic groups, significant differences between subgroups were also reported.

For example, in terms of gender, Al-Khwaiter (2001) reported female students to have a significantly higher level of integrative motivation (a mean of 4.28 with a standard deviation of 0.73) than their male counterparts (M = 4.07, SD = 0.69). Significant differences on this scale were also reported based on participants' fathers' levels of educational attainment, with six differences between the subgroups of illiterate, literature, primary, preparatory, secondary and university level education. The biggest difference between these groups was for participants whose fathers had received a university level education (M = 4.41, SD = 0.59) and those whose fathers' educations were confined to the primary level (M = 3.8, SD = 0.84). Similar differences in participants' levels of integrative motivation were also reported to occur between five subgroups according to mothers' educational qualifications, with significant differences reported, for instance, between participants whose mothers were illiterate (M = 3.91, SD = 0.67) and those whose mothers had obtained either high school (M = 4.38, SD = 0.59) or university-level certificates (M = 4.37, SD = 0.60).

Al-Khwaiter (2001) also reported significantly higher means on the "Integrative Motivation" scale for inner-city students (M = 4.32, SD = 0.57) than "outer-city" students (M = 4.01, SD = 0.82) and for non-Qatari students (M = 4.32, SD = 0.65) versus Qatari nationals (M = 4.10, SD = 0.74). Moreover, similar patterns were also displayed across the other two scales relating to attitudes towards English and instrumental motivation. For example, although gender was not found to have a significant relationship with either of these scales, much like the results for

integrative motivation reported above, participants' parental levels of education, school location and nationality were all found to have significant relationships with the degree to which participants' either expressed positive attitudes towards the English language or their level of instrumental motivation.

Although Al-Khwaiter (2001) did report a large number of significant differences in attitudes based on demographic variables, it is necessary to restate here that these differences are based on degree of agreement between participants, and not on direction of participants' attitudes. That is, all composite scales means explored here suggest positive attitudes in the areas under investigation. In fact, although Al-Khwaiter does not offer the calculations himself, an examination of the four demographic variables of gender, parental level of educational attainment, school location, and nationality by the three questionnaire scales reported here reveals that the lowest composite mean appearing in the study is 4.02 while the highest is 4.34. These results, therefore, suggest that, while statistically significant differences between subgroups on most of these scales did indeed exist, overall the student participants in this study held very favourable attitudes towards the English language coupled with strong levels of both instrumental and integrative motivation.

Moreover, although the teacher questionnaire was largely concerned with such issues as teacher training needs and perceptions of the utility of communicative teaching approaches in the classroom, Al-Khwaiter (2001) also reported largely positive attitudes towards English-language teaching as a profession with composite means for this scale by gender (M = 4.07, SD = 0.58), years experience (M = 4.11, SD = 0.56) and level of qualifications (M = 4.18, SD = 0.48) again all being above four. Unlike the results reported for student participants above, however, none of the three demographic variables were found to have a significant relationship with these Arab English teachers' attitudes towards their professions.

Al-Khwaiter's (2001) research, therefore, offers a glimpse of public secondary school education in Qatar more than a decade ago, in which students possessed almost universally positive attitudes towards the English language combined with an understanding of its utilitarian value and associated social and/or cultural worth. In addition, the English-language teachers in Al-Khwaiter's study, despite their backgrounds from disparate Arab nations such as Egypt and Jordan, all appeared to possess positive attitudes towards their professions regardless of their qualifications, years of experience, or gender.

The almost overwhelmingly positive nature of these attitudes may be due to a number of factors, including the desire of at least the teaching participants to display themselves and their working/school environments in a positive light, concern, at least amongst the teacher participants, about damaging career prospects, or, as Al-Khwaiter (2001) himself claims, a genuine regard for what is a high status language widely "regarded as the first official foreign language in the country" (p. 2).

Related to these concerns is the somewhat questionable reliability of the scales Al-Khwaiter (2001) developed for this research, with, for example, two scales removed from the research due to reported Cronbach alpha reliability levels of .09 and .08. In relation to the four scales across the student- and teacher-versions of the questionnaire featured here, however, these figures are slightly more acceptable with alpha levels .48 for the two scales related to instrumental and integrative motivation, .58 for the teachers' questionnaire scale regarding attitudes towards the teaching profession, and .70 for the scale concerning student attitudes towards English.

Despite potential concerns related to these relatively low alpha levels, however, Al-Khwaiter (2001) offers one of the few pieces of research to emerge from Qatar that features an examination of student attitudes towards the English language and its associated culture/s. Moreover, this research is notable for bringing Arab English-language teachers to the forefront of an area that is, to this day, still largely dominated by investigations of university students' attitudes.

Findlow (2006) elaborates upon the concept of division between those who have access to English and those who do not outlined in Malallah (2000) by describing the wide-scale structural "bifurcation" of society in the United Arab Emirates. For instance, of the three state-sponsored universities from which she drew participants for a qualitative investigation of student attitudes towards the prevalence of English in higher education, Findlow notes that two (Zayed University and the Higher Colleges of Education) are predominantly English-medium institutions, while the third (UAE University) offers instruction almost exclusively in Arabic. It is no coincidence, states Findlow, that the former are deemed by students to equip them with an "international" outlook and skills valuable in the marketplace through courses offered in the colleges of business and science. While, on the other hand, the UAE University, with its policy of Arabic instruction, focuses more on "public service" type careers including education in Shari'a, Islamic studies and

teaching, and thus represents a counter-balance of traditional values and cultural maintenance to the English-medium universities.

This division in higher education in the United Arab Emirates, according to Findlow (2006), however, is only a small part of the picture. The researcher uses personal experience gained from a long career in higher education in the Gulf combined with document analysis of government and university records to present Emirati society as one in which Arabic, with its connotations of tradition, nostalgia, religion, and service to others, dominates the personal and governmental sphere, while English - associated with internationalism, material prestige, and secularism - is related to the world of private enterprise and personal enrichment. This division Findlow presents in the Arabic-English dichotomies of childhood-adulthood, school-university, government-business, and home-work, thus suggesting a widespread and entrenched division of the roles performed by either language across the Gulf.

After acknowledging this division in both the UAE and the Gulf at large, Findlow (2006) held semi-structured interviews in English or Arabic and engaged in correspondence with 66 students, teachers and educational administrators in the three government universities mentioned above between 1997 and 2000. In addition, she also administered a largely open-ended survey in both languages to 500 students of these institutions of which 340 were analysed for the featured study.

Analysis of Findlow's (2006) data provided some intriguing, if perhaps contradictory, results. To begin, on an item inquiring whether respondents preferred to be taught in English or Arabic, 50% stated a preference for English while 22% preferred Arabic. When analysing the accompanying question regarding reasons for these preferences, Findlow discovered a general correlation between preference for Arabic and nationalistic, ideological sentiments including notions of freeing the UAE from dependence on foreign labour and leanings towards pan-Arab nationalism. Typical of responses here, around 22% stated a preference for Arabic not just because it was "rooted in heritage" (p. 27) and tradition, but, in keeping with Malallah (2000), because they also saw English as an "assault" on Arab culture.

This finding speaks of a growing animosity towards the place of English within Emirati society. However, it is important to temper this supposition with Findlow's (2006) statement that, despite the options of "Arabic" and "English" on the item regarding preferred language of instruction, a full 28% of participants pencilled in "both Arabic and English" as a response. That is, nearly one third of

respondents were willing to ignore the constraints of the survey to express a desire to receive their educations in both English and Arabic. What this number might have been if "both English and Arabic" appeared as an option on the questionnaire must remain a matter of speculation. However, that participants were willing to take such a step suggests, at the very least, some strongly held beliefs.

Another opportunity apparently lost in Findlow's (2006) research is the lack of reported relationships between attitudes and, if not student colleges and majors, then at least the universities in which participants were enrolled. Studies by Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) and Malallah (2000) showed important relationships between a college's language of instruction and attitudes towards English and native English speakers. In this light, it is perhaps not too much of a stretch to assume respondents in Findlow's study who perceived English as a cultural and religious threat may largely be concentrated in the College of Shari'a of the Arabic-medium UAE University. Or perhaps, they were that quarter of respondents who saw no future use for English once they left university and had subsequently made a conscious decision to shun it.

It may be that this lack of data specifying in what way participants "threatened" by the prevalence of English in Emirati society differed from their colleagues, combined with the 28% "Arabic and English" write-in, which leads Findlow (2006) to claim a kind of linguistic-cultural dualism exists as a defining element of the United Arab Emirates. The researcher offers the example of the young Emirati students assimilating the often seemingly opposed roles demanded by filial piety at home and international-flavoured pursuits involving, for instance, members of the opposite sex, available in wider society. Of course, the concept of a culturally dualistic society in which people move, with varying degrees of ease, between societal roles is one which lends itself to the concept of "identity shift" between a more Western and a more Arab outlook.

However, the potential that the bifurcation of UAE society Findlow (2006) uses to contextualise her research has also caused, or is at least a reflection of, a growing division between those who seek to benefit from the place of English in Emirati society, and those who perceive its prevalence as an increasing threat to their identities, religion and even the identity of their nation, cannot be entirely discounted. In many ways, the trends described in the above studies lend themselves towards notions of English as a "social cleavage" reported by scholars such as

Rahman (2005), where the division between those who use English pragmatically, those who adopt Western habits and norms due to exposure to the language, and those who reject it altogether, is a matter of growing concern.

In Findlow's (2006) own words, the positive attitudes associated with the posited "acceptance" of the place of English in the UAE by a certain number of participants may be subject to political or socioeconomic change, which could "at any time threaten the balance and bring about a rather different set of feelings about the prevalence of English" (p.33). That Findlow's research, although not published until 2006, was undertaken in the years immediately before the event of September 11, 2001 and the resultant American-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, offers the possibility that further research could shed more light on the apparent complexity of attitudes towards the English language in the GCC reported thus far in the literature.

Still within the United Arab Emirates, Clarke (2007) examined attitudes to the place of English within Emirati society by conducting a study of female student teachers enrolled in the English-major strand of an English-medium university's Bachelor of Education program. Clarke notes this program is marked by the two sub-strands of "personal language development", concerned with subjects including grammar and syntax, and "understanding language", with its focus on critical literacies such as the social and political implications of English as an international language and its ties to globalisation.

A qualitative research design was employed, with focus group interviews and student-led online conversations recorded and analysed over a two-year period. Clarke (2007) summarises his analysis of student attitudes towards the language as being associated with one of three main categories: 1) a naïve celebration of English, 2) nostalgia for Islamic-Arab purism, and 3) a pragmatic engagement with the language's socio-political implications. Leaving the first category momentarily aside, response two encapsulates a view in which English and its concomitant cultural values are deemed a threat to Arab-Islamic identity. Much like respondents in the studies already cited, participants who were deemed to hold attitudes typifying this response saw English as a purveyor of foreign cultural values and expressed doubt about the ability or, indeed, willingness of their future students to identity and resist such values.

This response appears the antithesis of response one in which the student teachers accepted English in an unquestioning way despite exposure to ideas and techniques critiquing the place of English within the United Arab Emirates. That attitudes related to this response were dominant among Clarke's (2007) female student teachers in spite of their study of the forces of globalisation and the historical and economic factors that have placed English as the world's current lingua franca may be explained, to a degree, by the empowering role English plays in these women's lives by allowing them to pursue a career acceptable to most Emirati families and thus freeing them from some of the demands of home life.

The third response of pragmatic engagement is one that was first explicitly reported in the Gulf by Fahmy and Bilton (1992). While Clarke (2007) fails to offer exact figures about response rates associated with each category, he claims a "significant minority" displayed critically constructive attitudes to English in a way promoted by the course aims. Attitudes related to this response are perhaps best summarised by one participant, Salma, whose statement,

> I don't believe in sheltering our students from western culture and I don't believe in making them accept it without questioning. What we should do is show them the bad and good of it and provide them with the knowledge and thinking skills that they need to make their own judgement and choose what's useful and reject what's not (p. 588)

signifies a heightened understanding of the need to apply critical analytical skills to her future teaching practice while also engendering such values in her students.

Clarke (2007) appears to rest on this "minority" as offering proof that the goals of the education degree program, of which he lead the development, are slowly being met. Moreover, it is this response which fills him with hope that the unofficial policy of bilingualism in the Emirates can be achieved in a way that challenges the balance of the dominant-dominated dualism often associated with English in a second or foreign language environment elsewhere in the world. However, it is still worthy to note that despite the English majors selected by these student teachers and their exposure to a critical pedagogy seldom in evidence in other teacher-training programs - let alone other university majors - around the region, that perhaps as many respondents displayed attitudes indicative of outright resistance to English as engaged with the language pragmatically. This research may therefore add further support to the notion of growing levels of negative attitudes towards English within

the GCC region, even among those who seek to benefit from the language in the medium- to long-term.

In Saudi Arabia in 2008, Elyas prefaced his research by acknowledging the potential division caused by educational reformers and proponents of an increased role for English within the Saudi education system and those opposing Western interference in education in the Gulf monarchies. Proponents of educational reform cited by Elyas included members of the Saudi Royal family, including Princes Khalid Al-Faisal and Turki Al-Faisal who, in 2004 and 2006 respectively, offered public support for the new curricula allowing a more prominent role for English in Saudi schools and universities as a counter to the issue of extremism and violence. In opposition, Elyas offers the case of a group of 61 Saudi professionals, including university professors and administrators, signing a declaration stating that the increased role of English in education, especially as it comes at the cost of time spent in religious education, will lead to the Westernization of Saudi society and thus endanger Islamic values.

Within the charged nature of this debate, Elyas (2008) stated an intention to investigate the "actual impact and attitudes towards this new trend of more English culture and ideology and less Islamization" (p. 40) in Saudi Arabia. In doing so, he administered a 12-item Likert-scale questionnaire to 65 male, English major, teacher-trainees at King Abdullah Aziz University in the port city of Jeddah. The average age of respondents was 21.

Despite the intent of Elyas's (2008) questionnaire, only about one-third of the featured survey items designed for the research related directly to attitudes towards the place of English in Saudi society. These are "My English textbooks contain some alien or taboo information" - asking about perceptions of the cultural appropriateness of the New English Curricula textbooks – and the two items "I believe that the English culture should be separated from learning English" and "Learning English language and culture is a must for an English major", which both seek to address attitudes to the oft-heard call for "Western" culture to be removed from English-medium classrooms. A fourth item of note in Elyas's study is "I believe that there is an imperialistic purpose in learning English in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" - inquiring about perceptions of mostly American manipulation of the Saudi education system to meet foreign economic and military objectives.

Responses to these items paint a picture of Saudi students somewhat at odds with the portrait of the Omani, Bahraini, Kuwaiti and Emirati students described above. For example, of the 47 participants to complete the surveys, about 49% either agreed or strongly agreed that their textbooks contain alien or taboo information. However, responses are almost perfectly divided (34% agree and 36% disagree) on whether the "English culture" to which this taboo information is ascribed should be separated from language learning. Seemingly contradicting this disagreement, a full 74% of respondents believed it to be vital for English majors to learn about Western culture, while a clear majority (a little over 87%) saw no imperialistic purpose in English's place within the Saudi education system.

Elyas (2008) uses these findings to state that most participants hold positive attitudes towards English as neither the language itself nor the Western culture/s associated with it appear to threaten students' sense of Islamic or Arab values. He supports this claim by stating Saudi students' cultural and religious identities are strong enough for the Western ideologies contained in English-language learning not to represent a threat. Unfortunately, Elyas returns to the early era of writing on the topic by largely basing this assumption on his own experience, and fails to inquire directly about the relationship between English and Islamic identity from his participants' perspectives.

Overall, then, although Elyas (2008) claims to have found no signs of a negative attitudes towards English based on the potential for tension between the language itself and Arab Muslim traditional values and beliefs. Despite this, it is important to note the limited focus of the study and its context-specific nature, in addition to the probability respondents, as English-language majors, perhaps shared more favourable attitudes to English and Western culture/s than other students in the kingdom.

However, perhaps the key to understanding the neat fit between Elyas's (2008) findings and official Saudi government education policy, comes in the author's retelling of the story of the "Saudi researcher" in 2002 sentenced to a thousand lashes for the dual transgression of publishing a study about the new Saudi curriculum in addition to suggesting the timing of the Muslim fast of Ramadan be based on astrology rather than moon sightings. In the retelling of this news report to reiterate the difficulties of accessing Saudi schools for linguistic research, Elyas perhaps inadvertently alludes to the lack of genuine academic freedom in the

kingdom. Perhaps this may explain why so little time was given to in his study to exploring the issue of "taboo" information participants claimed they encountered in their studies, and why other, seemingly more appropriate, items regarding participant attitudes suggested by the previous research were absent from Elyas's questionnaire.

Despite concerns that these issues may have influenced the mostly favourable attitudes Elyas (2008) reports towards the English language and its associated cultures, it is important to note that in 2010 Randall and Samimi presented a similar set of findings in the relatively liberal Emirate of Dubai. Randall and Samimi took their investigation beyond the confines of university campuses to research the attitudes of 330 police officers voluntarily enrolled in an English-language learning program at the Dubai Police Academy.

Respondents were predominantly male (87%) non-commissioned officers (74%), and were classified by the researchers as intermediate (50%), elementary (41%) or advanced (9%) level learners. Fifty-four percent of respondents were local Emiratis, while the remainder were "non-locals" of unspecified origins. However, perhaps the most interesting aspect of the sample, apart from participants' professional allegiance, was the mixed levels of education achievement featured. That is, unlike the overwhelming focus on undergraduates in most of the above Gulf studies, only 29% of respondents here had completed university. A further 47% held high school certificates, while the remaining 24% did not finish secondary school. In addition to the somewhat unique composition of the sample, the authors also added an interest in whether respondents viewed English as Dubai's de facto lingua franca to their concern with indications of negative attitudes towards the language.

In seeking to explore these two areas, Randall and Samimi (2010) analysed the results of a needs analysis survey the authors state was designed primarily to assist in the formation of police training courses in English-language skills. The survey was not, Randall and Samimi reiterate, specifically created for the research. However, they maintain that both of their research questions could be addressed by information gathered from six survey items featured on the original instrument. These items consist of three open-ended questions in addition to three statements with a five-point Likert-scale response key with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Of these six items, those relating to the status of English in Dubai included questions such as "What are the practical situations in which you need to use English?" and "I think English has become the most important language

in Dubai". Those related to the existence of negative attitudes are less apparent, with perhaps the single statement "I am opposed to using other languages in my work. I think we should only use Arabic" being the most directly-focused on the topic.

Unfortunately, the inherent risks of using data generated from a needs analysis survey to address these specific research questions soon become apparent in Randall and Samimi's (2010) work. For instance, despite the explicit question of whether respondents view English as Dubai's lingua franca, this concern is soon overtaken by an almost exclusive focus on the categorisation of reasons why participants are undertaking a course of English-language study. The nine categories of why these police officers voluntarily pursue their English-language studies include work needs/career requirements (33%), daily life/social life (24%) and so on. It is true, of course, that the fact English is found useful for work and pleasure by more than half of participants is related to its status as the Emirate's common language. However, Randall and Samimi do not directly examine the relationship between the reasons respondents have for studying English and that language's position in society. In fact, apart from the sample response "It is our society's lingua franca which means constant interaction in English" (p. 47), the first research question regarding participants' views of the place of English in Emirati society is only barely touched upon.

Moving to the second research question related to the existence of negative attitudes towards English among participants, Randall and Samimi (2010) claim that of the 330 participants, only one displayed any negative attitudes towards the language. This negativity was discovered in response to the open-ended question inquiring about reasons for taking the English-language course, and involves a respondent appending the adverb "unfortunately" to a reply about the place of English as the world's international language. Moreover, returning to the questionnaire statement regarding opposition to the use of languages other than Arabic at work, Randall and Samimi claim 18% of respondents did, in fact, agree that they were against the use of other language in their jobs. This figure represents around 57 respondents in total (21% were neutral and 61% disagreed with the statement), a surprisingly large number given all participants were either current or former students in a voluntary English-language program. That the reasons associated with this apparent opposition are not available again highlights the limitations of the questionnaire employed. Nonetheless, the researchers conclude by

focusing on the overall positive attitudes of respondents to both the English language and its place in the Emirates by stating that "there would seem to be an underlying pragmatic imperative underlying the use of English in the Dubai police force and, by implication, in the UAE in general" (p. 49). In this way, the positive attitudes reported here are again associated with the pragmatic value access to the English language allows.

Moving across the border from Dubai to that emirate's relatively conservative neighbour, Sharjah, the often-cited British-Muslim scholar Karmani (2010) recently submitted a doctoral dissertation about the socialising effects of English- and Arabic-medium education on students at the state-run University of Sharjah. The paper, perhaps not surprisingly given the nature of the author's earlier writing on the topic (see Karmani, 2005a, 2005b), takes as its context post-September 11 American-led calls for educational reforms across the Arab Muslim world. More specifically, Karmani (2010) seeks to address five research questions about the potential socialising effects of English and Arabic as languages of instruction. Of these five questions, the following related exclusively to English-medium education are most relevant here:

1. How do Arab Muslim students at a Gulf Arab university perceive the societal effects of English-medium education on Arab societies?

2. To what extent do Arab Muslim students at a Gulf Arab university feel that an English-medium education socialises students in distinct and noticeable ways?

3. To what extent do Arab Muslim students at a Gulf Arab university feel that an English-medium education has subtractive socialising effects on students?

In seeking to address these questions, Karmani (2010) administered a self-designed 21-item Arabic-language questionnaire to 365 students from the University of Sharjah. These students represented four of the university's colleges – the Arabic-medium College of Law and College of Shari'a and Islamic Studies, and the English-medium College of Engineering and College of Business. Following analysis of questionnaire data, four semi-structured group interviews featuring six interviewees each were held. The sample Karmani drew, in spite of the particular demographics of the research site in which 65% of the student body were female, was entirely male. The ethnic composition of the sample, however, despite the

apparent dominance of non-Emirati Arabs in at least the group interview stage, was not disclosed.

Regarding the first of Karmani's (2010) research questions about the broad societal effects of English-medium education in the UAE, the author reported overwhelming support to the statement "The Arabic language is the most suitable medium of instruction for Arab students at university-level education in the Arab world" (69.6% agreed or strongly agreed compared to 19.8% who disagreed or strongly disagreed). Despite initial appearances of very strong support, however, this finding is tempered by the 56.1% of respondents who stated English was the most suitable language of instruction for "modern" tertiary subjects including business studies and information technology. Moreover, when examining these two items in relation to participants' colleges of study, Karmani states almost half (49.4%) of English-medium students agreed Arabic should assume a primary role within the Arab world, while 89.6% of Arabic-medium respondents expressed some form of support.

Closely related to these items, two items inquiring as to whether English-medium instruction was beneficial or harmful to Arab students appear to offer support for Findlow's (2006) bifurcation of Emirati society. For instance, in response to the first of these two items – "The expansion of the English language as a medium of instruction at Arab universities is ultimately beneficial to modern day Arab societies" – some 55.4% of respondents stated some form of agreement, with little more than a quarter (28%) disagreeing. In response to the item about whether the English language was ultimately harmful, however, 45.6% agreed while under one third (33.1%) of students disagreed. Karmani (2010) notes the occasionally heated expression of this tension in his group interviews, relating this to what he describes as a general feeling running through the group sessions that Arab societies were under threat from a "wide-scale cultural onslaught" (p. 86) of which English was but a single part. This frustration is perhaps best summarised by Mahmoud, a Palestinian business student, whose belief that "Arab culture is disappearing… disappearing. Sometimes I feel I'm not living in an Arab country. Some public places now they don't even speak Arabic. It's having a big effect on our culture. A bad effect" (p. 86) underlines a much greater level of concern about the negative influence of English on Arab societies than expressed elsewhere in the research presented here.

In relation to the second research question – that of the socialising effects of English-medium education – Karmani (2010) again notes an almost even split (46.6% agree, 38.1% disagree) about whether English-medium education makes learners more receptive to Western cultural values such as notions of freedom, democracy and human rights. It is noteworthy here that the extent of this divide is also apparent when respondents' language of instruction is taken into account, with almost as many English-medium students (48.1%) agreeing with the statement as Arabic-medium learners (45.1%). Despite the apparently contentious nature of the concept of exposure to English opening learners to Western worldviews, Karmani notes that during the interview stage the "Western" cultural concepts of human rights and so on appeared not to be clearly understood by respondents. When the item was given a more accessible façade with references to Anglo-American movies, music, TV shows and so on in subsequent item, however, similar levels of agreement (50.2%) and disagreement (33.9%) to the initial item were also recorded.

Finally, in relation to the potentially subtractive socialising effects of English-medium education in the Arab world, Karmani (2010) notes only 22.4% (18.8% of English-medium, and 26% of Arabic-medium, participants) believe exposure to the language encourages learners to hold more favourable attitudes towards US foreign policy in the Middle East. Despite this apparent lack of concern, however, a little more than half of respondents (52.2%) concur that the more Arab students are exposed to the English language, the more alienated they will be from Arabic-Islamic cultural traditions.

Karmani (2010) uses these findings to call for both an increased awareness among teachers and administrators about the socialising role of English-medium education in the Middle East, and for a realignment of language education policies to bring them more into line with the values and ideals of local and regional communities. In at least this final suggestion, with its accompanying justification that, as English is a cause of societal division, it is time to decrease its importance in favour of Arabic-medium education, it is perhaps easy to discern the hand of the author already known for supporting a decreased role for English across the Arab world (Karmani, 2005a, 2005b). This stance could easily be argued as a rational option. However, certain key omissions give these calls a sense of being, in many ways, foredrawn conclusions.

First of these is the lack of clarity about to whom, exactly, Karmani (2010) intends to apply these findings. For instance, his decision to focus exclusively on male learners seems, given the research context, unusual at best. After all, Karmani himself states males comprise a mere 35% of the University of Sharjah's student population. Moreover, across all tertiary institutions across the UAE, male students make up fewer than 30% of all university graduates (Hamdan, 2012). One of Karmani's justifications for this choice to focus on men was the belief that the drive to socialise young people in the Arab Muslim world has been mostly directed towards them. However, this claim is apparently contradicted by the author's own detailed analysis of the way reforms have been implemented across almost every level of the education systems in the Gulf – a system that is dominated in the UAE by female learners.

Even if the exclusive focus on male learners was more credibly justified, however, the lack of detail about the cultural composition of the sample also raises a number of issues. In particular, the inclusion of the phrase in Karmani's (2010) title, "with particular reference to the United Arab Emirates" implies, at the very least, an equal representation of the "sizable number of Emirati students" (p. 65) from the research site. However, whether Emirati learners were included in any significant and representative number is difficult to discern from the available information.

In particular, only five out of the 24 students selected for the group interview stages were, in fact, Emirati. Moreover, of the quotes from the group interviews presented in Karmani's (2010) findings about English-medium education, only one is ascribed to an Emirati learner, in comparison to between three and seven quotations each from participants from the non-Gulf States of Palestine, Syria, the Sudan, Yemen and Libya. This selection of interview excerpts, perhaps not surprisingly given the often negative perceptions of US foreign policy in the region, tends to highlight the potential dangers of English-medium education. This heavy representation of non-Emirati learners, especially if it extends to the entirety of the sample, carries with it the danger of not only skewing the results presented here, but also leaves in doubt the veracity of Karmani's claims that his findings point to general "tendencies among university students in the Arab Gulf region" (p. 80).

Finally, among the most recent GCC studies to appear, Alresheed (2012) specifically examined how the attitudes of Saudi Arabian school teachers of English towards the English language affected their teaching practices. To achieve this,

Alresheed distributed on-line a three-part closed-response key questionnaire consisting of 24 items to 51 Saudi teachers of which 36 were currently working in schools in the kingdom with the remainder studying to further their qualifications in the United Kingdom.

Alresheed (2012) describes members of the sample as all having previous career experience in Saudi Arabia, with an average of 8.04 years teaching experience in the country and a mean age of 32.13 years. Both the school level at which participants had taught (primary, middle or high) and their genders were not specified, although, in relation to the second point, it was likely given the sex of the researcher and the fact that a number of participants were studying overseas in a Western nation, that all respondents were all male.

While the first part of the questionnaire concerned participants' demographic details, the second was devoted to measuring teachers' attitudes towards the English language. Unfortunately, Alresheed (2012) does not specify the exact phrasing of the items included in the on-line questionnaire, although he does nonetheless highlight three response areas that displayed important trends in terms of participant attitudes. The first of these was whether participants viewed the English language as an important part of their daily lives. Perhaps as expected from a sample of English-language teachers, 61.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that English formed an important part of their lives, although 7.6% were neutral and the remaining 30.8% claimed English to hold no importance whatsoever.

When inquiring into the impact of English on the students that participants teach, Alresheed (2012) reported that all respondents who viewed English as unimportant similarly discarded the relevance of the language in their students' daily lives. Of the teachers who believed English to be personally important, however, only 37.5% thought that the language had any kind of impact on their students' daily lives with the remaining 62.5% either unsure about, or completely dismissing, its usefulness.

In seeking to understand whether the anti-English sentiment Alresheed (2012) ascribes to those respondents who denied the personal value of English was primarily due to reasons of "religious fanaticism, cultural conservationism or simple indolence" (Findings section, para. 2) on these teachers' behalves, the researcher reports that the sample was equally divided into those who held negative and positive attitudes towards the English language. The teachers that held negative

attitudes towards the language, according to Alresheed, tended to have the most conservative religious values and to be insecure in their "Arabic" nationality. This insecurity caused in these participants a feeling of being threatened by the potential Westernisation of their culture and language through their encounters with English. Those teachers deemed to hold positive attitudes, on the other hand, were reported as secure enough in their own cultural and religious identities to not perceive exposure to English as a threat.

Although Alresheed (2012) goes on to link the existence of these negative attitudes with a propensity for "old-fashioned" and de-motivating teaching practices, he unfortunately makes few attempts to clarify how this correlation was made or from what items of the third part of the questionnaire these conclusions were drawn. Moreover, this overall lack of detail about the approaches adopted to the data collection and analysis stages of the research combines with Alresheed's contention that "surprisingly few" of the Saudi teachers who held negative attitudes towards English were actually consciously aware of this negativity to make the validity of the author's findings questionable.

Despite the need for caution when interpreting these results, however, Alresheed (2012) does manage to offer one of the few pieces of GCC research that explicitly focuses on Gulf-citizen English-language teachers' attitudes towards the English language. And, even if his conclusions about the negative attitudes half of respondents purportedly held may have been more influenced by the researcher's own first-hand experiences of Saudi Arabian schools and their teaching professionals than any explicitly-framed empirical evidence, this study is nonetheless informative in suggesting that attitudes towards English held by Gulf citizen teachers of the language may be influenced by religious and cultural issues that fall in line with the concerns outlined in Section 2.3.

2.7.2 Summary of the Gulf research.

All in all, the Gulf investigations cited above offer a rather ambiguous picture of Arab Muslim respondents' attitudes towards English and its speakers than perhaps is evident in the more recent research from the greater Muslim world. Given the often mixed attitudes towards the English language and/or its speakers reported above, the overall impression is of a region in state of flux, with mostly positive attitudes held by those who seek to benefit materially or socially from access to

English, and more negative attitudes displayed by those who reject English on the basis of its cultural concomitants. Added to this, Clarke's (2007) research also highlights how a number of learners in the region are drawn towards assimilation into the Western culture/s associated with the English language through an inability to apply critical literacy skills. Again, in line with Rahman's (2005) responses, these learners also display positive attitudes towards the English language and its speakers, though apparently make fewer critical decisions about which elements of the language's associated culture/s to adopt and which to reject.

Within this context it was deemed important to further investigate Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language, its place in Gulf societies, and towards native speakers of the language. Although much of the above research often focused on university students in the region, the current research sought to follow the lead set by Jones, Martin and Ozog (1993) in Brunei, and Al-Khwaiter (2001), Randall and Samimi (2010) and Alresheed (2012) in the Gulf itself, by investigating these attitudes in a non-student population that is, in many ways, at the forefront of the interaction between the English language and the more traditional Arab Muslim values often associated with the citizens of the GCC – Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors

2.8 The Conceptual Framework of the Current Study.

Following from Section 2.6 and the research from the Gulf and greater Muslim world presented above, the attitudes of Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors towards English, its place in Oman, and towards native speakers of English, will be examined through a conceptual framework formed by a combination of Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning. This framework is represented in Figure 2.1 below.

As outlined by Rahman (2005), each area of response and its associated attitudes (see Section 1.4.1) define a discrete and static block. Therefore, the lines between each response represent a discrete boundary, with there being little to no overlap between responses. Moreover, an individual, according to this framework, would be likely to hold a similar set of attitudes towards the English language, its place in Muslim societies, and towards native speakers of the language. For example, a person's negative attitudes towards English based on concerns about its

normative baggage and cultural associates (rejection and resistance) would most likely be matched by negative attitudes towards native English speakers based on concerns about the "Western" cultural values they are assumed to either embody or personally hold. An individual from this conceptual framework, moreover, would be unlikely to change their attitudes in any significant way over time, as the aesthetic, sociological, semantic and, to a lesser extent, pragmatic, associates of the English language would tend to stay relatively stable over fairly long periods.

Rejection and Resistance	**Acceptance and Assimilation**	**Pragmatic Utilisation**
Negative attitudes towards English based on concerns about the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects. Negative attitudes towards those who speak English focussed largely on sociological and aesthetic associates with the language.	Positive attitudes towards English based on an appreciation of the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects. Positive attitudes towards those who speak English focussed largely on sociological and aesthetic associates with the language.	Positive attitudes towards English based primarily on an appreciation of the language's pragmatic value.

Figure 2.1. The conceptual framework for the case study.
The conceptual framework is formed by a combination of Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning.

2.9 Conclusion.

This chapter sought to establish the social and historical context of the current research through the presentation and discussion of the literature related to a number of relevant areas. It started with an examination of some of the historical forces that have contributed to the privileged role English now plays as the world's dominant international language with close attention given to Phillipson (1992), before seeking to place the GCC within Kachru's (1985) language circles. It then examined how the central role English plays within the Gulf States may be a potential source of tension for Gulf citizen speakers of English, and offered some of the political and social developments since 2001 that have acted to reinforce English's role within at least the education systems of the GCC. It then attempted to

interpret attitudes towards English and its speakers as presented in research emanating from the greater Muslim world through a conceptual framework formed by Rahman's (2005) historical analysis of Muslim responses. Finally, research from the Gulf itself was explored with the attitudes reported in these studies held against the work that has emerged from the greater Muslim world, before a conceptual framework based on a combination of Rahman's Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning was proffered for the current case study.

Chapter 3 Methodology offers an overview of the data collection and analysis techniques used to examine the research questions presented in Section 1.7.1. After framing the current study in a post-positivistic paradigm, it presents the data collection techniques of documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews before looking at the way thematic analysis, cluster analysis and Fisher's exact tests for *r x c* tables were applied to analyse the data. Finally, some of the ethical issues associated with the current research, in addition to the potential influence of the researcher's identity on the formation and execution of the investigation, are discussed.

Chapter 3. Methodology.

3.1 Introduction.

Chapter 3 offers an overview of the different data collection and analysis techniques employed in this case study to examine the four research questions outlined in Section 1.7.1. In particular, after making explicit reference to the post-positivistic paradigm that frames the study, the chapter explains the ways in which documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews were employed to investigate participant attitudes towards the English language, its place in Oman, and towards native speakers of English, in addition to how the demographic variables outlined in the research questions relate to these attitudes. It then details the ways in which data derived from each collection method was analysed using thematic analysis, cluster analysis and Fisher's exact tests for *r x c* tables, before offering some of the political and ethical considerations, in addition to concerns related to the researcher's identity, associated with the study.

3.2 Research Questions.

As outlined in Section 1.7.1, the research questions under investigation are:

1. What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?

2. What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?

3. What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards native speakers of English?

4. What relationship, if any, do the variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained, have with these attitudes?

3.3 Research Paradigm.

A mixed quantitative-qualitative case-study approach was employed to examine the nature of respondents' attitudes towards the English language, its place in Oman and its speakers as specified above. A post-positivistic paradigm was adopted in an attempt to reconcile the positivist foundation associated with the quantitative aspects of the research (i.e. the Likert response key questionnaire) and

the more constructivist foundations of its qualitative elements in terms of the semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis.

In addition, the adoption of this post-positivistic paradigm allows for an explicit recognition of the value-laden nature of the study, especially as it relates to the selection and interpretation of both the quantitative and qualitative data, and issues associated with the application of the researcher's own values in the selection and presentation of research questions and subsequent findings. Moreover, this paradigm also allows for the explicit acknowledgement of the way my presence as researcher and colleague as well as religious, linguistic and ethnic outsider in the research site, inevitably affected both the research process itself and the "knowledge" I claim to have gained from it (Taber, 2009).

Underlying these concessions, therefore, is a belief in the conjectural nature of knowledge (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). However, equally important is the recognition that such concessions do not necessitate the abandonment of all criteria associated with a traditional positivist paradigm. Rather, the current research still sought to employ constructs such as validity and reliability as guides to "sound" research design and practice (Crook & Garratt, 2005) in addition to allowing for a constructivist interpretation of research results. The data collection methods employed here are employed in the belief that, while reality is based on conjecture, it can nonetheless be examined through systematic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

The warrants underlying the systematic inquiry employed in the current research, therefore, are that a Likert response key questionnaire can act as a valid and reliable measure of attitudes that are prone to change and that, despite the biases the researcher carries into the document selection and analysis process and the way semi-structured interviews act to artificially construct reality (Blee & Taylor, 2002), these methods nonetheless remain valuable means of learning about some aspects of the "realities" of the research site as they relate to the research questions.

3.4 Case Study.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), drawing their characterisation from Dyer (1995) and Geertz (1973), define case studies as investigations that closely examine a particular phenomenon in its real-life context through the provision of a "thick description" of participants' lived experiences based on data derived from a combination of sources. The insights that can be drawn from the limited number of

cases under study, therefore, allow for the uncovering of essential features of the case and, in doing so, provide a basis from which theoretical understandings of the researched phenomena can be framed (Blee & Taylor, 2002).

A common criticism of the case study approach, however, is that in narrowing the focus to a select number of cases, it may sacrifice the credibility of the research especially in terms of generalisability (Corbin & Holt, 2005). In response to this point, Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010) state that the way the concept of generalisability is examined depends largely on the ontological assumptions underpinning research design. For example, those studies employing a positivist approach tend to focus on correlations among variables, and, in doing so, seek to examine how these variables interact in a new context. Generalisability, from this perspective, is related to how easily the logics from the original study can contribute to the furthering of research in the field. However, from a more constructivist approach, Mills, Durepos and Wiebe continue, it is the duty of the reader to "assess whether the proposed insight may help him or her understand other cases of interest" (p. 419). This assessment of the transferability or fittingness of findings from a case study, according to Blaikie (2010), relies on an evaluation of the "congruence between the context in which the research was conducted and the one to which the findings are to be transferred" (p. 193). For this reason, Blaikie states, it is incumbent upon the researcher to provide sufficient and appropriate information about the research context for readers to successfully perform that judgement.

Framing the current research as a case study of the Omani English-language instructors of a single tertiary-level educational institution was deemed important, therefore, due to the primary investigative concern of extending the somewhat limited understandings of Gulf citizens' attitudes in the three areas outlined in the research questions, while, at the same time, emphasising the societal, historical and political context of the research site and its relationship with respondents' attitudes (Soy, 1997).

This latter function was initially addressed through a detailed outline of the interlinked contexts of the research site, the university of which the research site is a part, the country of Oman, the Gulf States, the wider Muslim world and the West as outlined in Chapters 1 and 2. Moreover, documentary analysis has also been utilised to place the research site within a wider institutional, political and social framework (see Section 3.6.1). The former function, on the other hand, involved the

examination of participant attitudes as recorded in the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire in relation to theoretical stances outlined in the literature.

3.5 Triangulation.

Another common criticism of case study approaches is that findings may lack validity and reliability. Here, Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010) claim these issues can be overcome through the use of multiple data collection and analysis methods, the comparison of resultant data from each method and the detailing of an explicit description of the processes involved in getting from the raw data to the final measurements and/or evaluations.

In the current research, the use of multiple data collection and analysis methods was therefore deemed essential. For this reason, the data collection methods of documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews were employed, with resultant data analysed with Fisher's exact tests for *r x c* tables, thematic, and cluster analysis accordingly (see Section 3.8). Triangulation of results from each of these methods of analysis was conducted, with specific attention paid to areas of convergence and divergence between themes in the data. This process of triangulation was also considered necessary due to the potentially sensitive nature of the research topic and the possibility respondents may, whether consciously or not, conceal or distort information (Blee & Taylor, 2002) due to the reasons highlighted in Section 3.9.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques.

3.6.1 Document selection.

A vital element of the case study approach is placing the selected case within a wider framework. Although historical, social and political forces have been outlined in the first two chapters, it was nonetheless considered necessary to provide the kind of "thick description" associated with case studies to filter this information in a systematic way through the examination of documentary evidence regarding the place of English in Oman's higher education system. To guide the selection of the documentary evidence necessary to achieve this goal, the research site was conceptualised as being the centre of a series of concentric circles moving outwards from the Language Centre itself (the current research site) to the Sultanate of Oman's Basic Statute or constitution. Each of these circles represents a larger social

or institutional context in which the research site can be placed. They were defined as: the research site (the Language Centre) → Sultan Qaboos University → The Ministry of Higher Education → Government policies and royal decrees regarding higher education in Oman → Oman's Common Law or de facto constitution. These circles are represented in Figure 3.1 below.

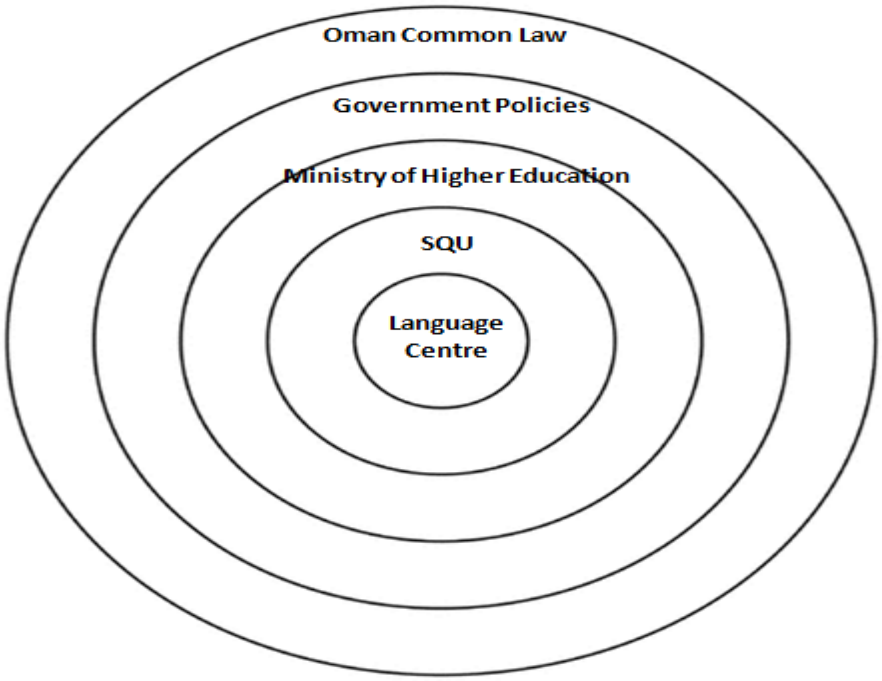


Figure 3.1. Concentric circles from which documentary sources were selected. This figure shows the concentric circles representing wider social and/or institutional contexts surrounding the current research site from which documentary data was selected.

Officially approved and published documents relating to higher education in Oman from each of these circles were identified and selected for inclusion. These documents are:

a. Oman's Common Law: Sultani Decree Number 101/96 Promulgating the Basic Statute of the State – 1996

b. Government policies/Royal decrees: University Law of Sultan Qaboos University issued by Royal Decree No. 71/2006 – 2006

   Several speeches by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said to celebrate the opening of Sultan Qaboos University in 1986, to the first batch of SQU's graduates in 1990, and to commemorate the 20th year of the university in 2006

c. Ministry of Higher Education: Ministry of Higher Education's vision and mission statements

d. Sultan Qaboos University: Sultan Qaboos University's vision and mission statements and objectives – 2006 and 2012

   A message from the Vice Chancellor of SQU to visitors to the university's website – 2012

   A welcome message from SQU to visitors to its website – 2012

e. The research site/The Language Centre – The Language Centre's vision and mission statements and objectives – 2012

All documents outlined above are in the public domain and are available from either Oman's Ministry of Higher Education or Ministry of Information or from Sultan Qaboos University's official website. As SQU is the country's only national university operating under a law established by royal decree, and as Oman's laws are written and amended by the ruler Sultan Qaboos himself, all documents highlighted above were considered to be public documents, even though a case could be made for interpreting those published by university sources as being private institutional texts.

The selected documents were given preference to other documentary evidence from non-public sources as, following Mogalakwe's (2006) advice, each of them could be determined to be authentic, credible, representative and meaningful. That is, all the selected documents are authentic in that they are produced and disseminated by either government ministries or government-run institutions, they are credible because they largely espouse or seek to explain and/or justify government policies and actions as they relate to higher education, and they are representative because they offer a comprehensive and multi-faceted view of the implementation of English-medium higher education in Oman from State to classroom level. Finally, they are meaningful in relation to the current research as they allow for a greater understanding of the research context as presented in the next chapter.

3.6.2 Questionnaire construction.

In addition to documentary analysis, a non-intervention survey research design was employed to collect quantitative data from a 29-item Likert response key

questionnaire (see Appendix A). In the quantitative research from both the Gulf and the greater Muslim world, questionnaires based largely on Gardner's (1985, 2004) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and International Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (IAMTB) dominate. Examples of instruments which have sought to focus on participant attitudes in the Arab and/or Muslim worlds are numerous and include: Fahmy and Bilton in Oman (1992), Jones, Martin and Ozog in Brunei (1993), Al Haq and Smadi in Saudi Arabia (1996), Karahan in Turkey (2007), Mostafizar Rahman in Malaysia (2008), Al-Tamimi in Yemen (2009), Al-Ansari and Lori in Bahrain (1999), Findlow in Kuwait (2006), Randall and Samimi (2010) and Karmani (2010) in the UAE.

A remarkable feature of the instruments employed in these studies, however, is the almost complete lack of reference between them. This is especially surprising considering the vast majority of the studies cited above share a very similar range of interests. This has resulted in a situation in which researchers are almost constantly designing and redesigning questionnaires with few efforts made to measure their validity or reliability.

One exception to this rule, however, is Malallah's (2000) questionnaire. Like many of the questionnaires highlighted above, Malallah also took as her reference point Gardner's (1985, 2004) I/AMTB. Similarly, she also sought to adapt many of the I/AMTB's items to a specific Gulf context. However, unlike the vast majority of these questionnaires, Malallah sought to examine the construct validity and internal consistency of her questionnaire in a systematic way, while scales from her questionnaire have also been employed by other researchers in the field (see Section 3.6.3).

Malallah's (2000) questionnaire was administered in Arabic to students in Arabic- and English-medium colleges. However, in the current research the profession of the respondents as English-language instructors meant the English-language version was initially offered. Respondents were reminded during initial contact and on the participant information sheet that an Arabic-language version of the questionnaire was also available upon request.

The questionnaire features a series of statements followed by a 5-point Likert response key. Although Gardner's (2004) IAMTB employs a six-point response key, the current research followed Malallah's use of five responses ranging from

strongly agree to strongly disagree with a middle option of neutral. The nature of the data gathered from the questionnaire is outlined in Section 3.8.2.

In relation to the first research question regarding participants' attitudes towards the English language, Malallah's (2000) "Attitudes towards the English Language" scale was deemed more appropriate than the IAMTB's roughly corresponding "Attitudes towards Learning English". Malallah offers a total of nine items, each of which has been retained here. (See Appendix B for the full list of scales and items.) The only change in wording has been made to the third item, with a Kuwait-specific reference to the "Channel 2" English-language television station changed to the more general "English language TV programmes".

The second research question about respondents' attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society is not explicitly addressed by the IAMTB. However, Malallah (2000) offers a 21-item scale featuring items extracted from Gardner (1985), Clement and Kruidnier (1983) and Oller, Hudson and Liu (1977), about the place of English in Kuwait society. These items could be readily applied to the current research context.

However, of the 21 items Malallah (2000) employed, there existed a large degree of repetition with, for example, three separate positively-worded items about the position of English as a language of prestige, another three stating there is no need for English in Kuwaiti society and so on. Therefore, after consultation with a professor of linguistics in an Omani university familiar with the research context (see Section 3.6.3), twelve of Malallah's original items were retained with the only change in wording being the replacement of "Kuwait" for "Oman".

The third research question relates to participants' attitudes towards native speakers of English. Malallah (2000) offered a scale with 24 items directly applicable to this question. However, given the current social and political environment across the Middle East in general and Oman in particular (see Collins, 2011), it was deemed items such as "English speakers have no morality" and "English speakers are unclean" to be potentially provocative. Instead, Gardner's (2004) IAMTB's "Attitudes towards English Speaking People" scale, with its eight positively-worded items, was considered more appropriate. Here, again, the only change in wording relates to a single reference to Japan, which has been changed to Oman.

The fourth research question examines the relationship of a number of demographic variables on the above scales. In terms of the Gulf research cited in Chapter 2, Fahmy and Bilton (1992), Malallah (2000) and Al-Khwaiter (2001) examined a number of such variables in relation to participants' attitudes towards English and its speakers. The significant variables to arise from these studies were those of gender, nationality, number of visits to English-speaking countries, time spent in English-speaking countries, college major and future intended use of English. Information about the first four of these variables was, therefore, elicited in the demographic section of the questionnaire. However, given the status of participants as professional English-language teachers, information about college major and planned future use was not deemed relevant.

Other demographic variables examined in the current research include year of study and age. Although these were not determined to influence participant attitudes in the Gulf research appearing thus far, they were nonetheless elicited due to the fact that similar samples to those being investigated here have yet to be thoroughly explored. Moreover, while year of study is obviously not applicable to professional instructors, it was marked here as broadly analogous to number of years spent teaching English. Finally, given the exploratory nature of the research, the demographic variables of first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained, were also examined. All demographic variables have been recorded and interpreted as categorical data.

3.6.3 Questionnaire reliability and validity.

The reliability and validity of the scale taken from Gardner's (1985, 2004) versions of the AMTB has received a great deal of attention in the literature. For example, Gardner's (1985) technical report offers psychometric details for each AMTB scale. Gardner's IAMTB scale utilised in the current research, "Attitudes towards English speaking people", is based on the scale of "Attitudes towards French Canadians" from the original version of the AMTB. In support of this scale's internal consistency, Gardner reports satisfactory reliability data based on a sample of over 5000 Anglophone students of French as a second language across seven Canadian school districts. Gardner reported the Cronbach alpha coefficient for this scale to be .85, while test-retest reliability, obtained after a period of around one year between administrations, was .64.

Turning to the issue of validity, Gardner (1985) claims content validity of the AMTB was ensured through the identification of a pool of potential items to measure the included constructs, and the development of particular items to accurately reflect these constructs. Of course, no single statistical measure is capable of accounting for construct validity, although the work conducted by Gardner and Smythe (1975, 1981) to build upon already existing work on the AMTB (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), at least ensures a thorough process of investigation and refinement was applied to the development and selection of included items.

With particular reference to the "Attitudes towards English speaking people" scale from the IAMTB that has been employed here, Gardner (2010) reports similar reliability results, with a Cronbach alpha level of .81 and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .61. Moreover, although Gardner's figures were both based on samples of school learners rather than the adults featured in the current research, a number of researchers on adults and university learners in Middle Eastern nations and elsewhere around the world have reported similar psychometric results (see Makrami, 2010; Moiinvaziri, 2008)

The two scales used here from Malallah's (2000) research, however, are yet to be thoroughly investigated in terms of their psychometric characteristics. However, Malallah did attempt to demonstrate the construct validity and internal consistency of her scales through the performance of factor analysis on the featured variable set. This analysis revealed 18 latent variables with cut-off points for item loadings on to each variable determined, according to the researcher, by the Burt-Banks formula. Each of these 18 latent variables can be associated with a construct measured by the five scales Malallah employs.

For example, the "Attitudes towards the English language" scale is associated with the latent variables of "General attitudes towards English", "Attitudes towards English in terms of educational prestige", and "Affective attitudes towards English". Malallah's (2000) scale of "Attitudes towards English in Kuwait" may be similarly associated with the variables of "Attitudes towards English for status and prestige", "Attitudes to Westernisation and harm to Islam", and "Instrumental attitudes to English in Kuwait".

Each of these variables is associated with items from Malallah's (2000) questionnaire, with, for example, the items "I find speaking English is prestigious" and "I find the English language easy" loading onto the latent variables measured by

the "Attitudes towards the English language" scale. Unfortunately, Malallah does not provide a complete list of her questionnaire items' loadings onto each variable, although her factor analysis appears to support the supposition that inter-correlations between variables on each scale are at least of a moderate level, and, therefore, likely to be measuring the same concept.

Malallah (2000) also fails to offer a measure of internal consistency of her scales. However, one recent report by researchers who employed a slightly modified version of the "Attitudes towards the English language" scale originally developed by Malallah reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .77 (Abu-Ghazaleh & Hijazi, 2011), with measures of .73 and .91 for the two other scales also based on Malallah's work.

In terms of the validity of the scales from Malallah (2000) employed in the questionnaire for this research, the two scales of "Attitudes towards the English Language" and "Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society" were discussed with a professor of linguistics with extensive experience in the fields of applied linguistics and socio-linguistics in the Middle East and Oman. This discussion took part as a necessary step in achieving ethics permission from the research site and focused, in terms of the quantitative elements of the research, on issues relating to the face and content validity of Malallah's scales. In order to improve validity in both areas, a series of small changes in the wording and number of items on both of Malallah's scales was suggested. These suggestions were applied, with resultant changes outlined in detail above.

3.6.4 Questionnaire administration.

The focus of the study was Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors currently employed in the language centre of the country's only public university. During the Omani academic year 2011/2012 in which the research took place, there were officially a total of 62 such instructors employed at the research site (Language Centre, 2011). However, when consideration was given to a number of instructors on various kinds of leave and seconded to other colleges and organisations, the total number of instructors available during the research period was 51.

All 51 of these Omani English-language instructors were initially contacted through a group email stating the nature of the proposed research, including a softcopy of the questionnaire-phase participation information sheet, and calling for

volunteers. From this number, 21 instructors expressed an interest to participate in the questionnaire phase of the research. These instructors were asked to complete a hard-copy English-language version of the questionnaire, though, as stated in Section 3.6.5, they were reminded an Arabic-language version was also available upon request. These questionnaires were posted in participants' secure university mailboxes, with volunteers asked to return the questionnaire either directly to the researcher in his office during regular office hours or to post it in the researcher's own secure mailbox within a two week period.

Only the researcher was involved in recruitment, data collection and the analysis process. No names or other contact details were elicited or recorded during data collection or during any other phase of the research.

3.6.5 Translation.

Given their status as professional English-language instructors, participants were originally administered the English-language version of the questionnaire. However, they were reminded both during initial contact and on the participant information sheet that an Arabic-language version of the questionnaire was available upon request. The Arabic-language version was originally prepared by a graduate student majoring in English-Arabic translation at Sultan Qaboos University – the university to which the research site is attached.

Both the original English-language version of the questionnaire and its translation were sent to the Department of English Language and Translation at a private Omani university for certification. This was achieved with the head of department offering a letter of certification stating that statements in the English- and Arabic-language versions had the equivalent meaning. Appendix A contains the full-length English-language version of the instrument. However, as the Arabic-language version was no requested by any participant, it has not been included here.

3.6.6 Coding the questionnaire.

To maintain consistency across the questionnaire's three scales, positively-worded items suggesting favourable attitudes towards the English language and its speakers, such as "I find the English language interesting", have been assigned values of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for responses of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Conversely, negatively worded items, for instance "The

English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language", have been reverse scored for the same response ordering listed above.

3.6.7 Semi-structured interviews.

Following the administration of the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were held in English with volunteers from the sample. Volunteers were invited to participate in a fifteen-to-twenty minute one-on-one interview with the researcher. Like the recruitment phase for the questionnaire, the invitation was extended through a group email to all Omani English-language instructors at the research site after a period of about two months after the initial quantitative data collection and analysis stage was finalised.

All Omani English-language instructors were contacted regardless of whether they participated in the initial data collection phase or not. Findings from the questionnaire helped guide the selection and wording of the initial set of guiding questions used in the interview stage (see Appendix C for a list of questions), although respondents were encouraged to expand upon responses and move the interview in ways that allowed them to best express their attitudes.

The majority of interviews were recorded as MP3 audio files to facilitate transcription and analysis, with these audio files permanently erased once transcription was completed and checked by the researcher for accuracy. However, following feedback from the research committee at the local research site, female participants were also explicitly given the option of refusing to be recorded due to cultural and religious sensitivities relating to my position as a male interlocutor. In these cases, notes were taken by hand during the interview with any quotes from these interviews likely to be featured in the results or discussion chapters checked for accuracy with the participant after the interview was complete. All interviews took place either in the researcher's or participants' offices or in one of the private consultation rooms available at the research site.

The maximum number set for these interviews was 20, while the minimum number was determined by the number of volunteers. After the two-month period assigned for this part of the data collection process had elapsed, only 8 Omani instructors (around 16% of the entire population) had volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Of these, only two female participants requested the interview not be recorded.

3.7 Participants.

3.7.1 The population.

As outlined in Section 3.6.4, 51 Omani English-language instructors were employed at the research site during the research period. Of these 51, all were Omani citizens and all currently resided in Oman and were adherents of Islam. Thirty-four (66.7%) of these instructors were female and 17 (33.3%) were male. In terms of highest level of educational attainment, five had received doctoral level degrees (9.8%), another five (9.8%) had received bachelor degrees, while the remaining 41 (80.4%) possessed master degrees. Of the five members to have bachelor degrees, all had studied for these degrees in Omani universities. In contrast, all Omani instructors at the research site with post-graduate degrees had received these from overseas institutions. 50 members (98%) of the population spoke Arabic as either their exclusive first language or as a shared first language, while the remaining member used Swahili and English for these purposes.

Although details such as country of birth, age and time spent teaching English are maintained as a matter of personnel records, this information was not available to the researcher and was not sought.

3.7.2 The sample.

All participants were assured of their anonymity as outlined in Section 3.9. Therefore, given the small population from which the sample was drawn, and the possibility that presenting certain demographic features, especially those of country of birth and languages spoken at home, may make identifying participants an easy task for any person familiar with the research site, some of the sample's demographic features have not been presented in specific detail here.

In total, 21 Omani English-language instructors volunteered to take place in the initial questionnaire data collection stage, which represents a participation rate of around 42%. The sample was generally representative of the population described above, with fairly even rates of participation across the different demographic categories. For example, the split between female (61.9%, $n = 13$) and male (38.1%, $n = 8$) participations closely approximates the existing gender divide at the research site. Regarding age, 28.6% ($n = 6$) of participants were aged between 20 and 30, with 61.9% ($n = 13$) between 31 and 40. The remaining 9.5% ($n = 2$) was divided evenly between the 41-50 and 51-60 age groups.

As expected, the vast majority of participants (81%, *n* = 17) were born in Oman itself, although the remaining 19% (*n* = 4) were born overseas. 90.5% (*n* = 19) of participants speak Arabic as a first language, although the remaining two participants reported being fully bilingual at home.

In terms of educational attainment, 66.7% of participants (*n* = 14) had obtained master level degrees as their highest level of educational attainment. A further 19% (*n* = 4) had received a bachelor degree as their highest educational level, while the final 14.3% (*n* = 3) had obtained doctorate degrees. Here, holders of master level degrees are underrepresented in the sample while the other two categories are slightly over-represented. All 17 participants with post-graduate qualifications received their degrees from universities in Western nations. The most popular destinations for higher-level studies were the United Kingdom (58.8%, *n* = 10) and Australia (29.4%, *n* = 5). However, two respondents (11.8%) received their highest level post-graduate degrees from the United States.

Participants were fairly evenly spread across categories in relation to years of experience as English-language teachers, with 19.1% (*n* = 4) having taught between 0 and 5 years, 23.8% (*n* = 5) between 6 and 10 years, 33.3% (*n* = 7) between 11 and 15 years, 19.1% (*n* = 4) having taught between 16 and 20 years and, finally, one participant (4.7%) had taught English for more than 21 years.

All except one respondent (4.7%) had visited English-speaking countries, with 33.3% (*n* = 7) having visited these countries between 1 and 3 times, 23.8% (*n* = 5) between 4 and 6 times, 19.1% (*n* = 4) in each of the 7-9 and more than 10 categories. In terms of the approximate time spent in Western-speaking countries, one respondent (4.8%) had never visited any predominantly Anglophonic countries, 28.6% (*n* = 6) had spent between 1 and 6 months in these countries, 4.8% (*n* = 1) between 4 and 6 months, 33.3% (*n* = 7) between 12 and 24 months, and 28.6% (*n* = 6) more than 24 months.

Eight participants volunteered for the semi-structured interviews. This represents a response rate of around 15.7%. Six of these participants (75%) were female and two (25%) were male. Seven (87.5%) held master level degrees while the remaining participant held a bachelor's degree. Only one participant (12.5%) was born outside of Oman. All participants spoke Arabic as their home language. Information about age, country where highest level degree was obtained, number of

visits to English-speaking countries and time spent in these countries was not elicited during the interview stage.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures.

3.8.1 Documentary analysis.

Following the lead set by Fahmy and Bilton (1992) and Findlow (2006) in their GCC studies, the public domain documents related to the place of English-medium higher education in Oman as outlined in Section 3.6.1 were selected for analysis. Due to the large quantities of data involved in this stage, the software program NVivo 10 was employed to aid the analysis process. This process took place in three stages. The first stage involved conducting a frequency search of the 100 most frequently occurring words in the documents. For this part of analysis, the NVivo parameter was set to include stemmed words with, for example, the words developing, development, developed and so on all counting towards the occurrence of the term "develops". Next, a cluster analysis was performed to create a tree map which demonstrated relationships between the 100 most frequently occurring words.

NVivo performs this cluster analysis by creating a table with all 100 of the most frequently occurring words which places each term into a row and column based on the sources (in this case, the documents chosen for analysis) in which they appear and the number of times they are featured in that source (QSR International, 2010). The software program then uses Pearson's correlation coefficient to calculate a "similarity index" between every pair of items, before grouping these items into clusters based on the strength of their relationships as measured by Pearson's *r*. These relationships are represented in NVivo in graphic form, with, for the current analysis, a tree map selected to display relationships in a manner that is reminiscent of branches on a tree (NVivo, 2011).

Following the cluster analysis, the third and final stage of documentary analysis involved combing groups of clustered words into new categories that represent potentially meaningful relationships in the documents. This process was aided through the graphic representation of the tree analysis. These categories were then employed to code the documentary data. Common themes, variations and exceptions associated with each code were sought to inform the refinement of these categories, with these refined codes then re-applied to the data.

3.8.2 Questionnaire data.

A number of authors claim that a great deal of quantitative research employs inappropriate analysis techniques in relation to data gathered from Likert response key questionnaires (Boone & Boone, 2012; Clason & Dormody, 1994; Gob, McCollin, & Ramalhoto, 2007; Jamieson, 2004). At the heart of this issue, Brown (2012) claims, is the common treatment of data from Likert items as belonging to the interval measurement scale instead of the ordinal scale they were originally designed to represent. Others, however, claim that interpreting data from Likert response keys at the interval measurement scale is theoretically non-problematic (Allen & Seaman, 1997) or even should be accepted practice when composite scales of three or more Likert items are calculated (Boone & Boone, 2012).

However, Jamieson (2004), claims that Likert-scales should ideally be interpreted at the ordinal level of measurement due to the fact Likert response categories, by their very nature, have a rank order in which intervals between responses cannot be assumed to be equal. That is, the interval between strongly agree and agree on a Likert-scale cannot be assumed to be equal to the interval between agree and neutral (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) and, therefore, such data must necessarily remain ordinal.

Moreover, despite Boone and Boone's (2012) contention that composite scores from multiple Likert items should be treated as interval level data, Jamieson offers the following concise paraphrase of one of Kuzon, Urbanchek and McCabe's (1996) statistical analysis 'seven deadly sins': "the average of fair and good is not fair-and-a-half" (p. 1218). In other words, interpreting Likert-scales at the interval measurement level may result in the use of inappropriate data analysis techniques and, therefore, runs the risk of producing meaningless, or at least misleading, results.

The current research, therefore, adheres to Knapp's (1990) and Jamieson's (2004) advice that it is both important to be aware of the debate regarding measurement scales briefly presented here and, consequently, to choose and explicitly express a measurement perspective. As such, data gathered from the Likert response key questionnaire in the current research, both at the Likert-scale and individual item level, will be interpreted as ordinal in nature.

3.8.3 Assessing questionnaire reliability.

As outlined in Section 3.6.3, the reliability of the scales comprising the current questionnaire has been fairly well-established for Gardner's (1985, 2004) scale and, although yet to be thoroughly investigated, at least suggested by the research on Malallah's (2000) scales. However, despite this support, it was nonetheless considered important to provide a test of internal reliability of the questionnaire scales to provide some detail about how well-suited they are to the current research context.

Of course, a challenge in examining the reliability of the revised questionnaire is that the small sample of 21 means it is not possible with any certainty to confirm the internal consistency of the scales employed here. However, Iacobucci and Duhachek (2003) claim that, even for those scales with more than five items sharing a medium level of inter-correlation, the difference in reported alpha reliability levels between a small sample size of around 30 and a sample size of 200 is nominal. As the number of items on each scale varies between 8 and 12 and as the existing literature suggests levels of inter-correlation between these items tend to be somewhere between medium (for scales from Malallah, 2000) and strong (for Gardner, 1985, 2004), an alpha test of internal reliability was performed on each of the questionnaire scales.

These tests were performed as a guide to the reliability of these scales in line with the exploratory nature of the research. However, in keeping with the post-positivistic paradigm adopted here, it is explicitly acknowledged that reliability coefficients based on these tests can be offered as tentative guides only, and are likely, given the small sample size, to be somewhat unstable and therefore in need of more comprehensive exploration.

Another important consideration taken into account when assessing the internal consistency of the questionnaire scales was which measure of reliability to use. For instance, although Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used reliability measure across a number of fields, today some authors recommend that for questionnaires employing Likert response keys, measures of ordinal alpha reliability are more accurate (Gadermann, Guhn, & Zumbo, 2012; Oliden & Zumbo, 2008; Zumbo, Gaderman, & Zeisser, 2007). This is due to the fact that Cronbach's alpha calculations are based on the Pearson correlation matrix which was designed for

continuous data and, therefore, has a tendency to either over- or under-estimate reliability coefficients for ordinal data.

One alternative to performing Cronbach's alpha for Likert data, as outlined by Zumbo, Gadermann and Zeisser (2007), is the use of ordinal alpha reliability. Calculations of ordinal alpha treat individual items comprising each scale as belonging to the ordinal measurement scale. Although it is conceptually equivalent to Cronbach's alpha, ordinal alpha is based on the polychoric correlation matrix designed specifically for measurements involving ordinal data (Gadermann, Guhn, & Zumbo, 2007). For these reasons, the statistics software Factor 8.10 was used to calculate ordinal alpha reliability levels for each of the three questionnaire scales.

3.8.4 Quantitative data analysis techniques.

As stated in Section 3.8.2, the three questionnaire scales of "Attitudes towards the English Language", "Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society", and "Attitudes towards English Speaking People" were interpreted as belonging to the ordinal measurement scale. Therefore, total scores for each of these three scales have been presented in Chapter 4 in terms of scale medians. The potential range for these medians is between 1, which represents negative attitudes in the area measured by the scale, and 5, which represents positive attitudes. These results have been used to help address the first three research questions.

The fourth research question regarding the relationship between the demographic variables elicited in the questionnaire on Omani instructors' attitudes in the three areas measured by the questionnaire scales was examined through a series of cross-tabulation analysis procedures. In these analyses, the demographic variables act as the independent variables while the ordinal data obtained from the questionnaire scales and items are the dependent variables.

Cross-tabulation analysis is one of the most common forms of statistical analysis in the social sciences, and is often associated with exploratory research (McNabb, 2010). According to Michael (2001), a cross-tabulation, or contingency table, analysis involves the creation of a frequency distribution table for variables. The distribution table is then analysed with a chi-square test to determine whether the variables are statistically independent. This type of analysis is usually associated with categorical variables (Meyer, 2007), and, as such, is appropriate for the nominal and ordinal level data featured in this study.

The first of these cross-tabulation analyses was planned to examine the relationship of the variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained and total scores on the three scales featured in this study. However, due to the small population under study and the resultant sample size of 21 for the questionnaire phase of the research, assumptions commonly associated with the Pearson chi-squared test of relationships in cross-tabulation analysis would have been violated if such a test was performed. In particular, the widely held rule of thumb that expected frequencies in each cell should be at least five and no more than 20% of all cells should have fewer than five cases would be impossible to achieve in the present study even if the response rate reached 100%. Moreover, as the sample in the current case study was self-selecting, Pearson chi-squared assumptions of randomised sampling would also be violated.

Therefore, a consultant statistician from the University of Southern Queensland was contacted with exact information about the nature of the population and the limited sample size of 21 participants while precedents set by other studies featuring similarly small finite populations in the literature were also examined. In both cases, the recommended course of action when sample sizes are too small to use the Pearson chi-squared test and/or when randomised sampling has not been achieved is to employ the Fisher's exact test for *r x c* tables which is also known as the Fisher-Freeman-Halton (Lyderson, Pradhan, Senchaudhuri, & Laake, 2007; McDonald, 2009; Pedersen, 1996; Schuenemeyer & Drew, 2011; USQ ORHD-Statistical Consulting Unit, personal communication, September 3, 2012).

Like Pearson's chi-squared, the Fisher's exact test for *r x c* tables is also a test of the independence of the variables being explored, with the null hypothesis being independence of row and column categories. However, unlike Pearson's chi-squared test, the Fisher's exact test does not approximate the probability of independence, or *p* value, of the variables. Rather, it calculates the probability of every possible set of outcomes for contingency tables given the number of rows and columns and the range of values. The Fisher's exact test then sums the probability of the reported contingency table and all other theoretically possible permutations of these tables with the same or lower levels of probability to calculate a *p* value (Kirkman, 1996). Lower *p* values reported by the Fisher's exact test represent a

smaller probability that the reported table occurred by chance, and therefore, depending on the pre-established acceptable level of significance, may mean the null hypothesis of independence between variables can be rejected if a relationship is statistically likely to exist.

Due to its ability to make exact estimates of *p* rather than relying on asymptotic approximations whose calculations are tied to sample size like the Pearson chi-squared, Fisher's exact test is commonly used to examine contingency tables with small samples (Bower, 2003) and also in those cases where asymptotic assumptions of random sampling are not met (Pedersen, 1996). Moreover, the test is applicable to categorical data (Freeman & Campbell, 2007), including the nominal and ordinal variables utilised in the current research (Miller, 1994; Schlotzhauer, 2007). Therefore, it was deemed the most appropriate data analysis technique to address the fourth research question.

To add greater nuance to the understandings drawn from the quantitative data in relation to the fourth research question, and, moreover, given the exploratory nature of the research and the fact that few studies have reported relationships between the demographic variables featured here and attitudes towards the English language and its speakers, a second set of cross-tabulation analyses using Fisher's exact test was also performed for each of the items on the three scales in relation to demographic features. Frequency tables were also calculated and are presented in Chapter 4.

3.8.5 Data reduction.

Before the above Fisher's exact tests were performed, several categories of the demographic variables were collapsed to assist in the meaningful examination of the cross-tabulation contingency tables. The first of these was number of years spent as an English teacher, with the categories of 16-20 years and more than 20 combined into a new 16 years plus category. Similarly, for the variable of number of visits to English-speaking countries, the 0 and 1-3 visits categories were also combined into a 0-3 visits category. Finally, the first language variable was divided into two groups: those participants who exclusively used Arabic as a first language, and those who reported being fully bilingual at home.

3.8.6 Data assumptions and screening.

Unlike the performance of chi-square tests for cross-tabulation analysis, Fisher's exact test makes no assumptions about the minimum number of participants and expected frequencies in each cell, and is therefore suitable for small sample sizes (Bower, 2003). Moreover, while the Pearson chi-squared test used in cross-tabulation assumes a random sampling of the population, Fisher's exact test does not and, according to Pedersen (1996), is the most appropriate test when a randomised sample is not available as "there are no restrictions about the nature of the data required by this test" (p. 194).

In addition, the Fisher's exact test also assumes that cases can only fall into one cell within the table and the responses recorded by one participant or case will not affect responses recorded by another (Freeman & Campbell, 2007). These assumptions were met through questionnaire design and analysis which assured no case could be recorded in two separate cells simultaneously and that respondent responses existed exclusively of each other.

Data screening, therefore, focused on issues of missing data and outliers. Any missing data was, for ease of identification, entered into the spreadsheet as the letter "M" as opposed to a numerical value. Frequency counts for responses were conducted for all variables before analysis, with no instances of missing data being reported. Following this, the ranges of each variable were also checked to ensure that no errors occurred during data entry. Again, no values either less than 1 or greater than 5 (the response range for questionnaire items) appeared. Finally, box plots were performed on all variables related to questionnaire items to search for potential outliers. Again, no cases were reported as being outside of the "whisker" area of these plots.

3.8.7 Transcribing and analysing the semi-structured interviews.

Due to the smaller amount of data in this stage of the research than in the documentary analysis phase, semi-structured interview transcripts were analysed by hand rather than with the assistance of software programs. This analysis followed three basis steps: coding, categorisation and analysing. According to Blee and Taylor (2002), the codes initially applied to the first sets of data gathered from semi-structured interviews should be drawn from theoretical positions that are tied to a

study's objectives. These codes are employed to create descriptive, multi-dimensional categories which Hoepfl (1997) states help form the framework of the analysis. In this way, words, phrases, recounted events and so on, that share similarities can be grouped into categories. An audit-trail is then established as a way to allow for these "chunks" of data to be linked to both the speaker (with sufficient precautions taken to protect their identity) and context.

Blee and Taylor (2002) state that as the interviewing process continues, the data collection and interpretation process should also continue thus allowing the researcher the opportunity to refine the interview questions used while developing a sense of the important themes that begin to emerge. As both the questions and focus of the semi-structured interviews become more refined, the researcher then engages in the process of "axial coding", in which the categories that have been established through initial attempts at analysis are compared and combined to allow for a greater understanding of the area under investigation.

In the current research, the initial codes applied to the transcribed interview data were drawn from the conceptual framework offered in Section 2.8 and informed by results from both the questionnaire and documentary analysis. In particular, the initial codes were related to attitudes associated with Rahman's (2005) three responses of resistance and rejection, acceptance and assimilation, and pragmatic engagement. These were combined with the research question topics of attitudes towards English, attitudes to the place of English in Oman, and attitudes to native speakers of English, to create the following nine codes: Acceptance of English Language, Acceptance of English in Oman, Acceptance of Native Speakers, Pragmatic Engagement with English, Pragmatic Engagement with English in Oman, Pragmatic Engagement with Native Speakers, Rejection of English, Rejection of English in Oman, Rejection of Native Speakers.

Phrases, words, stories, examples of actions, relationships and so on associated with one or more of these areas, or representing one or more aspects of Adaskou et al.'s (1990) senses of language learning, were manually coded using different coloured highlights in their respective Word documents. After this initial stage of coding was complete, data highlighted in the same colours were cut from their transcripts and pasted into nine new documents that were each based on one of the original nine coding schemes. These compiled files were then re-examined to gain a more complete and abstracted understandings of their themes, while the pre-

established codes were refined to better represent data in each file. Once codes had been refined, they were re-applied to the original interview transcripts to ensure an accurate representation of the data.

3.8.8 Triangulation.

Themes emerging from the interview analysis were then triangulated with the dominant themes from the questionnaire and documentary data. As analysis of the documentary and interview data focused more on emergent themes than quantifiable content analysis, triangulation also focused more on the convergence and divergence of themes across all three data types than on frequency counts and statistical correlations. In this way, triangulation followed Hannes and Lockwood's (2001) description of thematic analysis as involving the identification of significant, common and reoccurring across the different data sources.

With reference to the questionnaire, emergent themes were identified according to the total composite score reported for each scale, with a median closer to five representing positive attitudes in the scale area and scores closer to one more negative attitudes. From each scale, items whose medians were the closest to the scale total were highlighted as examples of a dominant theme. Those items with the highest level of disagreement with the scale total were also highlighted as potential areas of divergence. As the wording of individual items is, of course, far more specific than each scale's title, highlighting individual items was considered one way to gain a clearer understanding of the nuances associated with each area. The themes associated with each scale were then compared and contrasted with those emerging from the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews and the cluster and thematic analyses of the documentary data. In this way, triangulation of data sources was conducted to decrease the possibility of the Hawthorne effect influencing participants' responses and also to allow a more nuanced and objective understanding of existing theoretical models of attitudes in the areas under investigation.

3.9 Ethics and Politics.

As previously stated, the current research is a case study of Omani tertiary-level English-language teachers working in the language centre of a public university in the Gulf state of Oman. As the researcher, I am also employed at this university

as a language instructor at the research site. Within this context, one of the major political issues to take into account is the way my position as a colleague of participants may have potentially influenced the outcomes of the research. In particular, a risk exists that as a researcher with official approval from the director of the centre and the head of the research committee, I may have been viewed as attempting to gain information about my workmates that could influence their standing at the university.

I hoped to reasonably address this issue through a clear explanation of anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of data collected during initial contact for the recruitment phase of the research and in the participant information sheets for the questionnaire and interviews. However, it is nonetheless confounded by the status of the research site as a public university in which all participants are directly employed by the national government as public servants.

Given their status as government workers, there is a chance that any opinions participants believe run contrary to their employer's (the Ministry of Higher Education) official policies may be potentially damaging to their careers. Moreover, after the research findings were compiled, there is a chance that any reported negative perceptions of English or native speakers of English may reflect negatively upon the research site. Unfortunately, there appears to be no easy solution for this issue, and the application of cultural and social understanding in the selection and presentation of the research data – a practice that fits with the post-positivistic paradigm adopted here – has been necessary.

In addition to these concerns, there also existed a certain level of psychological risk that an exploration of participants' attitudes may have caused feelings of unease for some respondents. This is especially so given the research encouraged participants to consider areas that constitute a major part of at least their professional identities, and may, therefore, have opened them to an experience of confusion in the examination of their attitudes. To attend to this issue, respondents were reminded that they could withdraw from the research at any stage without negative repercussions. Moreover, while no respondent directly reported experiencing any such psychological discomfort, it was agreed with the research site's research committee that any respondent doing so either now or in the future could be reminded of the university's free counselling service.

Another important ethical consideration to emerge during the reporting of the study's results was that of making every effort to ensure anonymity of participation. This issue was especially pertinent in this research given both the possible risks to participants' careers and social standing if negative attitudes were reported, as outlined above, and the fact that the small finite population and the level of familiarity its members have with each other means identifying participants from demographic features may be a theoretical possibility. For this reason, a number of defining features of the questionnaire and interview samples have not been reported here.

Closely linked to the previous point is the transcription and presentation of excerpts taken from the semi-structured interviews to highlight specific attitudes. Given the relatively small number of participants in the interview stage, it was necessary for the sake of anonymity and confidentiality to remove certain pieces of information, such as names of hometowns, distinctive anecdotes about teaching and travelling overseas, post-graduate university of study and so on.

For the same reason, certain speech patterns that could potentially assist in the identification of participants in the interviews, such as the repetition of the phrases "you know" or "like this", were also removed from the transcriptions. Finally, in case my own lack of familiarity with interview participants inadvertently lead me to present a series of quotes from one interviewee that could somehow be combined to disclose their identities, I have presented all featured excerpts in the next chapter as belonging to "a participant" rather than Participant A or Participant B or assigning pseudonyms.

3.10 The Researcher.

In terms of the politically and culturally sensitive nature of the current research and the post-positivistic paradigm adopted for it, I believe it necessary to clearly situate myself as a researcher in the current investigation. As an instructor employed in the research site, I faced a number of issues associated with conducting research in my own working environment (Moore, 2004). These issues included the complication of personal relations between myself as a researcher and my colleagues, the researched, and the possibility of subconsciously bringing my own personal perceptions to bear on the research process. Regarding the first point, the large number of teaching staff employed at the research site means that, although I

am familiar with a number of Omani instructors, these relationships are by no means intimate and remain "professional" enough to avoid some of the risks that may occur in closer working environments (Jarzabkowski, 2004). In relation to the second point, I believe being explicit about my own background and beliefs allows me to recognise, and therefore deal with as objectively as possible, any personal perspectives that may have influenced the outcome of the study.

Given the focus of this research on issues of attitudes as they relate to culture, religion and identity, I feel it necessary to detail here some pertinent details of my own background. First, and in many ways most importantly, I am not a follower of Islam, though I have an immense respect for its tenets and for the examples I see set by many of its followers in my daily life. My own religious background is that of a Roman Catholic, though I am not an active worshipper of that or any other faith.

Regardless of this, my own formal engagement with the church through the first seventeen years of my life, I believe, allows me an understanding of the multi-faceted nature of religion and of the many personal ideals and values followers bring to its attendance. Whether such attitudes apply directly to the Ibadi sect of Islam as practised by the majority of Omanis is not for me to say. However, my own experiences of involvement with one of the world's largest organised religions has lead me to appreciate that any outsider looking in on a religion as vast as Islam must bear in mind that what they think they understand may be far less than what is left unknown.

Another important point is of my own cultural background. I am an Australian of Eastern European decent, with Polish being my mother's first language and both Polish and Russian, in turn, the home languages of her parents and grandparents. Despite this, I was raised with as little knowledge of either language or their associated cultures as possible, with only the celebration of important religious events in a Polish-Catholic manner and the predominant use of these Slavic tongues within extended family interactions any hint at the non-mainstream bent in my family. It is perhaps this background that has made issues of attitudes as they relate to language and culture so pressing for me, although I must also state here that I have spent the vast majority of my adult life in Asia and have therefore developed a deep, if all too often desultory, interest in the interaction between the effects of

"modern" education and practices and the many religions and cultures that can be found across the continent.

Regarding my relationship with "Arab" culture, I have enough experience of this part of the world to realise that the twenty-two countries comprising the Arab League often boast as many differences as similarities. This is even true of the comparatively small geographical area of the Gulf, where the six member nations of the GCC can vary in any number of criteria from ethnic composition, proven oil reserves, to political and historical outlook (see Section 1.5). However, my own understanding of "Arabs" or even "Gulf Arabs" is mostly based on my experiences with Omanis, which, in itself, can be a problematic term.

As outlined in Section 1.5.2, Oman boasts a remarkable diversity of languages and ethnicities among its local population, with languages such as Arabic, Swahili and Balochi widely spoken and Omani nationals born as far afield as Zanzibar off Africa's east coast, and Gwadar in the subcontinent. Although occasionally some of these many differences are easy to discern, often this diversity is hidden from the outside by a lack of understanding of the nuances of dress, accent and vocabulary range, confounded by the process of acculturation to an "Omani" ideal that forms an important part of modern Omani society (Peterson, 2004b).

Taking into account the number and significance of these differences, my own experiences of Omani Arab culture has been largely positive, with no cause to question the veracity of claims by a number of writers placing the people of this country as some of the most hospitable and traditionally-minded of the GCC (Hawley, 1990; Hopkins & Ibrahim, 1997). An apparent risk with this research, therefore, may be the way this positive regard has influenced interpretations of my Omani colleagues' attitudes towards the English language they teach and its related culture/s and native speakers. As a cultural and religious outsider, it was also necessary to remain mindful of the way the generally welcoming nature of Omani society, and respondents' positions as fellow workers employed to instruct their compatriots in the field of academic English, may have influenced the outcomes of this study.

3.11 Conclusion.

After reiterating the four research questions that have guided this case study and the post-positivistic paradigm adopted to study them, Chapter 3 discussed the

data collection techniques of documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews employed here. It also examined the data analysis techniques used to analyse data drawn from the three different collection methods, and the way triangulation was employed to search for areas of commonality and divergence between these sources as they relate to the research questions. Finally, ethical and political considerations of the current study, in addition to some potential concerns related to the researcher's role in conducting the research, were presented.

The next chapter offers the results of analysis of the data collected from each of the data collection tools. These results are initially offered separately with specific reference to their relevant research questions, before the data is drawn together through triangulation to look for areas of convergence and divergence. Results of the triangulation are again presented in relation to the relevant research questions.

Chapter 4. Results.

4.1 Introduction.

The results of the data collected and analysed from the three different data collection techniques of documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews are presented. Initially these results are reported separately, in line with the data collection and analysis techniques employed and the way these techniques relate to the relevant research questions, before seeking to triangulate dominant themes, again with reference to the research questions, that have emerged from the data.

4.2 Documentary Analysis.

The first stage of the documentary analysis involved using NVivo 10 to generate a list of the 100 most frequently occurring words (including their stems) from the documentary data related to English-medium higher education in Oman. The words that recorded the highest levels of repetition across all the documents were: Sultan/Qaboos, university, Oman/country, develops/development, education, research, academic, Allah/God, achieve, students, community, national, knowledge and institutions. Other notable recurring terms include: Islam/Islamic, progress, culture/cultural, values and heritage.

Interestingly, the words "English" and "language" did not appear in this list. However, this omission could be explained by the fact that the theme of the selected documents was higher education in Oman, which is a domain almost completely dominated by English-medium colleges and courses. Moreover, this dominance is supported by what Al-Jadidi (2009) describes as a "major policy imperative" (p. 22) placing English at the heart of the development of Oman's education system since 1970, and, therefore, could be argued to form part of the shared knowledge between the documents' authors and their intended audiences and in this way not to require re-affirmation in the selected texts. Although, it could also be argued that other terms such as God/Allah, Sultan/Qaboos and Oman/country, for example, form a much more important part of this knowledge, it should be stressed that these concepts, unlike English, form an essential part of the dominant narrative of Omani identity (Peterson, 2004a; Valeri, 2009) and therefore can quite often be encountered across a wide range of government-produced texts.

With English-medium higher education, rather than the more general term

"English", forming the main theme of the analysis, a cluster analysis of the 100 most frequently occurring words was then performed to help visually represent relationships in a tree map. The tree map featured three foundation terms: university, develops and sultan, with these terms again divided into four main points. These points are: Qaboos, education, research and academic. As the branches of the tree moved outward from the foundation terms, overlaps between them started to occur. Examination of the developing branches, including areas of overlap, revealed the recurrence of words and terms that suggested a number of emergent themes. These themes include the following combinations which were of greatest relevance to the current study: knowledge, God and bless; university, cultural and values; academic, international and innovation; and education, community and country. Figure 4.1 shows the foundation and main branches based on the NVivo tree map.

These cognates emerging from the data were then combined into categories to guide the analysis of the documentary texts. For ease of reference, these categories, along with some of their associated key terms, have been labelled here as English-medium Education and Islam (including the terms students, knowledge, God, bless), English-medium Education and Cultural Values (university, cultural, Islamic, values), English-medium Education and Modernisation (academic, institutions, needs, international, innovation, enhance) and English-medium Education and Community Service (develops, education, Omani, community, country). Data associated with each of these categories is presented below.

4.2.1 English-medium education and Islam.

One of the dominant areas to emerge from the documentary analysis was the close tie between English-medium higher education and Islam. The terms Islam, religion, God and Allah, in fact, were present in every document analysed and, as such, can be associated with every level of contextualisation of the research site from the classroom to the state level.

One of the first of these references occurs in Oman's Common Law. The Common Law was issued by Sultan Qaboos in 1996 in a decree entitled "Promulgating the Basic Statute of the State". This law, like a constitution, outlines the responsibilities and rights of the government in the administration of the country, and the way these responsibilities interact with Omani citizens' rights.

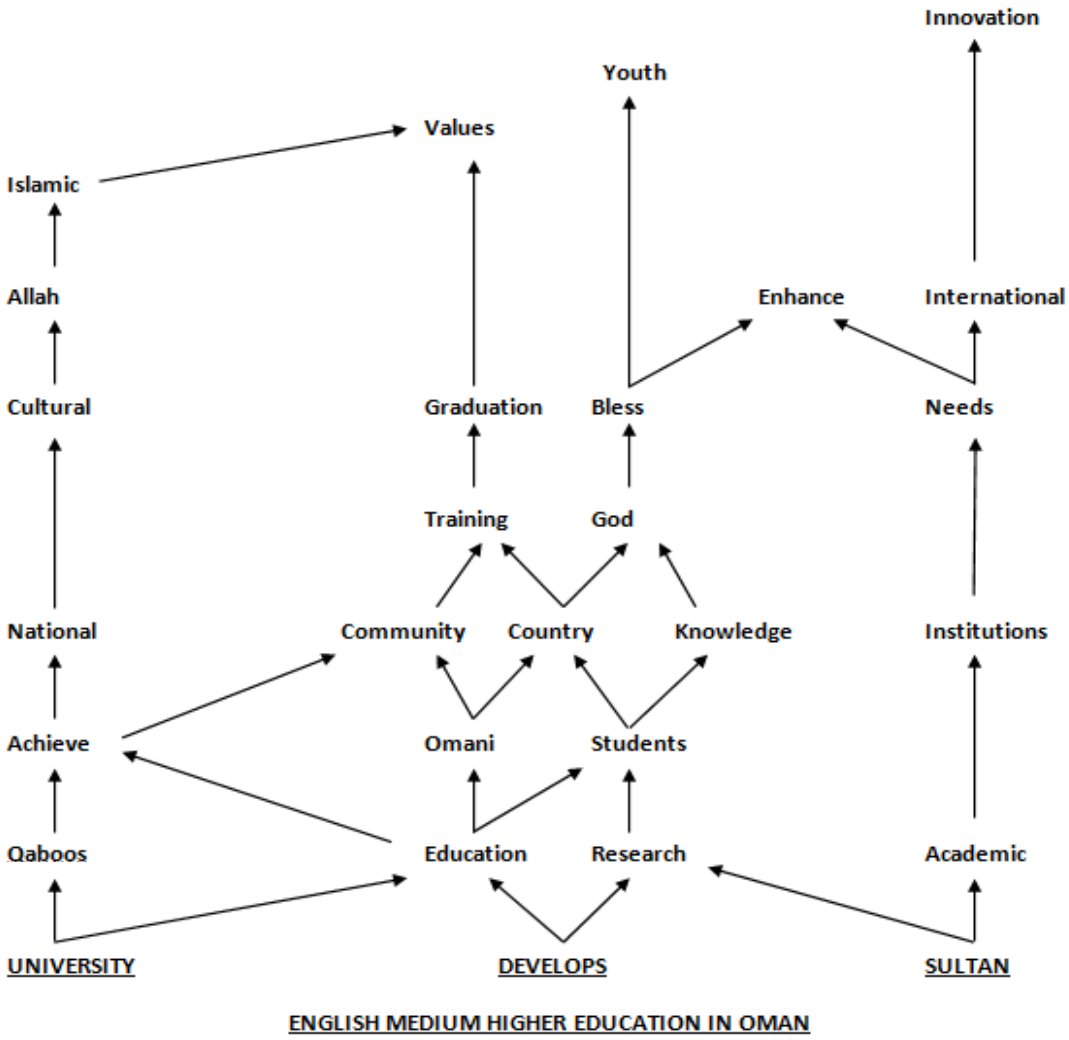


Figure 4.1. Major branches and overlap based on NVivo treemap.
This figure shows the major themes to emerge from the NVivo analysis of the 100 most frequently occurring words and terms. Vertical lines represent terms associated with each branch, while areas of overlap between the four main branches are shown by diagonal lines.

It was published in English and Arabic in the official government gazette and also made available on the Ministry of Information website. While the Common Law contains 81 articles divided into seven chapters that deal with an array of issues from public health to security, the first three articles are primarily concerned with placing the country's governance within a framework comprised of Arabic, Islam and Shari'a. These articles state:

> Article 1: The Sultanate of Oman is an Arab, Islamic, Independent State with full sovereignty and Muscat is its Capital

> Article 2: The State's religion is Islam and Islamic Sharia is the basis for legislation.
>
> Article 3: The State's official language is Arabic.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the centrality of Islam to the discourse of Omani identity as promulgated by the Common Law, references to the Islamic religion continue to abound in the other selected documents related to English-medium higher education. For example, twenty years after the country's only national university, the predominantly English-medium Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), was founded, its governing laws were refined in the 2006 Royal Decree 71/2006 "Promulgating the Law of Sultan Qaboos University and the Adoption of Its Organisational Structures". In the university's governing laws, the link between education, religion and tradition assumes pride of place, with the first objective of the university outlined as the:

- Graduation of alumni cohorts who value their cultural and Islamic heritage and are keen to strengthen their faith in God and their loyalty to the nation and the Sultan.

This theme is also continued in the introductory message to the university posted in 2012 on SQU's official homepage in both English and Arabic. This message highlights the importance the designers of the university placed on Islam since the institution's inception and the way religion influences almost every aspect of its existence. Examples include:

> The University is a tasteful array of buildings designed with arches and courtyards and constructed in white and pink sandstone in a manner that reflects traditional Omani and Islamic architecture. The University was constructed on an axis in the valley with one end aligned toward Mecca.

And:

> This axis line starts at the gates of entrance to the University, runs through the Administration Building with its massive Omani doors, and extends uninterrupted through the middle of the academic buildings to the University Mosque at the western end of the campus. The Mosque, with its large dome and minarets, is situated on the higher ground of the campus, and is visible from many points within and around the University.

The fact that the majority of SQU's welcome message to visitors is devoted to highlighting the compatibility between Islam and the kind of English-medium

university-level education the institution offers, could be interpreted as implying that resentment towards the university, or fear that students may lose their religious identities when exposed to English-medium instruction, may exist in certain sections of Omani society. That this kind of mistrust based on religious concerns about the predominance of the English-medium education most students encounter at SQU might be present in the country is implicitly addressed by the ruler of Oman, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, in a speech to selected students, faculty and community members to celebrate the 20th year anniversary of the university's founding in 2006. In this speech, Sultan Qaboos alludes to the way the university exists as a place in which Muslims can perform their duty of seeking knowledge as espoused in the Qur'an:

> Our Religion stands for ideas and the intellect, not the suppression of thought. Never. Our religion is tolerant, ethical and receptive to ideas. Every verse of the Glorious Quran calls for thinking, cogitation, etc.

The physical setting of the speech and the focus on the "ideas and intellect" it calls for, especially when taken alongside the architectural axis from SQU's entrance to its mosque, implies the way the university can act as a portal to higher branches of knowledge and understanding. That this knowledge is available to students through the medium of English, however, is nowhere presented as a potential threat to Islamic values and ideals. Rather, the documentary evidence suggests that great care has been taken in the planning and implementation of public-funded, English-medium tertiary-level education in the country to ensure that it allows students to pursue a religiously dutiful life based on strong morals and an understanding of the inexorable link between religion and knowledge.

4.2.2 English-medium education and cultural values.

The 1996 Common Law again offers a valuable insight into the way formal education can act to serve traditional Omani culture. In particular, Article 13 highlights how one of the aims of the post-1970 spread of free public education in Oman is that of the preservation and promotion of Omani-Arab cultural heritage and moral values. According to this document, education in the country:

> Aims to raise and develop the general cultural standard, promote scientific thought, kindle the spirit of research, respond to the requirements of economic and social plans, build a generation that is physically and morally

> strong, that takes pride in its nation, country, and heritage and preserves its achievements.

This bond between English-medium higher education and the preservation of Omani culture is a theme that emerges in various forms in many of the other documents analysed. For example, one of the roles of Oman's Ministry of Higher Education is to oversee the administration of higher education, in general, and to supervise the administration of SQU through the University Council in particular. The Ministry's mission statement, following from Article 13 of the Common Law, places emphasis on the value of education in helping Oman "keep pace with changes and developments in today's world" while "preserving the cultural identity of Omani society".

This point was also explicitly highlighted in a speech made by Sultan Qaboos upon the opening of SQU in 1986. Some of the Sultan's opening lines to his audience of officials and selected audience members sought to bridge the gap between an understanding of the "realistic" that implicitly acknowledged British and American power within the GCC and Oman, the role English plays in the international marketplace, and the need to maintain Omani traditions while re-orienting the country towards a more international outlook. A result of this bringing together of these arguably opposing ideals, according to the Sultan, was the development of a unique educational institution that had been tailor-made for Oman and its people:

> In planning this foundation [of SQU] we have followed a realistic policy to choose the positive aspects of contemporary academic systems that suit our Omani way of life and the national characteristics of our people. We have not imitated other universities in this.

And:

> The University has the particular responsibility to preserve Omani values and traditions and to preserve the valiant and exemplary Omani heritage as an incentive to our young people to serve their country by carrying forward what has been achieved in the past.

> Moreover, during the graduation ceremony for the first batch of SQU

graduates in 1990, Sultan Qaboos again reminded students, their parents and SQU faculty of the way Oman's rich "legacy" acted as the foundation for the building of a modern state through education:

> From the very start, one of our primary aims was to bring education to every part of the Sultanate, so that every member of the population could acquire the schooling he or she was entitled to. This country was facing a great challenge in its battle to overcome the results of long years of isolation and backwardness. So we began a hard, gruelling struggle, as we set about building our modern state brick by brick. We were helped immeasurably in our task by the legacy of our ancient civilisation, history and glory, by the assistance of Allah, and by the hard work, determination and noble ambitions of our people.

In this way, English-medium higher education in Oman, at least as it is provided by the national university, has been presented in the documentary data as being in no way incompatible with Oman's traditions and heritage. In fact, according to the documents, English-medium higher education in Oman performs the dual role of helping serve and preserve those traditional Omani values while, at the same time, enhancing the country's standing as a modern state in the international community.

4.2.3 English-medium education and modernisation.

Formal education in Oman was only really implemented following the ascension of Sultan Qaboos to the throne in 1970. Before that time, there only existed two or three public primary boys' schools in the entire country, with the previous sultan himself handpicking children from loyal families to attend (Denman, 2012b). Within this context, one of the objectives of the new regime in 1970 was the transformation of an isolated, "backward" and war-torn country into a modern, united nation through, among a number of other initiatives, the rapid spread of education.

With this historical context acting as a background, many of the documents featured here seek to re-enforce the close link between English-medium higher education and modernisation, especially in relation to the nation's institutions and workforce and their ability to participate in the global economy. Such references include the mission statement outlined by the Ministry of Higher Education on its official website in 2011, that higher education in Oman should help the country:

a) keep pace with developments and changes in today's world;
b) meet the requirements of sustainable development in the Knowledge Era

Moreover, one of the first objectives outlined by the 2006 University Law states that higher education should produce "specialists and experts of Oman in diverse fields, taking into account the changing needs of the marketplace and working within the framework of state policy on resource development". Sultan Qaboos, in his opening speech at SQU in 1986, ties the "needs of the marketplace" to developments in the world economy by maintaining the national university "has been set up principally in order to produce young Omanis who are aware of the world around them". In addition, the Language Centre's own mission statement brings together these concepts of an awareness of the wider world and changes in the marketplace by highlighting the importance of improving the English-language skills of Omani university students so as they can meet "the challenges of a changing work environment".

The Ministry of Higher Education's strategic objectives also acknowledge the way Oman's universities should produce graduates who "achieve high quality standards aligned with economic and social development requirements and national and global trends". Although it is not explicitly stated, the ministry-mandated compulsory study of English during students' foundation year at university, combined with the immersion of students in predominantly English-medium colleges and courses, could be read as one of the key elements of this "alignment" between national concerns and global trends.

Building upon this point, in his 2006 speech to commemorate the 20th year anniversary of the founding of SQU, Sultan Qaboos again offers the success of the English-medium national university as a marker of modernisation and participation in the workforce, by stating, "Education and work are our only means of progress and development within the context of our Islamic civilisation". Moreover, the Sultan clarifies the nature of this "progress" in serving the modernisation of the country by claiming, "Our target is not personal reward, but the progress and welfare of our country and the raising of its status among the nations." A similar note is also struck by the University Law, with one objective drawing the audience's attention to the rise of the "technological age" and reminding them that this era is one in which

"innovation and modernization are crucial for the development of society".

English-medium education, therefore, is linked in the documents to the modernisation of Oman and the increased ability of students with high-level English-language skills to participate in a globalised workforce. This explicit focus of the relationship between enhanced English-language skills, modernisation and the benefits of globalisation is, of course, a common theme used to justify the dominant position of English in education in a number of developing countries (Brock-Utne, 2001). However, within the documents analysed here, an important element of this presentation is the almost constant references to the way English-medium university-level education has been designed to suit Oman's "unique" traditions and needs, including placing education within the context of the country's contribution to "Islamic civilization".

4.2.4 English-medium education and community service.

While the above theme seeks to make an explicit link between English-medium higher education, modernisation and meeting the challenges of an increasingly globalised world, another important theme to emerge from the documentary analysis focuses less on issues of commerce and more on the value of education in building bridges within communities and across organisations.

The 2006 University Law, for instance, makes reference to the way education can be employed in serving community/communities both within the country and internationally. For example, notable objectives of the law state that SQU should assist:

- International links and exchange with other academic institutions, particularly those in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries.
- Interaction with international academic experience in all areas of thought, science and culture.
- Participation in community service and development through direct and continuous interaction with economic, social and cultural institutions, and the provision of scientific and technical advice to enable these institutions to utilize the University's skills and expertise.

One important feature of these objectives is the positioning of the predominantly English-language national university at the forefront of establishing international links with other academic institutions within the GCC. These "academic institutions", although not specified, are more than likely to also be

English-medium universities and colleges (Charise, 2007), which contributes to the situation in which academic exchange among the national universities of the Gulf may be dominated by English-language interactions.

Other examples of the way English-medium education has been presented within the documents as a means of contributing to other communities and organisations include SQU's mission statement which claims the university exists "to participate in the production, development and dissemination of knowledge, and to interact with national and international communities".

With direct reference to the research site, the Language Centre's mission statement also directly highlights the way the institute whose role it is to raise the English-language skills of Omani students is also primarily concerned with building interactions with the wider Omani community. The statement claims:

> The LC [Language Centre] exists to provide high quality language services to meet the requirements of academic study, the challenges of a changing work environment and the needs of the wider community.

This theme is also expanded upon in the Language Centre's objectives which include the community service goals of fostering community services and expanding "LC community service to the international community".

Sultan Qaboos, in his speech to mark the 20th year anniversary of the university, also highlights the way the English-medium university was established to serve all parts of Omani society, and how the enlightenment gained through access to the kind of "modern" education the university allows could spread "richness and growth" in the country:

> When we first set the education process in motion, we appealed for education to take place "even in the shade of the trees". We appealed for the whole population - male and female, young and old - to be given the opportunity to join the march of knowledge without discrimination, because the clear river of knowledge is one from which all should drink, and the channels flowing from it should carry richness, fecundity and growth to every part of Oman's pure and noble land.

In this speech, Sultan Qaboos returns to a common theme running through all four areas presented here: that English-medium higher education was initially designed and has been subsequently implemented in Oman to serve the religious, social, economic and community needs of the country, and should therefore be

celebrated for the benefits it brings to the country rather than feared as a potential source of contamination to traditional Oman-Arab and Islamic traditions and values.

4.2.5 Documentary data and attitudes towards English.

As stated above, the focus of the documentary data was on English-medium higher education in Oman and not on the attitudes towards the English language and its speakers of the Omani instructors working in these institutes. Nonetheless, the major themes that emerged from the documentary analysis performed here can be examined in relation to the areas of interest highlighted by the first two research questions: attitudes towards English and attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society. However, as no references were made in the documents to native speakers of English, the way these themes relate to the third research question cannot be explored.

Overall, the attitudes towards the English language and its place in Omani society expressed in the selected documents were very positive. For example, referring to the relationship between English-medium higher education and modernisation, the data suggests that English itself has helped provide a vital platform from which Oman has managed to re-engage with the international community after long years of isolation. By likening English to a portal through which international exchange and rapprochement can occur, the documents therefore acknowledge English's dominant position within the world of business, politics and trade. Moreover, English is also positioned in the documents as an important means of allowing people and countries to "keep pace" with developments in the "knowledge era". These developments are explicitly highlighted in the data as occurring across a variety of areas, including academia, science, and cross-cultural understandings, with English positioned as being more capable of dealing with advancements in these areas than any other language including Arabic itself.

This positive regard for the international utility of the language is also highlighted in the documents by the way English is viewed as one means through which Oman's national concerns and global developments can be "aligned". Interestingly, this alignment is not just presented in the documents as occurring between Oman itself and other non-Arab states, but is also featured as involving communications between other academic institutions within the GCC.

Moreover, positive attitudes towards English are not only limited in the documents to the language's material and social value, but are also associated with the way access to English can allow its users to perform the Muslim duty of seeking knowledge. In this way, English is presented in the featured documents as offering a path of spiritual advancement for its Muslim speakers.

With specific reference to attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society, all four areas presented in this section regarding the place of English-medium university-level education in Oman seem to offer a very similar set of positive attitudes. That is, English's position as a dominant medium of higher education in Omani, as promulgated by the government and implemented by Sultan Qaboos University initially and now, some twenty-five years after that institution's founding, by a growing number of small privately-run universities, is presented as complementing Oman's religion, culture, heritage and engagement with communities within the country. Moreover, the central role English has assumed in higher education means, according to the documents, that Oman has been able to engage in a process of modernisation that has allowed it to create a generation of informed, traditionally-minded, yet outward-looking young people who are capable of carrying Oman into the future without losing any of their cultural or religious values.

In addition to the compatibility between Omani traditions and values and the modernisation that English's central role in Oman has encouraged, the English language is also presented in the documents as one way to build bridges between various factions of Omani society. In fact, English is seen as offering such material, social, economic and spiritual benefits that the documents highlight how outreach programs devised by SQU's language centre can contribute to the community development and enhancement. Perhaps due to this focus on the positives of the place of English-medium higher education to Omani society, no potential negatives are highlighted in the documents.

Throughout the documentary data analysed here, positive attitudes towards the English language and its place of English in Omani society, or at least towards its place within the higher education sector, are constantly foregrounded, although the documents' authors are careful to constantly tie the material and social benefits English allows its users back to Islam and Omani-Arab traditions. As may be expected from government and other official sources seeking to promote education

policy choices to the country's citizenry, almost no negative attitudes towards either the English language or its role in Oman are featured in the documents.

4.3 Quantitative Analysis.

The second stage of data collection involved the use of a 5-point Likert response key questionnaire based on Malallah (2000) and Gardner (2004). The questionnaire's internal consistency was measured through ordinal alpha reliability coefficients calculated for each scale by Factor 8.10 software. Next, medians for the three scales of "Attitudes towards the English Language", "Attitudes towards the Place of English in Oman" and "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English" were calculated. Finally, to address the fourth research question inquiring into the relationship between the demographic variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained and attitudes, a series of Fisher's exact tests for *r x c* tables were conducted.

4.3.1 Questionnaire reliability.

Regarding the reliability of the questionnaire's scales, the "Attitudes towards the English Language" scale reported an ordinal alpha of .81, while the scales of "Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society" and "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English" reported ordinal alpha coefficients of .87 and .75 respectively.

The results for the first two scales, which were both adapted from Malallah (2000), therefore, show very good levels of reliability, while the final scale taken from Gardner (2004) also reported what DeVellis (1991) terms a "respectable" reliability level, which is between .7 and .8. Moreover, these measures are very similar to those either reported in Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) and Gardner (1985, 2004), or suggested by Malallah, (2000). However, as stated in Section 3.6.3, the small sample size in the current study means these coefficients are prone to instability and, therefore, must be interpreted cautiously.

4.3.2 Attitudes on questionnaire scales and items.

Due to the use of the 5-point Likert response key, data gained from both the questionnaire scales and individual questionnaire items have been interpreted as

belonging to the ordinal measurement scale. Therefore, the use of frequency tables and medians as a measure of central tendency was deemed more appropriate than the arithmetic means and standard deviations often used to describe interval and ratio level data (Boone & Boone, 2012).

A general rule for interpreting results for each of the scales featured here is that medians of 1 or 2 represent negative attitudes in the areas measured, with a median of 1 indicating more negative attitudes. Conversely, medians of 4 or 5 represent positive attitudes, with 5 representing more positive attitudes. Finally, a median of 3 can be considered to represent neutral attitudes. All scale medians are also presented with the percentage of positive responses (calculated from the total number of responses of strongly agree or agree across all scale items), negative responses (all strongly disagree and disagree responses), and neutral responses. As highlighted in Section 3.6.6, all negatively worded items have been scored in the opposite direction to the positively worded items so as to maintain the directional consistency of the scales. These items are marked in the frequency tables presented below by an asterisk.

When examining the medians of the individual items as opposed to those derived from each of the composite questionnaire scales, medians of 1 to 5 are perhaps best described as being more indicative of levels of agreement and disagreement than the overall concept of "attitudes". For instance, a median of 4 for the individual questionnaire item "I find the English language interesting" indicates that the middle response on the 5-point Likert response key from strongly agree to strongly disagree was "agree". On the other hand, a median of 4 for a negatively worded item such as "I don't like watching English language programmes on TV" indicates that the middle response was "disagree".

The median of each reported item is therefore presented with its corresponding level of agreement (the combined percentages of strongly agree and agree responses for the given item), disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) and neutrality. Again, responses to the negatively worded items have been coded in the opposite direction to the positively worded items to maintain consistency across scoring. When discussed in this chapter, these negatively worded items are explicitly highlighted.

Research Question #1: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?

The first research question regarded participants' attitudes towards the English language. Overall, these attitudes were quite positive, with a scale median of 4 and 75.13% of all responses being positive with only 12.70% neutral and 12.17% negative (see Table 4.1 below).

Of the 9 items featured on this scale, statements that recorded the highest possible medians of 5 were reported for two negatively-worded items. These were item 9 "I don't like watching English language programmes on TV" and item 17 "I don't like speaking English". Both of these items received 100% levels of disagreement. Of the remaining items, five recorded medians of 4 and another, "When I speak English, I feel that I'm more educated" (item 13), recorded a median of 3 which indicates a neutral level of agreement/disagreement. However, while 38.10% of participants responded in a neutral way to this item, another 38.09% of respondents expressed agreement while the final 23.81% disagreed.

The only item on the first scale to record a median indicating disagreement was item 11 "I prefer the English language to the Arabic language" (*Mdn* = 2). Here, 61.90% of respondents expressed disagreement, while 33.33% were neutral and only 4.76% agreed.

Research Question #2: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?

Results for the second research question are outlined in Table 4.2 below. The overall median for this scale was 4, which indicated quite positive attitudes in this area. However, unlike results on the first scale, all items on this scale received medians of 4 or 5 while 84.92% of all responses were positive. In fact, across this scale, negative and neutral responses each account for only 7.54% of all responses.

Some of the items on this scale to record the highest median of 5 include item 1 "The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman" (95.24% agree, 4.76% disagree), item 4 "Learning English enables Omanis to communicate with others abroad" (100% agree) and item 8 "More and more jobs in Oman (e.g. in banks, airports, companies) will require English" (95.24% agree, 4.76% disagree).

Table 4.1

Attitudes towards the English Language

	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Item 9*: I don't like watching English language programmes on TV.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	47.62% (10)	52.38% (11)	5
Item 17*: I don't like speaking English.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	38.10% (8)	61.90% (13)	5
Item 2: I find the English language interesting.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	52.38% (11)	47.62% (10)	4
Item 5: I hope to put my children in a private English school so that they speak English fluently.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	14.29% (3)	38.10% (8)	42.86% (9)	4
Item 15*: I find the English language boring.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	57.14% (12)	42.86% (9)	4
Item 21: I find the English language easy.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	4.76% (1)	57.14% (12)	33.33% (7)	4
Item 26: I find speaking English is prestigious.	4.76% (1)	9.52% (2)	23.81% (5)	52.38% (11)	9.52% (2)	4
Item 13: When I speak English, I feel that I'm more "educated".	4.76% (1)	19.05% (4)	38.10% (8)	33.33% (7)	4.76% (1)	3
Item 11: I prefer the English language to the Arabic language.	33.33% (7)	28.57% (6)	33.33% (7)	4.76% (1)	0% (0)	2
Column Total & Percent	4.76% (9)	7.41% (14)	12.70% (24)	42.33% (80)	32.80% (62)	4
Totals for Disagree/ Neutral/Agree	12.17% 23		12.70% 24	75.13% 142		

Note. For most items, the column figures 1 – 5 represent responses of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree. However, items marked with * are negatively worded with 1 – 5 representing responses of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. All percentages have been calculated to two decimal points. Therefore, some column percentages may sum to either 0.01 above or below 100%. The numbers in parenthesis are the total number of participants that indicated each response.

Other notable items on this scale relate to English as the language of prestige in Oman, with, for example, items 20 – "To be an academic expert in Oman, you have to learn English" (76.19% agree, 14.29% disagree and 9.52% neutral) – and 22 – "The English language is the language of prestige in Oman" (71.43% agree, 23.81% neutral and 4.76% disagree) – both recording medians of 4. Moreover, most respondents also disagreed with those negatively worded items relating to the potentially damaging effects of the English language on Omani society, the Arabic language and Islam. These include a median of 5 for item 24 "Learning English will harm the Islamic religion" (95.24% disagree, 4.76% neutral) and medians of 4 for item 10 "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" (80.95% disagree, 9.52% agree and 9.52% neutral), item 14 "The English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language" (80.96% disagree, 14.29% agreement and 4.76% neutral) and item 23 "Oman society is so proud of the Arabic language that it feels no need to learn English" (66.66% disagree, 19.05% neutral and 14.28% agree).

Research Question #3: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards native speakers of English?

The final questionnaire scale regarded participants' attitudes towards native speakers of English. The overall median for this scale was 3, with 45.83% of responses being neutral, 39.88% positive and the remaining 14.29% negative (see Table 4.3).

Of the eight items featured on this scale, only three recorded medians that indicated levels of agreement. These are item 12 "If Oman had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss" (71.42% agree, 19.05% neutral and 9.52% disagree), item 16 "Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends" (52.38% agree, 38.10% neutral and 9.52% disagree) and item 18 "The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them" (57.14% agree, 38.10% neutral and 4.76% disagree). All items recorded a median of 4.

Conversely, the remaining five items on this scale all received medians of 3 which indicates neutral attitudes. Notable items here include item 7 "You can always trust native English speakers" (52.38% neutral, 23.81% agree and 23.81%

Table 4.2

Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society

	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Item 1: The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	0% (0)	42.86% (9)	52.38% (11)	5
Item 4: Learning English enables Omanis to communicate with others abroad.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	33.33% (7)	66.67% (14)	5
Item 8: More and more jobs in Oman (eg in banks, airports, companies) will require English language proficiency.	4.76% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	28.57% (6)	66.67% (14)	5
Item 24*: Learning English will harm the Islamic religion.	0% (0)	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	42.86% (9)	52.38% (11)	5
Item 3*: It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman.	0% (0)	9.52% (2)	9.52% (2)	66.67% (14)	14.29% (3)	4
Item 6: It is important to take postgraduate studies abroad in English.	0% (0)	9.52% (2)	9.52% (2)	38.10% (8)	42.86% (9)	4
Item 10*: Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis.	4.76% (1)	4.76% (1)	9.52% (2)	52.38% (11)	28.57% (6)	4
Item 14*: The English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language.	0% (0)	14.29% (3)	4.76% (1)	57.14% (12)	23.81% (5)	4
Item 20: To be an academic expert in Oman, you have to learn English.	0% (0)	14.29% (3)	9.52% (2)	42.86% (9)	33.33% (7)	4
Item 22: The English language is the language of prestige in Oman.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	23.81% (5)	52.38% (11)	19.05% (4)	4
Item 23*: Oman society is so proud of the Arabic language that it feels no need to learn English.	4.76% (1)	9.52% (2)	19.05% (4)	57.14% (12)	9.52% (2)	4

(table continues)

	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Item 29: Many Omani parents put their children in private English-medium schools so that they will speak English fluently.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	0% (0)	61.90% (13)	33.33% (7)	4
Column Total & Percent	1.19% (3)	6.35% (16)	7.54% (19)	48.02% (121)	36.90% (93)	4
Totals for Disagree/ Neutral/Agree		7.54% (19)	7.54% (19)	84.92% (214)		

Note. For most items, the column figures 1 – 5 represent responses of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree. However, items marked with * are negatively worded with 1 – 5 representing responses of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. All percentages have been calculated to two decimal points. Therefore, some column percentages may sum to either 0.01 above or below 100%. The numbers in parenthesis are the total number of participants that indicated each response.

disagree), item 25 "Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value" (52.38% neutral, 33.33% disagree and 14.29% agree) and item 27 "Native English speakers are very sociable and kind" (61.90% neutral, 33.33% agree and 4.76% disagree).

Research Question #4: What impact, if any, do the variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained, have on these attitudes?

Cross-tabulation analysis was initially performed to assess what relationship, if any, the demographic variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained had with each of the three questionnaire scales. As outlined in Section 3.8.4, the small sample size means computing Pearson chi-square tests of independence was not possible without violating a number of important assumptions. Therefore, a series of Fisher's exact tests were calculated. Significance levels for the Fisher's exact tests were set at .05. Given the status of the research as exploratory rather than confirmatory in nature, corrections for increased probability of type I error due to multiple tests, such as Bonferroni or Sidak corrections, were not performed.

Table 4.3

Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English

	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Item 12: If Oman had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.	0% (0)	9.52% (2)	19.05% (4)	61.90% (13)	9.52% (2)	4
Item 16: Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.	0% (0)	9.52% (2)	38.10% (8)	52.38% (11)	0% (0)	4
Item 18: The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	38.10% (8)	52.38% (11)	4.76% (1)	4
Item 7: You can always trust native English speakers.	0% (0)	23.81% (5)	52.38% (11)	23.81% (5)	0% (0)	3
Item 19: I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends.	0% (0)	19.05% (4)	57.14% (12)	23.81% (5)	0% (0)	3
Item 25: Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.	9.52% (2)	23.81% (5)	52.38% (11)	14.29% (3)	0% (0)	3
Item 27: Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.	0% (0)	4.76% (1)	61.90% (13)	33.33% (7)	0% (0)	3
Item 28: I would like to know more native English speakers.	4.76% (1)	4.76% (1)	47.62% (10)	38.10% (8)	4.76% (1)	3
Column Total & Percent	1.79% (3)	12.50% (21)	45.83% (77)	37.50% (63)	2.38% (4)	3
Totals for Disagree/ Neutral/Agree	14.29% (24)		45.83% (77)	39.88% (67)		

Note. All items on this scale are positively worded and therefore responses of 1 – 5 represent responses of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. All percentages have been calculated to two decimal points. Therefore, some column percentages may sum to either 0.01 above or below 100%. The numbers in parenthesis are the total number of participants that indicated each response.

Only one of these tests indicated a significant relationship between demographic variables and overall scores on the questionnaire scales. This was for the variables of gender and attitudes towards native speakers of English (p = .045). On this scale, male respondents recorded a slightly higher median response value (Mdn = 3.5) than their female counterparts (Mdn = 3.25). This indicates that male participants held slightly more positive attitudes towards native speakers of English than female participants (see Section 5.3).

Despite this finding, however, the remaining tests did not indicate any other significant relationships. That is, probability levels for all tests of demographic variables and questionnaire scale composite scores were too high to reject the null hypothesis of independence between contingency tables rows and columns. This outcome was largely predicted by the existing research.

Following the analysis of the three scales, individual items comprising each scale were also examined for significant relationships with the demographic variables again using Fisher's exact tests with a set significance level of .05. Items reporting significant relationships from each scale are reported below.

Scale 1: "Attitudes towards the English Language".

Only one item reported a significant relationship with any of the demographic variables on the first scale. This was item 21 "I find the English language easy" and the variable of number of years spent as an English-language teacher (p = .004). For this item, those participants who had taught for 5 years or fewer reported a median response value of 4.5, which indicates two middle scores of 4 and 5. Moreover, those respondents who had taught English for between 6 and 10 years had a median value of 5 (strongly agree). However, for Omani English-language instructors who had taught English for both 11-15 years and 16 years or more, the reported median decreased to 4 (agree). (See Figure 4.2.)

Scale 2: "Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society".

A higher number of significant relationships between items on the scale regarding attitudes towards the place of English in Oman and demographic variables were reported. The first of these was for the negatively worded item 10, "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" and age

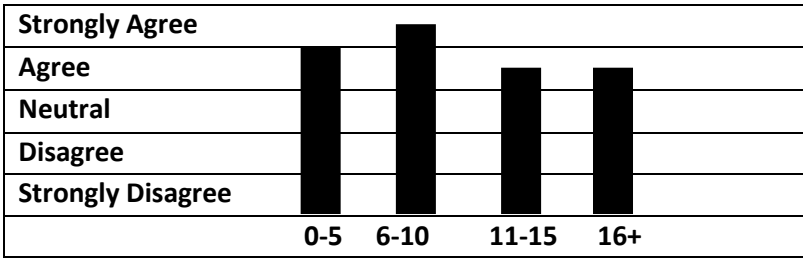


Figure 4.2. Item 21 "I find the English language easy" by number of years teaching experience.

(p = .004). Here, respondents in the lowest and highest age brackets of 20-30 and 51-60 recorded a median value of 5 which indicates strong disagreement with the item. Respondents falling into the two remaining age brackets of 31-40 and 41-50 also disagreed with this statement. However, their level of disagreement was slightly lower, with a median value of 4 (disagree). (See Figure 4.3.)

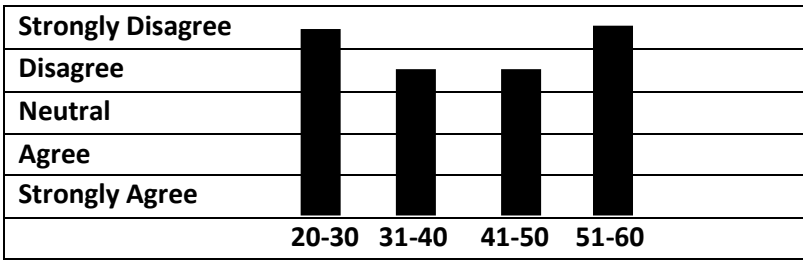


Figure 4.3. Item 10 "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" by age in years.

The next significant relationship on this scale was between participants' first language and item 1, "The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman" (p = .043). Those participants who used Arabic as their exclusive first language recorded a median value of 5 (strong agree). On the other hand, participants who were bilingual recorded a median value in response to this item of 3. This value represents a neutral stance in relation to the item. (See Figure 4.4.)

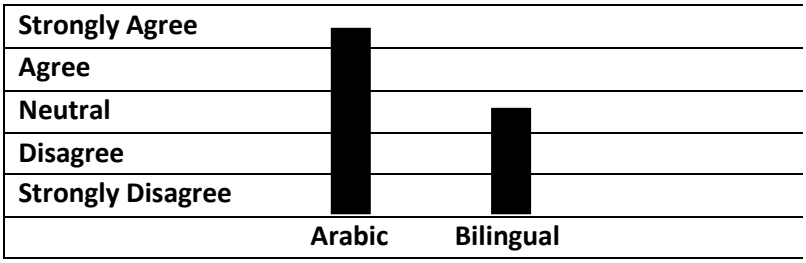


Figure 4.4. Item 1"The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman" by first language.

The demographic variable of country where post-graduate level studies were undertaken displayed significant relationships with two negatively worded items on this scale. These were item 3, "It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman" (p = .033) (see Figure 4.5) and item 24, "Learning English will harm the Islamic religion" (p = .033) (see Figure 4.6). Regarding item 3, respondents in all variable categories recorded medians of 4, thus indicating disagreement with the item. Differences here are due to the response range recorded for each group.

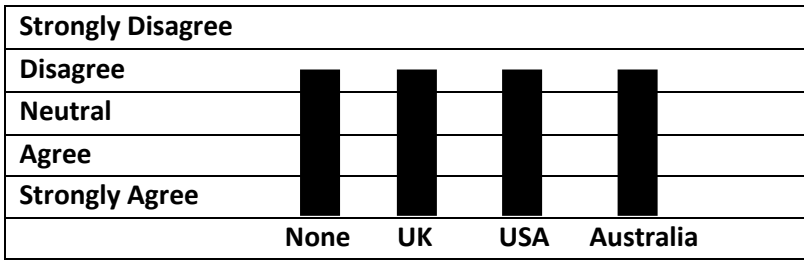


Figure 4.5. Item 3 "It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman" by country of post-graduate studies.

For example, for those participants who had not attended post-graduate studies, the response range was from 3 (neutral) to 5 (strongly disagree). For those who had studied at the post-graduate level in the United Kingdom, this range was from 3 (neutral) to 4 (disagree). However, all participants who studied in the USA responded to this item with 4 (disagree), while respondents who studied in Australia recorded the widest range of between 2 (agree) and 5 (strongly disagree)

In terms of the relationship between country of post-graduate degree and item 24, those participants who had either not completed higher level studies or had undertaken these studies in Australia reported a median value of 5 indicating strong disagreement with the statement that learning English will harm Islam. Those who studied in the USA also disagreed/strongly disagreed with this item (Mdn = 4.5), while participants who had studied in the UK disagreed (Mdn = 4).

Finally, number of years teaching was also found to have a significant relationship with the negatively worded item 10 "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" (p = .031). Respondents who had taught for 5 years or fewer recorded the highest median value of 5 (strongly

disagree). While participants falling into each of the other age brackets reported median values of 4 (disagree). (See Figure 4.7.)

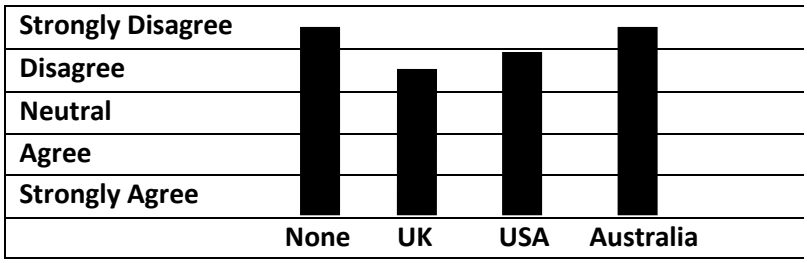


Figure 4.6. Item 24 "Learning English will harm the Islamic religion" by country of post-graduate studies.

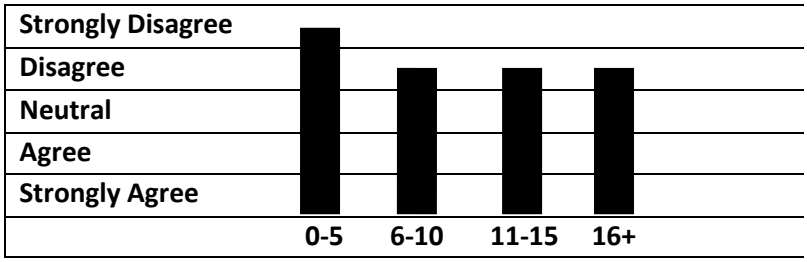


Figure 4.7. Item 10 "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" by number of years teaching experience.

Scale 3: "Attitudes towards English Speaking People".

Only one item on the third questionnaire scale regarding attitudes towards English-speaking people was found to have significant relationships with any of the demographic variables. This was item 7, "You can always trust native English speakers" (p = .012), and the variable of country where higher studies were completed. In response to this item, participants who had not studied higher level degrees recorded the highest level of agreement (*Mdn* = 4). However, median values became neutral (*Mdn* = 3) for those respondents who had completed their highest level degrees in either the United Kingdom or the United States. Finally, those participants who had completed their post-graduate studies in Australia recorded a median of 2 which indicates disagreement with the item. (See Figure 4.8.)

4.3.3 Summary of the questionnaire results.

Overall, the three questionnaire scales reported either very good or respectable levels of reliability with ordinal alpha coefficients between .75 and .87. However, as noted

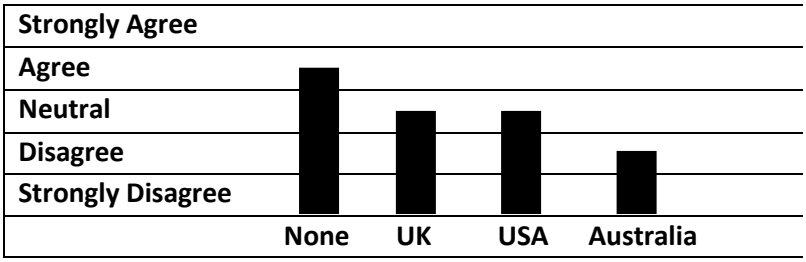


Figure 4.8. Item 7 "You can always trust native English speakers" by country of post-graduate studies.

above, the sample is too small to consider these measurements stable and they are offered here as part of the exploratory nature of the research. Participants' attitudes towards the English language and attitudes towards the place of English within Omani society were both positive, with medians for these two scales of 4 (with 75.13% of all responses being positive) and 5 (84.92% positivity) respectively. However, for the third scale regarding attitudes towards native speakers of English, the overall median was 3 with only 45.83% of responses being positive which indicates far more neutral attitudes in this area.

Across the three scales, only the demographic variable of gender was found to be significantly related to differences in composite scale totals, with male respondents reporting slightly more favourable attitudes towards native speakers of English than their female counterparts. Although a number of differences related to demographic variables did appear when all questionnaire items were examined individually, these differences were almost all found to be merely in strength of agreement, with only the variable of country in which post-graduate studies were completed and the item "You can always trust native English speakers" displaying any level of disagreement (see Section 5.2.3 for more details).

4.4 Semi-structured Interviews.

The final stage of data collection involved conducting one-on-one semi-structured interviews with eight participants. After all semi-structured interviews were transcribed either in their entirety (for the recorded interviews) or as a set of notes (for the female participants who did not want to be recorded), resultant data was thematically analysed employing *a priori* categories suggested by the literature.

4.4.1 Semi-structured interview results.

As stated in Section 3.8.7, the initial codes devised for analysis of the interview data were drawn from the results to emerge from the questionnaire and documentary data and theoretical positions espoused in the literature with particular reference given to the conceptual framework formed by Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) senses of language learning as outlined in Section 2.8. These responses, informed by aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic aspects of language learning, are acceptance and assimilation, pragmatic utilisation, and resistance and rejection – all of which appeared in various forms in results, and with varying levels of reference to the senses of language learning, in the questionnaire and documentary analysis stages of the research. These general categories where then examined across the three primary areas of interest in the current research of attitudes towards English, attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society, and attitudes towards native speakers of the language, thus creating nine categories or codes.

Examination of these nine categories revealed a large degree of overlap in themes associated with the first two areas of attitudes towards English and the place of English in Omani society and those attitudes associated with acceptance and pragmatic utilisation. To visually represent this blurring of boundaries, the borders between these cells have been removed in Table 4.4 which summarises dominant responses from the semi-structured interviews.

Research Question #1: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?

In the semi-structured interviews, attitudes expressed towards the English language were largely positive. For instance, there was a general agreement amongst participants that the English language acted as the world's global language and, as such, was dominant in a number of domains including education, business, science, travel, technology, conferences and so on. Participants mostly focused on the positives of this internationally-dominant position, with several responses highlighting the ways in which knowledge of the English language had eased their experiences abroad as international students, researchers, conference-goers and travellers.

Table 4.4

Semi-Structured Interview Themes

Initial Codes	Attitudes to English	Attitudes to English in Oman	Attitudes to Native Speakers
Acceptance and Assimilation	English is world's language English is language of business, education, science, conferences, travel, health care and many more domains in many countries English helps Omanis communicate with outside world English gives access to good jobs and social status Using English lets Omanis express own concerns/identity to people in other nations English makes research/study easier	English is used across a number of domains such as education, science, health care etc. English allows Omanis to communicate with other racial/cultural groups in the country English has played an important role in Oman's development English has been associated with development in the country since British colonisation	English can be a way to make native speaking friends
Pragmatic Utilisation			Working with many native speakers requires good relationships with them as colleagues English lets Omani instructors interact in different ways with their native speaking colleagues than how they interact with their Omani and/or Arab colleagues
Resistance and Rejection	May be potential for "Westernisation" of young people – but overall Omani identity is too strong to be threatened by English Some people outside of Muscat resent English because can't dissociate it American/British foreign policy	English acts as a "gatekeeper" of education success Omanis who speak English outside of Muscat are seen as "showing off" English dominance in higher education is a construct that can be changed at any time	Friendships between native speakers and Omani teachers in research site may be based on "politics" rather than mutual respect Native speakers of English seen as "the enemy" in some segments of society

Note. The left column represents the initial coding of the interviews adopted from the conceptual framework while the remaining columns represent the three areas in which participants' attitudes were examined. An interesting feature of the themes to emerge from the interviews summarised in this table is the overlap across the first two areas (attitudes towards English and attitudes towards English in Omani society) and attitudes associated with acceptance and pragmatic utilisation. To represent this overlap, the horizontal borders between these cells have been removed.

Closely related to the positive attitudes of English as a global language, were the benefits of participant access to a socially esteemed career path due to access to the English language. All participants reported positive reactions from family members regarding their decisions to become tertiary-level English-language instructors. For instance, although several participants claimed that English-language teaching was not their initial goal when entering university, once their career paths had been chosen, family members were very supportive.

Concerns about any potentially negative effects from the exposure to the English language that their careers demanded were largely absent. However, two participants did express concern that young people studying English might become more vulnerable to some of the bad habits, such as drinking alcohol and "immodestly" with members of the opposite sex, often associated with the Western cultural products they experience on the internet, TV and in music. These concerns were expressed by one participant who claimed:

> So I think some young people would try to imitate certain behaviours because they think this is really associated with the language that I'm speaking [English] and I have to do it to convince people that I'm a good language speaker. They could have that perception because they have not reached that maturity level to separate the two – speaking the language does not mean giving up your culture.

On a more personal level, two respondents questioned how their native-like English-language skills may potentially limit their abilities to think in Arabic. For example, one respondent claimed to be "afraid" of thinking in English because "sometimes I can't think in Arabic. So, it might affect my behaviour, even my way of thinking. And I'm not happy about that, but I don't think in Arabic when I speak in English."

While another stated:

> I don't even write in Arabic anymore. And at this stage, last year, I felt like I was losing a part of my identity and my language. I know so many people say it's [speaking English] additive, you do not lose anything you're gaining something. And at one point that was true, but now I don't even think in Arabic. And to me, I'd like to go back and forth rather than being focused just on English because I like to write in English, I write my diaries in English, and if you write something that's as personal as diaries in a second language then this is you.

However, both these participants also tempered their statements by recalling the way their English-language abilities had been empowering in their personal and private lives in spite of these potential threats.

In addition to these two participants, another respondent also acknowledged the potential for knowledge of English to alienate learners from their cultural heritage. However, while this respondent explicitly highlighted the way the English language acts as a carrier of Western culture/s, they nonetheless maintained that an individual's maturity level helped determine whether this exposure would be harmful:

> The thing is, I believe when you learn a language you learn the culture. You cannot really separate the two, even if you are very careful with what to listen to, what to watch, with the internet. I mean, the language allows you to be exposed, or to be introduced, to a different kind of culture. Different people respond to these different elements of a new culture differently. I learned the language, and I learned a lot about the culture of the language, but it all depends on your maturity level, it all depends on if you are really focussed and know what you are looking for.

This belief in what Kabel (2007) describes as the "power potential" of students of other languages is closely linked with another theme to emerge from the research, that of the ownership of English. Although most respondents expressed their attitudes towards English in terms of the language being a "global" or "international" phenomenon, a common response during interviews was of the appropriation of the English language to suit respondents' own beliefs and values, despite the language's historical ties to British colonisation. This notion is perhaps best encapsulated by one respondent who stated:

> We know that English has spread all around the world because of many reasons. Actually, colonisation played a role in the past, but now I think people are free and they actually don't need this as an excuse to learn. It is now used for knowledge, business and interaction. I think we live in a world that has become a village. So, we need a shared language, and English could be the one.

Therefore, the pragmatic or instrumental value of participants' knowledge of English emerged as a theme that contributed to their generally positive attitudes towards the English language, with only a few areas of concern about the intrusion of foreign values into either their or their students' lives being apparent.

Research Question #2: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?

Attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society were closely linked to participants' attitudes towards the English language itself. For instance, in response to questions about the utility of the English language in general and its current position in Omani society, all participants identified a similar set of domains in which the language was dominant. These included education, business, science and technology. The one domain to emerge in specific relation to Omani society, however, was that of health care, with a several participants highlighting the dominance of foreign-born, English-speaking medical workers in the country.

In addition, while the English language was identified as facilitating international communication by a number of participants, the language was also claimed in a number of interviews to act as a kind of lingua franca in Oman itself as it is employed for communication between the diverse racial and cultural groups that comprise the country's population. A number of participants identified these various groups as coming from all over the world, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Africa and Western nations, as well as those from other Arab nations. One respondent offered a succinct summary of the place of English in Omani society:

> English can be used in public communication. People go to hospitals, supermarkets, malls, public places, where they find people who only speak English. Like nurses in the hospitals. We have a lot of international nurses who are not Omanis and cannot speak in Arabic, so you need that actually. Not only that, when you interact actually with people abroad, of course we live in this world, we need English. Also, we have people living in Oman who are not Omanis and cannot speak Arabic and we need to communicate. Not only that, but in some fields, like science, you need English because you need to learn what's new in this field. Like in teaching English as a second language, to get the latest information and updates, they are going to come in English, not in Arabic.

English was seen by participants in these interactions as the preferred form of communication, although most participants claimed interactions with fellow Omanis outside of their daily professional lives was usually carried out in Arabic. Moreover, one participant even claimed to almost exclusively prefer the use of Arabic with his Omani English-teaching colleagues at the research site, claiming:

> Sometimes, when a person starts talking with me in Arabic, I will complete the conversation in Arabic. If he starts in English, I might use English but I will not be talkative, I will not, you know, let the conversation carry on – this is with all Omani colleagues here in the Language Centre.

Participants also highlighted how the English language has played an important role in the development of Oman, especially since the current ruler, Sultan Qaboos, came to power in 1970. In this way, participants stated English has continued to be widely used in private enterprises and international business, but has also acted as the de facto language of higher education and local business. Most participants, therefore, saw the central role of English in Omani society as a beneficial force, with, for instance, one participant stating:

> Oman is at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, so English is a way to tap into international trade and globalisation and all that. It's an important part of the future, look at all the developments now to increase tourism and the new airport and ports to make Oman a hub in the region. Really, I think English will be even more important in the future, especially as the economy keeps moving away from relying too much on oil production.

While another, when asked about the potential downside of the link between the widespread use of English in Oman and development, noted:

> Honestly, I cannot see any negatives. Maybe in very few Omani families – very few, I cannot actually give you percentages or numbers – but maybe some people talk about it like, look at that person he only speaks in English with his children, ignoring his mother tongue. But these are just a very, very small number, so we should actually not say there is a problem with English.

Despite the overall focus on the advantages of the central role English plays in Omani society, two participants raised concerns about the over-emphasis placed on the language, at the expense of Arabic, in the education system, with one respondent stating:

> Look at teachers working here, including myself. All our sons and daughters, because we want a better education, are in bilingual schools. And they are called bilingual schools but kids there speak in English. They are not taught Arabic properly and they grow up, like my brothers who study in private schools and they have spelling mistakes in English and Arabic, but their English is much better than their Arabic. So this is why I'm saying it's harming the Arabic language. It's because a lot of attention is given to English but, on the other hand, there isn't the same attention given to Arabic.

These concerns were also expressed by several participants who wondered about the potential of the English language to exclude their university-level students from educational success. For example, one participant noted that the English language was used as the medium of instruction in the "prestigious" colleges at the research site, such as those of engineering and medicine. However, due to the exclusive use of English in these colleges, some students who may lack English competence cannot either gain entry to these colleges or, if they do, fail their studies there. This leaves them, according to the respondent, with the option of improving their English-language skills, dropping out of university altogether, or entering a college, such as agriculture, where Arabic is the primary medium of instruction. This respondent claimed that:

> I think, also in the job market, there are people who feel that they are limited if you don't have enough language skills or the required level of English then your opportunities are really minimal – there aren't any fields to enter. You might also have students who become frustrated because in a lot of institutions – most institutions at the tertiary-level in Oman – English is the medium of instruction. Again, you do spend lots of money upgrading the level of English of these students, that's why they have to go through a foundation program, and so they spend a whole year basically only learning English before they start their degree courses. Some students find it difficult, they cannot cope, and they have to leave the university, so they lose their opportunity of getting a higher education.

In addition, another respondent worried about the way English as the dominant language of higher education in Oman may act to hamper the development of academics and academic culture in the country:

> Frankly, it's after 10 years of studying English that I feel capable of expressing myself and writing research in English. To me, and I am one of the few, I had opportunities that many others did not have. If I teach these kids English and only one them could write research then this is one out of a thousand. Why not teach them something in their own language and I would have a hundred? This is what I meant. I think it is a political social construct. Things do not have to be this way.

In this way, some respondents saw English as acting as a "gatekeeper" to the kind of educational success that is often associated with social mobility in many societies. Moreover, access to English is often linked with access to private educational facilities at the primary and high school levels. A number of

respondents highlighted how private English-medium schools were becoming an increasingly popular, if expensive, option for parents:

> But I think people realise, particularly young parents – they know that a lot of attention is given to the teaching of English, so they're also shifting their attention. Young parents are interested in sending their children to private schools, that means they have to spend huge amounts of money for their children's education because they do want to ensure that their children have a better future.

Despite these concerns with English-language education increasingly becoming the preserve of the upper and middle classes, few of the respondents believed that the central role of English in Omani society had the potential to negatively impinge upon Oman's culture.

However, aside from the belief that the dominance of English in higher education may be potentially limiting to the development of academia and student success in the country as stated above, one respondent also noted that attitudes towards Omanis who spoke English outside of the capital city may often be negative. This respondent stated:

> Here [in Muscat], I can speak English in the university, I can speak it outside of the university and people understand English, English is very popular, but if you go to the countryside and start speaking English everybody will look at you. 'What's he doing? He's trying to sound like he's a prestigious person.' That's common, very common, it's dominant in the countryside. You can't speak English in public places, otherwise you'll be seen negatively, like you're trying to show off.

Much like attitudes towards the language itself, participants' attitudes towards the place of English in Oman were also largely positive, with many focusing on the access to work and education, in addition to a variety of public and private services, that knowledge of English allows. However, again this positive regard was tinged with a some minor concern about the way English acts as a gate-keeper to educational and social success, with one participant even suggesting that access to the language may be increasingly becoming the preserve of the middle- and upper-classes due to the expense of private schools where English is the de facto medium of education.

Research Question #3: What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards native speakers of English?

Like themes to emerge about attitudes towards the English language and its place in Omani society, attitudes towards native speakers of English were also generally positive. All respondents reported a large degree of experience with native speakers due to both their jobs, where Omanis comprise a little over 20% of the faculty at the research site with the other 80% being teachers from around the world, and their experiences as students of higher degrees in Western nations such as the UK, Australia and the United States. It is perhaps due to this extensive experience that respondents were unwilling to make universal statements about their relationships with native English speakers, with dominant responses perhaps best summarised by:

> So my friends are my friends. The thing is, I've also realised with Western culture, like in my culture – and this is what many Westerners don't understand because of the way we dress and look – there are circles of thought and you fit in a certain circle and with Westerners, like with Omanis, I fit within a certain circle and I do not fit with the others.

In fact, some participants identified English as a good way to make native-speaking friends, although many were ambiguous about whether they would look to extend their number of personal relationships in this area. Moreover, one respondent questioned whether the relationships made between Omani language instructors in the research site and their native English speaking colleagues were genuine, or if a desire on the behalf of native speakers to advance their careers was an element affecting these friendships. This respondent stated:

> Most people coming here want a job, and for me, as an Omani, some of them – and I heard this from a native speaker – they think just because you're an Omani some day you will become someone important. So you become their friend.

Despite this potential concern, most participants expressed a desire to form good working relationships with all their colleagues regardless of where they were born. However, while respondents reported having mostly favourable attitudes towards their native English-speaking colleagues, one respondent claimed hostility towards native speakers of English to exist among certain segments of Omani society. This respondent claimed:

> English is seen negatively by some people in the countryside, or even by some people in the main cities, because they talk about two separate things. They talk about English, and the people who speak English. We know English is related to culture, so when they see English the first thing that flashes into their minds is English people. Who are English-speaking people? They are Americans, they are European people who speak English. And what are they? They think they are our enemies. They relate two separate things that can't be related – politics and language. "We hate those people, so we hate their languages" - this is the thinking of ignorant people, old people, and sometimes people who are fanatic, who have dogmatic personalities.

Overall, attitudes towards native speakers were largely positive in the interviews, with a number of participants insisting that personal relationships were based more on an individual's personality and way of thinking than on nationality. However, like a number of the Malaysian studies reported in Section 2.5, one respondent noted the existence of hostility towards native English speakers in certain segments of Omani society. These attitudes were not reported as being held by any of the respondents themselves, and were mostly ascribed to elderly people living outside of the cities or those with "dogmatic" personalities.

4.5 Triangulation.

The data presented above was gathered from three different sources: documentary analysis of public domain documents related to English-medium university-level education in Oman, a Likert-scale questionnaire based on scales adapted from Malallah (2000) and Gardner (1985, 2004), and semi-structured interviews. Due to the exploratory nature of the research, and in an attempt to heighten the validity and reliability of results (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010), dominant themes and trends emerging from analysis of data from these sources have been triangulated and summarised below.

As outlined in Section 3.8.8, triangulation was performed through a comparison of dominant themes emerging from analysis of the data gathered from each source. For example, the medians for each questionnaire scale were taken as indicators of overall attitudes towards either the English language, its place in Oman, or towards native speakers of English. These areas were further explored through examination of the scale items that most closely approximated, or diverged from, the composite scale score. These individual items were explored as examples of dominant attitudes in each of the three areas measured by the questionnaire, with

these themes then compared and contrasted with results from the thematic analysis and/or cluster analysis of the semi-structured interviews and documentary data. Again, areas of divergence and convergence between themes emerging from all three data sources as they relate to the first three research questions were explored. (The fourth research question was only addressed through the use of statistical analysis and not through triangulation.) Results are presented below.

4.5.1 Triangulation and summary of findings.

Results for the triangulation are divided into the first three research questions. Areas of convergence and divergence in the data as they relate to these research questions are reported.

Research Question #1: What are Omani tertiary-level English language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?

As outlined in Section 4.3.2, data obtained from the first scale of the questionnaire revealed quite positive attitudes towards the English language as evidenced by the more than 75% of positive responses to items of this scale. Results from the semi-structured interviews similarly revealed a high level of positive attitudes towards the English language while the documentary data also placed an explicit focus on the potential advantages to be gained through access to English.

For example, responses to the first scale of the questionnaire suggested that respondents held the belief that their knowledge of English added to, rather than detracted from, their identities. Most respondents in the interviews saw their knowledge of English as "empowering" and reported being "grateful" to the many social and personal opportunities the language had allowed them. These positive attitudes were also apparent in the 100% of respondents who stated they enjoyed speaking English and liked watching English language programs on television. A focus on the empowering potential of English-language tertiary education was also present in the documentary data, with a special focus on the way English-medium education could help create a new generation that is morally "strong".

Another area of overlap between the quantitative and qualitative data related to the questionnaire item "When I speak English, I feel that I'm more educated". Around 38% of respondents responded in a neutral way to this item, while almost another 24% disagreed. This level of uncertainty and disagreement is linked to the

questioning of the dominant "construct" of English-medium tertiary education in Oman and, as such, may be directly linked to an awareness of the way English can act as a gatekeeper to educational success, rather than a marker of that success. This point was expressed by a number of interview respondents who agreed that a lack of English-language skills acted to limit an individual's employment possibilities.

Such concerns about the positioning of the English language as a gatekeeper to educational and social success were, of course, entirely absent from the documentary data. However, this lack of reference could be accounted for by the choice of documents that were either government-produced and -disseminated or at least officially supported by government ministries. Therefore, these documents were more concerned with promoting government policy decisions as they relate to the place of the English language in higher education than debating the potential negatives of such policies.

The only questionnaire item to receive a high level of disagreement on the first questionnaire scale related to participants' preferences for English over Arabic. About 62% of respondents disagreed with this item with a full third reporting neutral responses. A similar trend also emerged in the interviews, with most participants claiming a preference for the Arabic language at least in their professional lives, and one participant even extending this preference to interactions with fellow Omani English-language instructors. However, the 33% level of neutrality reported in response to the questionnaire item may have found similar expression in the interviews with the concern some respondents stated feeling about the knowledge that English was starting to replace Arabic as their language of self-expression.

Regarding the documentary data, a common theme to emerge across documents was of the overt focus on the compatibility between English-medium education and Arab heritage. This point was restated numerous times in the selected documents, including in the statement that the English-medium national university has "the particular responsibility" to maintain Omani heritage and traditions. The documentary data relating to the preference of Arabic to English, therefore, runs contrary to the trends reported in the interviews and questionnaire.

Research Question #2: What are Omani tertiary-level English language instructors' attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?

Questionnaire results for the second scale were overwhelmingly positive, with around 85% of all scale responses being positive. Results for the interviews, at least as they related to those items not focused on the encroachment of the English language on Arabic and the Omani culture, were also largely positive. In addition, as might be expected of government-produced documents, the vast majority of data from documentary sources also sought to promote the advantages of English's central role in the Omani higher education system.

Between 95% and 100% of all questionnaire participants agreed that English was the dominant language of science and technology in Oman, enabled Omanis to communicate with others overseas and will be necessary for more jobs in the country in the future. Almost all interviewees agreed with these points, with many pointing to the utility of English across a variety of domains in Oman, from health care to private business and education. Similarly, one of the major themes to emerge from the documentary data was the relationship between English-medium education as a central element of Omani society and modernisation.

Around 76% of questionnaire respondents stated that English was required to be an "academic expert" in Oman. Here, again, most interviewees highlighted the way English had been used as a key to their advancement in academia in the sultanate, with only two respondents explicitly stating how the necessity of English language skills to attain this status could be potentially disadvantageous to their students. English-medium university-level education in Oman was also highlighted in the selected documents as being a means through which students could access knowledge in the ever changing "knowledge society" that accompanied the growth of globalisation.

Almost 67% of questionnaire respondents disagreed with the statement that "Omani society is so proud of the Arabic language that it feels no need to learn English", with about 19% choosing a neutral response and only around 14% agreeing. Similar patterns were apparent in the interviews, with most respondents claiming members of Omani society to be proud of their cultural and linguistic traditions. Similar themes also emerged in the documentary data, with a number of selected documents seeking to highlight the way English's role in the country encouraged the preservation of Oman's heritage and traditions. The only negative attitudes in this area were reported by two respondents who claimed that Omanis

may lack a pride in their language which has allowed English to assume its currently dominant position in society today.

Despite this relatively high level of concordance between the different data sources reported thus far, the quantitative and qualitative data did tend to diverge in relation to the potentially harmful effects of learning English on Omani culture. For example, more than 80% of questionnaire respondents disagreed with the statements that "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis" and "The English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language". In addition, as highlighted in the previous paragraph, the link between English-medium education and the preservation and promotion of Omani values and Islamic traditions was often referred to in the analysed documents.

However, two interviewees did express concern that their knowledge of English had affected their ability to operate in culturally-appropriate ways within Omani society due to a growing propensity to think in English. Additionally, several other respondents stated that, although they did not hold such attitudes themselves, they were nonetheless aware of negativity towards the English language in Oman due to a perception of the language as a threat to traditional values.

Research Question #3: What are Omani tertiary-level English language instructors' attitudes towards native speakers of English?

Results from the third scale were the most mixed to be reported on the questionnaire, with almost 46% of all responses being neutral, around 40% positive and the remaining 14% negative. A similar pattern was also apparent in the interviews while references to native speakers of English were entirely absent from the documentary data.

More than 50% of all respondents were neutral in relation to the questionnaire items inquiring about participants' relationships with native speakers. These items included "Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends" and "The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them". Despite this level of neutrality, interview results were almost overwhelmingly positive with the vast majority of respondents claiming to have good relations with their native-speaking colleagues and also highlighting the belief that "people are people" regardless of where they were born or what language they speak. In fact, only one interviewee highlighted

the potential for political motives relating to workplace advancement being a possible motivation for native speakers to extend their friendship with their Omani colleagues.

Elements of negativity to native English speakers, however, were expressed in the reports of hostility towards these speakers by certain segments of society to appear in the semi-structured interviews, including claims that older people, people in the countryside and "fanatics" resent English speakers. This belief may be closely allied with the almost 33% level of disagreement to the questionnaire item "Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value".

While, as stated above, direct references to native English speakers were largely lacking in the documentary data, one of the important themes to emerge was the way English-medium education encouraged the building of bridges between Oman's institutions and those of the wider world. Although this relationship building was often presented in the documents as occurring between institutions within the GCC itself, the fact that English was positioned as the conduit for these exchanges suggests that a growing level of interchange between Anglophonic people and organisations was one of the implicit goals of this outcome.

4.6 Conclusion.

This chapter offered the results of the data analysed from the three different data sources. These results were first presented separately, according to data collection and analysis technique, before being drawn together in a thematic triangulation that explored areas of overlap and discrepancy between them. Overall, attitudes towards the English language and its place within Omani society were positive across all data sources, although there was a level of discrepancy between the more positive attitudes towards native speakers of English reported in the interviews and the more neutral or negative attitudes in this area that emerged from the questionnaire results.

The final chapter begins with a discussion of the key findings about participants' attitudes towards English, its place in Oman, and towards native speakers of English, in addition to how these attitudes relate to the demographic variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational

attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained. It then explores some of the implications of the current case study and contributions this research has made towards knowledge before discussing some of the study's limitations. The chapter then concludes by suggesting a number of potential areas for future research.

Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusions.

5.1 Introduction.

This chapter presents a number of key findings that have emerged from the case study. It then discusses the implications of these findings, before offering some of the contributions the study has made to knowledge. The limitations of the current research are offered, before potential areas for future research are suggested.

5.2 Key Findings.

The key findings outlined below are based on the triangulation of results from the differing data collection and analysis techniques highlighted in Section 4.5. However, while Section 4.5 was primarily concerned with areas of divergence and convergence between themes, the main focus of this section is examining these results in relation to their wider socio-cultural contexts while making reference to a number of trends that emerged from the studies reported in Chapter 2.

5.2.1 Attitudes towards the English language.

Participants' attitudes towards the English language were largely positive as witnessed by both the interview results and the median response score of 4 on the first questionnaire. Moreover, around three quarters of all responses to items on the first scale indicated some form of agreement. This result was perhaps to be expected for a number of reasons, including that participants' mastery of the English language has given them a socially-esteemed, secure and relatively high-paying profession which, as evidenced in the analysed documents, could be interpreted as an outcome of key government imperatives seeking to create an internationally-looking and dynamic workforce capable of taking advantage of the opportunities globalisation allows.

Moreover, this apparent positive regard for the English language holds true for both male and female respondents. However, like results from Clarke (2007), it is also possible to argue here that this level of positivity may be closely linked to the numerical dominance of female respondents in both the questionnaire and interview stages of the research, and the fact that female participants' English-language abilities have allowed them the kind of career choices and access to personal freedoms that may generally be unavailable to other women in certain sections of Omani society. While, in relation to those participants who were born outside of Oman and/or the GCC states, these positive attitudes may stem from the way their knowledge of the

English language, coupled with the required university-level qualifications, has given them a pathway to become Omani citizens, with all the potential social and economic benefits such citizenry entails.

Another important point in interpreting this apparently high level of regard for English is the fundamental part the language plays in respondents' day-to-day lives. Naturally, a large part of this has to do with participants' professions which demand the constant use of advanced-level English-language skills, although it is worthy to note that the English language is also presented in the official documents analysed here as a means of preserving and promoting Omani culture, heritage and even religious values. Therefore, in this regard, admitting to disliking the English language could be seen as amounting to either an admittance by respondents that they dislike aspects of their chosen careers or could even be interpreted as disagreement with elements of the officially-promoted discourse of the beneficial nature English's pre-eminent international role. As discussed in Section 3.9, either of these concessions would be highly unlikely, especially given participants' statuses as Omani public servants whose working lives inevitably involve the implementation of ministerial-level educational policies and directives.

Another important point to be suggested by the questionnaire results and confirmed in a number of interviews was, as Dan et al. (1996) noted in Malaysia some 15 years previously, respondents no longer considered English to be the exclusive property of the West, but rather to be a truly global language that can be appropriated in ways allowing them to express their own identities and concerns. This theme of the appropriation of the English language by outer- and expanding-circle speakers suggests a trend that is perhaps best described by Behera and Panda (2012):

> Thus more and more people are giving up the assumption that English is primarily an Anglo-American, Judeo-Christian phenomenon. A related assumption that is also being given up today is the tenet that Anglo-American norms should be the final arbiters in all matters pertaining to the use of English (p. 43).

The very fact that around one quarter of all English-language instructors at the research site are now Omani with this number growing every year, hints at this process of reclaiming the English language and removing and/or redefining its associated Anglo-American norms in ways that empower, rather than marginalise,

even for participants in this "remote corner of the Arabian Gulf" (Fahmy & Bilton, 1992, p. 269).

5.2.2 Attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society.

Much like attitudes towards the English language itself, participants' attitudes towards the place of English within Omani society were also very positive across all data sources. The research revealed little to no concern about the role of English as what could be, along the lines of Randall and Samimi (2010) in the UAE, argued to be an unofficial second language within Oman, with respondents mostly eager to highlight the benefits of English's special status within their country.

Again, much like attitudes towards the English language itself, a fair amount of this positive regard can be assumed to come from the professional and personal advantages respondents' knowledge of, and access to, the English language has given them in Omani society. More specifically, in a country where English acts across a number of spheres as a second language and/or lingua franca, participants' ease of communication in the language allows them to navigate a number of social and professional experiences with greater ease than those of their compatriots without the same level of mastery. For instance, Charise's (2007) characterisation of English in Gulf societies as dominating the realms of wider communication, mass media, international relations, and higher education, suggests that those Gulf citizens with greater access to English can gain a greater amount of personal, social, and even financial, advantage from that access (see Section 1.6). Indeed, participants in the current research can and do use English in all of the domains highlighted by Charise, and thus are some of the "winners" in regards to the central place of the language in Omani society.

One of the most interesting results to emerge from this study came in response to queries about the perceived threat of English to Gulf Arab identities. A number of researchers, such as Al Haq and Smadi (1996), Findlow (2006) and Al-Tamimi (2009), reported that resentment towards the place of English in Arab societies based on a fear that its presence would erode traditional cultural and religious values was displayed by a certain number of respondents. However, findings here, while reporting a degree of this fear, were far more indicative of Fahmy and Bilton's (1992) research in that English was perceived to be no threat to the Arabic language, Islam, or Omani identity.

However, like Kim (2003), the current study also reported a belief among respondents that some people in Oman did view English's place in the country negatively. Much like Kim, however, these people were often characterised as acquaintances of participants who were described as being elderly and/or living in rural areas – that is, those who had little exposure to English and whose opinions were based on the confounding of the language with American and British foreign policy in the Middle East.

Despite this, some of the interviewees did question whether English's place in higher education in Oman was ethical, with one claiming it was a social and political construct that acted to limit people's opportunities to access knowledge and succeed in the job market. This situation, according to the respondent, was a cause of "frustration" and wasted time, and even acted as a means of limiting the academic achievements and potential scholarly output of students, thus placing them in a subservient position to Western languages, technology and expertise in ways that sit comfortably alongside Pennycook's (1994) and Karmani's (2005b) descriptions of the imperialistic applications of English in the developing and Muslim worlds.

5.2.3 Attitudes towards native speakers of English.

Overall, attitudes towards native speakers of English were more mixed than those towards the language itself, with the dominant response of "neutral" to questionnaire items on the third scale indicating a level of uncertainty in this area that was, for the most part, absent from the interviews and almost completely untreated in the documentary data.

One interpretation for these apparently mixed attitudes towards native English speakers could be that the long-running government policy of "Omanisation", both as applied to Omani society in general and the research site more specifically, may position Omani nationals and non-Omani native speakers of English in competition for jobs in a way that encourages misunderstanding and tension between the two groups. Moreover, it should also be referenced here that around one year before the current research took place, widespread riots and protests across the country sought, among a number of other demands, the expulsion of foreign workers from a number of industries and the granting of more lucrative "expatriate" labour contracts to Omani nationals in their place.

The government responded to these demands by launching an initiative that has reportedly created more than 36,000 jobs for Omani nationals since 2011, with another 56,000 opportunities planned in the coming years (Al-Shaibany & Dokoupil, 2013). However, despite a much improved security outlook since the initial wave of protests centred around the northern port city of Sohar, occasional anti-foreign worker and anti-corruption protests still do occur across the country, although it is obviously difficult to gauge how widespread this pro-national sentiment is, and, therefore, what effect it may have had on the results reported here.

Moreover, the apparent mismatch between the more negative attitudes towards native speakers of English arguably expressed in the questionnaire and the generally more positive results in the interviews may suggest that the latter form of data collection was influenced by cultural factors associated with the interpersonal nature of the interviews themselves. In particular, many Arab nations can be characterised as having "conflict-avoidance" societies where people are more likely to shy away from direct confrontation and disagreement (Hofstede,1986), such as expressing uncertainty about native English speakers directly to their native English-speaking interviewer and colleague. Moreover, more traditional countries in the Arab world, such as Oman, are often reported as still retaining a culture of making guests feel welcome with, again, such a propensity perhaps colouring the nature of responses about native speakers during the interviews. Therefore, it could be argued that the disparity between the more negative, or at least much more neutral, attitudes towards native speakers reported in the questionnaire and the more positive responses in the interviews is a result of an attempt to mask a level of hostility or suspicion in this area that at least some respondents were unwilling to openly state. This explanation may account for why those Arab researchers in the field who employed a mixed quantitative-qualitative design did not generally find such high levels of disparity between attitudes reported in their questionnaires and interviews (see Al-Tamimi, 2009; Karmani, 2010).

5.2.4 The relationship between demographic variables and attitudes.

As largely suggested by the existing research, the demographic variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained shared few statistically significant

relationships with attitudes towards English and its speakers as measured by the three questionnaire scales.

The only demographic variable to display a significant relationship with any of the three composite scale scores was gender with the third scale of "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English". However, although statistically significant, the difference between male and female respondents on this scale was a matter of strength and not direction. That is, while male respondents had slightly more positive attitudes towards native speakers than their female colleagues, both groups displayed attitudes that were only marginally positive in nature.

In keeping with the exploratory nature of the research, relationships between demographic features and individual questionnaire items were also examined. However, while a number of significant relationships were reported, these, again, were often more based on differing strengths of agreement among participants than any kind of discord. For example, regarding the first scale of "Attitudes towards the English Language", the variable of number of years spent teaching English was found to have a significant relationship with the item "I find the English language easy". However, all age groups reported overall median response values of 4 (agree) or above, with the highest median of 5 (strongly agree) for those participants who had taught for between 6 and 10 years, thus suggesting that attitudes towards the English language become more positive the longer participants had spent in their careers.

Regarding items from the second scale, "Attitudes towards the place of English in Omani Society", similar patterns were also apparent. For example, of the five items on the second questionnaire scale to report statistically significant differences with demographic variables, almost all, again, merely indicated differences in strength of agreement. These include a stronger level of disagreement for participants who were aged either between 20-30 or 51-60 than those falling into the age brackets of 31-40 and 41-50 for the item "Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis", thus suggesting that the participants with the greatest and least experience of the English language in formal institutional settings were those who held the least concern about the potential for cultural deracination through this exposure.

Continuing this pattern, significant relationships were also found between country of post-graduate studies and the item "Learning English will harm the Islamic religion" and the variable of years spent as English-language teachers and the item

"Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis". Respondents disagreed with both items, with medians across each variable being either 4 (disagree) or 5 (strongly disagree). This outcome, therefore, suggests that overall respondents did not believe the English language to represent a threat to either Islam or Omani-Arab cultural values, which is a position that was explicitly reinforced by the conscious efforts to highlight the compatibility between English-medium higher education, Islam and Omani culture in the featured documents.

However, some unexpected patterns did emerge from the relationship between participants' first language and the item "The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman". Respondents who used Arabic as their exclusive home language reported a median value of 5 (strongly agree) for this item, while those who were bilingual at home, using either Arabic and English or English and Swahili, reported neutral responses (*Mdn* = 3). An interesting point about these results is that the two respondents who were bilingual at home were also born not only outside of Oman itself, but also outside of the Gulf States.

It may be, then, that the attainment of Omani citizenship later in life meant these respondents were unwilling to commit to a response in this area that may have required a deeper level of insight into Omani society that they felt themselves to possess. Or, it could also be that such responses were more indicative of their own educational experiences as learners in non-Gulf educational institutions, where English, perhaps, is not as intimately tied to the domains of science and education as the strong agreement of the exclusively Arabic-speaking respondents, in line with Charise's (2007) exploration of the place of English in Gulf societies, suggests.

Another interesting pattern of responses to an item on the second scale was the relationship between the country where respondents' highest level degree was obtained and the item "It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman". Here, every group reported a median of 4 which indicates disagreement with the negatively-scored item. However, it is the range of responses that suggests the nature of these differences, with participants who had not studied for higher level degrees or who had studied in Britain or the USA reporting a range in medians that indicated either neutrality or disagreement with the items. However, for those participants who had studied in Australia, this range was the widest, with responses from either agree to strongly disagree. Although, in itself, this result perhaps does not indicate any significant pattern in the data, it does, nonetheless, suggest the possibility

of differences in attitudes for those participants who had studied in Australia than those who had studied in other Western nations.

In fact, country of study was the only demographic variable to share a significant relationship with an item on the third questionnaire scale regarding attitudes towards native English speakers. This variable displayed a somewhat complex relationship with the item "You can always trust native English speakers". Those participants who had not studied higher level degrees reported the highest rate of agreement, while respondents who had studied in either the United Kingdom or the United States recorded a median of 3 indicating neutrality in response to this item. However, those respondents who had studied in Australia recorded a median of 2 for this item, which indicates disagreement.

It is interesting to speculate that those respondents with the least amount of experience in English-speaking countries, at least in terms of formal education as number of visits to English speaking countries and amount of time spent in these countries had no significant relationships with this or any other scale item, believed native English speakers to be more trustworthy than their colleagues. Moreover, the finding that those participants who had studied in Australia did not believe native speakers are always trustworthy could indicate either more negative attitudes gained as a result of studying in Australia or a more detached examination of participants' beliefs into what is, in effect, a very general statement. It is this latter supposition that appears to have received the greatest support from the interviews, with the majority of interviewees pointing out that "people are people" regardless of their nationalities.

5.3 Implications of the Research.

A number of important implications emerged from the current research. The first relates to participants' attitudes towards the English language and its native speakers. In many ways, the research reconfirmed the findings of Fahmy and Bilton's (1992) case study at the same research site almost twenty years ago. That is, Fahmy and Bilton found almost overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards the English language and its increasingly central role in Omani society during the time when the university was the first to open in the country. Of course, much of the positive sentiment reported by Fahmy and Bilton may have been due to the euphoria associated with this landmark in Oman's development, and an awareness among

faculty and the student population that English was a necessary ingredient for the academic success of those initial cohorts participating in that study.

However, some twenty years later and with smaller private universities now established across the country to rival SQU, positive attitudes towards English and its place in Oman appear to still be prevalent, at least among the Omani tertiary-level English-language teachers of the sample. Much of this positivity could be due to the centrality of the English language to participants' professional lives, and the fact that they, like a number of other professional classes across the Gulf, could be conceived to have a vested interest in maintaining English's privileged role both in Oman and across a number of international domains. Regardless of this qualification, however, it is interesting to note that such positive attitudes towards the English language have been widely reported across the literature, with recent examples including Al-Tamimi's (2009) study of engineering students in Yemen, Elyas's (2008) investigation of education majors in Saudi Arabia and Randall and Samimi's (2010) research on police officers in Dubai.

However, while Fahmy and Bilton (1992) reported almost exclusively favourable attitudes towards native speakers of English and Western culture/s, the current research results perhaps adhere more closely to a number of contemporary studies from the GCC in which a certain level of negativity towards the intrusion of Western culture/s into traditional Arab spheres has been observed. In the current research this negativity was perhaps more alluded to than blatantly manifested, at least as far as the interviews were concerned, though could be interpreted through the overall neutral attitudes on the scale "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English" and the highlighting of negative attitudes towards native speakers among certain "ignorant people, old people, and sometimes people who are fanatic" in the semi-structured interviews.

It is interesting to ponder, nonetheless, whether these neutral attitudes would have been more negative had a non-English-speaking Western-born foreigner administered the questionnaire and conducted the interviews, or even if either of these forms of data collection were conducted in Arabic. On the other hand, it could equally be argued that the general level of neutrality of attitudes towards native speakers of English reported here may not be an expression of any vetted negativity on the behalf of participants at all, but may be the result of the high level of familiarity participants have gained with these speakers in their day-to-day lives.

For example, the vast majority of the Gulf research reported in Section 2.7 was focused on students whose interactions with native English speakers may be assumed to be largely limited to the classroom, transactions involving certain private businesses and occasional social activities. Conceivably, such a casual level of familiarity may offer the kind of environment where either very positive or very negative attitudes towards native speakers could flourish. However, the participants under investigation in the current research have almost all spent at least one year living and studying in Western nations, and are all employed in a workforce where Omani nationals are still outnumbered by native or native-like English speakers by a ratio of almost 1 to 5. Therefore, it is fair to say participants have a much higher level of personal familiarity with native English speakers, both in Oman and overseas, than many of the respondents in the existing Gulf studies.

For this reason, it may not be surprising that participants were, as a rule, reluctant to make universal statements about native English speakers, with prevailing responses focusing on the nature of the individual as opposed to their ethnic and/or cultural background. In fact, one participant even wrote above a questionnaire item inquiring about relationships with native speakers: "We're emphasising this difference in culture, and then when you get really close to someone from a different culture, you realise these differences are not because of the particular culture they belong to, it's because of their thinking." Additionally, another participant in the interviews stated that "You can't really say that these relationships are always good or always bad. It's like anywhere, it depends more on the person's personality than where he comes from". Therefore, seeking to interpret the neutrality of attitudes reported on the third scale of the questionnaire as indicative of a cultural/personal reluctance to openly admit negative sentiments towards native English speakers may be short-sighted at best while running the risk of even openly contradictory participants' own reasoning.

What is not a matter of speculation, however, is that results on the third questionnaire scale did indicate female participants held slightly more neutral attitudes towards native speakers of English than their male counterparts. The difference in attitudes reported in this study was, of course, only marginal. However, the fact that differences in attitudes based on gender have not yet appeared in those studies from the region which examined this variable (Abu-Ghazaleh & Hijazi, 2011;

Fahmy & Bilton, 1992) means this could prove an area worthy of more thorough exploration. (See sections 5.4 and 5.6.)

Another important implication to emerge from the current research is the way English has moved away from the tool of oppression and colonisation highlighted by Phillipson (1992) in Section 2.2.1, to a tool of empowerment, at least as far as participants are concerned. This empowering presence of the English language in Muslim societies has been reported widely in the literature, with, for example, Dan et al. (1996), Kim (2003) and Mostafizar Rahman (2008) all claiming to have found evidence of their participants' abilities to co-opt the language in ways that allow for the expression of their own identities and concerns. While there can be little doubt that the Omani English-teaching participants in the current research have sufficient mastery of the language to gain personal, social and economic advantages, caution must be taken when extrapolating these findings to wider Omani, let alone non-Omani Gulf and other Arab, communities.

Perhaps this concern was best expressed by one participant who claimed a feeling of unease about the way English acted as gatekeeper to educational success for students at the research site. For those people in Omani society without the kind of access to English that many of the respondents have enjoyed, it may be conceivable that English still acts as a means disempowerment in this globalised age, especially in a society where the language acts as the de facto means of communication across so many domains.

5.4 Contributions to Knowledge.

5.4.1 Theoretical contributions.

One unexpected outcome to arise from this case study was the emergence of differences in attitudes towards native English speakers based on the variable of gender. In short, female respondents' attitudes towards native speakers of English were neutral, while the attitudes of male respondents were somewhat positive (see Section 4.3.2). Of those Gulf studies that have examined gender as a potential correlate of attitudes either towards the English language or its speakers, Fahmy and Bilton (1992), Al-Khwaiter (2001) and Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) found no significant relationships to exist. Moreover, the findings reported in these studies closely align with the belief of a number of scholars of international relations that Muslim attitudes towards the West are based more on individual responses to Western

foreign policy directives than on sociological factors such as gender (Furia & Lucas, 2008; Telhami, 2002).

The finding in the current study that female participants held significantly more neutral attitudes towards native speakers of English than their male counterparts, therefore, is one that has apparently not been widely-reported in the literature to date, and could thus be interpreted as supporting Karmani's (2010) claim that young men have been the focus of efforts to socialise Arab Muslims into more favourable attitudes towards America and the West. However, it is necessary to temper this supposition with an acknowledgement of the way the sample's self-selection bias and small size may have influenced the nature and extent of the female participants' attitudes towards native speakers of English reported here (see Section 5.5).

The triangulation of results from this case study has also contributed to the reinterpretation of the conceptual framework based on Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning explicated in Section 2.8. As discussed in Chapter 2, much of the current research tends to support attitudes towards the English language and its speakers that can be associated with Rahman's responses of resistance and rejection, pragmatic utilisation, and acceptance and assimilation. Attitudes associated with each of these responses are often reported in studies from the Gulf and greater Muslim world. For instance, acceptance and assimilation is often tied in the literature to positive attitudes towards English and those who speak it based on an appreciation of the aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects of the language and/or its associated cultures. Utilisation, on the other hand, is linked with an awareness of the pragmatic or instrumental value of the language both within a country and internationally, while rejection is often linked to negative attitudes based on concerns about the aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects of the language and/or the cultures of its native speakers.

Such responses have been reported perhaps most recently by Clarke's (2007) study of teacher trainees in Dubai, in which attitudes clustering around the themes of naive celebration of English (acceptance and assimilation), nostalgia for Islamic-Arab purism (rejection and resistance) and pragmatic engagement with English (utilisation) were reported. Similar attitudes are also explicitly reported by Fahmy and Bilton (1992) in Oman, Al Haq and Smadi (1996) in Saudi Arabia, Al-Ansari and Lori (1999) in Bahrain, Findlow (2006) and Randall and Samimi (2010) in the UAE, and, of course, Malallah (2000) in Kuwait (see Section 2.7). However, while these

responses posited by Rahman (2005) and informed by Adaskou et al. (1990) have formed an excellent theoretical base from which to interpret Muslim attitudes towards English and its speakers, the results of the current study suggest that these categories may be lacking the necessary level of nuance to more fully comprehend attitudes and responses in such a complex area.

More specifically, Rahman (2005) presents his three responses in terms of "social cleavages" that divide society and mark the boundaries between the haves, or those with access to English through English-medium education, and the have-nots. However, the author's use the term "cleavage", with its implications of mutually-exclusive and static blocs with distinct, non-permeable borders, belies some of the intricacies of the relationships between these areas as reported in the current research and as Rahman himself implies.

For instance, Rahman (2005) acknowledges the path to assimilation into a Western worldview, or acceptance and assimilation, starts for a number of Muslims with a pragmatic engagement with the English language. This statement, therefore, not only suggests the close relationship between these two responses, but also the existence of an overlap between them. Within this overlapping area, it is likely that there exists Muslim speakers of English who see the language as offering access to material and other personal benefits, and who, in pursuit of these ends, have consciously or otherwise adopted more positive attitudes towards certain Western values and behaviours. This is not to suggest, however, that such people have forgone their Muslim identities altogether, or even that they are likely to continue this process of acculturation through incremental steps. But, rather, they have taken on certain actions associated with a Western worldview (Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler's, 2000, behavioural element of attitudes), or are more prone to hold favourable attitudes towards Western ideas and practices (affective and cognitive elements), that they see as complementing, rather than detracting from, their cultural and/or religious identities.

Within the current research, examples include those participants who saw the pragmatic value of their knowledge of English in terms of material and social advantage, and who demonstrated, too, favourable attitudes towards the aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects of the English language and held concomitant positive attitudes towards native English speakers. This positioning is one that is actively encouraged by the official government documents featured in Chapter 4. Of

course, most respondents in the current research held positive attitudes towards English and somewhat more mixed attitudes towards its speakers, thus placing them farther apart from Rahman's (2005) acceptance and assimilation category. However, those participants who did display positive attitudes to native English speakers and Western culture/s in the research could nonetheless be argued to exist somewhere on the boundary between pragmatic utilisation and assimilation.

Additionally, Rahman's (2005) characterisation of pragmatic utilisation as dominated by fundamental Islamic militarists seems somewhat myopic in the way it excludes the countless millions of Muslims worldwide – as evidenced here in participants' use of English for their careers and interactions with other cultural groups in a wide variety of domains - who use English to pursue their own, blatantly non-militaristic, agendas. Moreover, where Rahman offers the example of Islamist groups using English as a weapon in the battle against Western influence, what he is really describing is not a clear-cut case of "pragmatic" use, but another area of overlap in which those who seek to reject and resist Western influences typified by the spread of English have co-opted the language as a means of "using the tools of the powerful against them" (p. 159).

Examples of participants using the English language as a way of rejecting Western influence did not appear in this study. This is not surprising as, after all, participants' livelihoods are intricately tied to the continued centrality of the English language to many parts of Omani society, and seeking to restrict that influence could be viewed as self-defeatist. However, it is still important to regard the neutral nature of the attitudes towards native English speakers to emerge from this study, even if any examples of "hostility" were almost entirely absent from the one-on-one interviews, as a potential though far from certain expression of this resistance. Moreover, both Fahmy and Bilton (1992) and Al Haq and Smadi (1996) offer examples of participants seeking to learn English to either limit Western influence in their respective societies or to spread Islamic influences outwards. Therefore, based on these areas, the conceptual framework for this study based on Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning could be reinterpreted as in Figure 5.1.

Such a model allows for overlaps between the three responses Rahman (2005) offers and seeks to highlight the role Adaskou et al.'s (1990) four senses of language learning plays in forming these attitudes. Moreover, in keeping with the fluid nature

of the boundaries between the differing responses in Figure 5.1, it should be reiterated here that an individual may be prone to change the nature of their responses and attitudes towards the English language and its speakers as their perceptions of the language's aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic associates change. This is an outcome that fits neatly with Findlow's (2006) contention that attitudes towards English in the Gulf are intricately linked with political and socio-economic factors and may therefore change any time these factors vary.

Finally, Figure 5.1 also allows for individuals to simultaneously hold different attitudes towards the English language, to the language's place within their society, and towards native speakers of English. Examples from the current study would include those participants who held largely positive attitudes towards the English language but somewhat neutral or even negative attitudes towards native speakers of the language.

5.4.2 Methodological contributions.

One of the methodological goals of the current research was the use of a questionnaire specifically designed for the Gulf context which has been featured in previous research conducted in Arabia. In particular, as outlined in Section 3.6.2, to date there is not a single, well-established questionnaire that is widely used to specifically investigate Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language, its place in their respective societies, and towards native speakers of English. Quantitative researchers within the GCC and the greater Muslim world have largely dealt with this issue through the development of their own research instruments, although these often fail to build upon pre-existing instruments and also tend to pay little attention to issues of validity and reliability.

For these reasons, a pre-existing questionnaire about Gulf citizen attitudes towards English and its speakers was used in this case study. Malallah's (2000) questionnaire was selected here not only because its scales specifically applied to the research questions featured in the current study, but also because issues of validity and reliability as they relate to the questionnaire have been previously explored. The only changes made to the two scales from Malallah employed in this study were in relation to the number of items per scale and, of course, in changing Malallah's

Utilisation for Purposes of Resistance

Negative attitudes towards English based on concerns with the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects.

Negative attitudes towards those who speak the language focussed largely on the sociological and aesthetic aspects of their language.

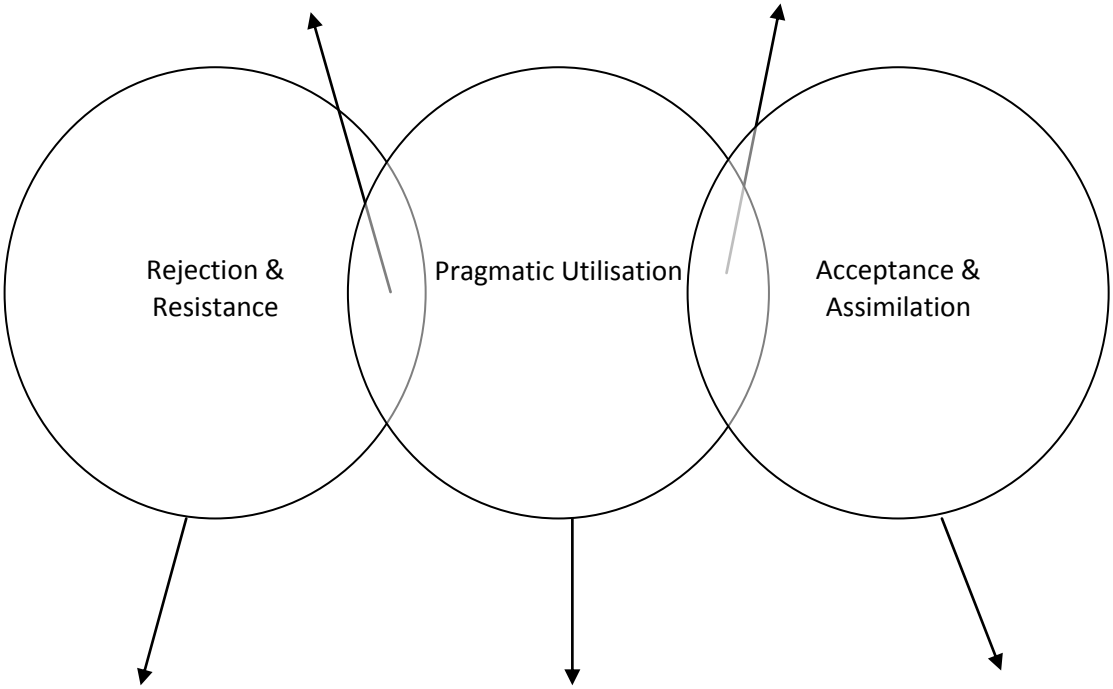
An understanding of the language's instrumental value.

Utilisation with Elements of Assimilation

Positive attitudes towards English based on an appreciation of the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects.

Positive attitudes towards those who speak the language focussed largely on the sociological and aesthetic aspects of their language.

Positive attitudes towards English based primarily on an appreciation of the language's instrumental value.



Rejection & Resistance

Negative attitudes towards English based on concerns with the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects.

Negative attitudes towards those who speak the language focussed largely on the sociological and aesthetic aspects of their language.

Pragmatic Utilisation

Positive attitudes towards English based primarily on an appreciation of the language's instrumental value.

Acceptance & Assimilation

Positive attitudes towards English based on an appreciation of the language's aesthetic, sociological and semantic aspects.

Positive attitudes towards those who speak the language focussed largely on the sociological and aesthetic aspects of their language

Figure 5.1. A reinterpretation of the study's conceptual framework.
The reinterpretation builds upon Rahman's (2005) Muslim responses to English and Adaskou et al.'s (1990) senses of language learning.

references to Kuwait to Oman. Moreover, these two scales were supplemented by one scale from Gardner's (2004) IAMTB.

Building upon Malallah's (2000) attempts at assuring the construct validity and internal consistency of the scales used in this case study, construct validity for the questionnaire's scales was assessed through a validation performed by a professor of linguistics familiar with the research context. Moreover, ordinal alpha coefficients were performed to assess the reliability of all three scales, with these reporting satisfactory coefficients of between .75 and .87 (see Section 4.3.1). Although the small sample size means these measures are prone to instability and should be interpreted more as guides than infallible measures, they nonetheless, when taken alongside the work already done by Malallah, Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi (2011) and Gardner (1985, 2004), suggest that the instrument may offer a somewhat reliable and valid measure of Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language and its speakers. If this is the case, then perhaps researchers who investigate similar attitudes to those explored here will have more confidence in using either Malallah's/Gardner's instrument as employed in the current study for future research, or at least will be more willing to refine and examine instruments designed explicitly for the Gulf region rather than continually attempting to design these without reference to those studies that have come before.

5.4.3 Contributions to field of research.

Although an increasing amount of research has been conducted in recent years into Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language and/or its speakers, the vast majority of these studies have been conducted in the United Arab Emirates, with a particular focus on the relatively Westernised and relatively liberal emirate of Dubai. Since Findlow's (2006) exploration of higher education institutions in the UAE, for instance, other important pieces of work from that country include Clarke (2007), Randall and Samimi (2010) and Karmani (2010). However, in the same time period, the number of investigations into Gulf citizens' attitudes towards the English language and its speakers appearing in English-language international journals at the time this dissertation was finalised from other Gulf nations has remained almost insignificant.

For this reason, the current research sought to move research into Gulf citizens' attitudes towards English and its speakers away from the "centre" of Dubai

and the UAE. It did so by examining trends in a country that is still, for many, on the very edge of the periphery. In this way, it was envisaged that the research contributed to allowing space for some previously seldom heard voices in the region and, by doing so, raised awareness about some of the overlapping qualities and unique concerns of Omani citizens in this area.

Moreover, unlike the majority of the studies reported in Chapter 2, the current research focused on a non-student population in an attempt to gain a broader perspective on the attitudes of a group of Gulf citizens' whose daily lives involve interaction with the English language and its speakers in what Findlow (2006) describes as the "contested ground" of higher education in the Gulf. Therefore, the research has contributed to understandings about attitudes of non-student Gulf citizens while still relating these attitudes to some of the concerns about the imposition of English-medium education on Arabic-speaking populations in the Gulf.

5.5 Limitations and Recommendations.

One of the biggest potential limitations of the case study approach adopted here is the lack of generalisability of results to other contexts (Corbin & Holt, 2005). While it is true that many of the findings to emerge from the current research have either been reported in the existing literature from either the Gulf itself or the greater Muslim world, the fact that very little research into Omani citizens' attitudes towards English and its speakers has been conducted since Fahmy and Bilton's (1992) work means extrapolating these findings to other contexts is something that should only be done cautiously.

Moreover, the self-selecting nature of the sample means that claiming the findings reported here to accurately reflect attitudes among the larger population under study must only be done with a great deal of care and an explicit awareness of the potential limitations raised by self-selection bias. In particular, it cannot be discarded that those participants who volunteered for the current study did so because they held strong views about the research topic, saw it as an opportunity to express a political, cultural or religious opinion, or just because they had the free time and/or desired to assist the researcher. This bias in the sample, therefore, may mean that participants' attitudes are markedly different from the attitudes of those members of the population who chose not to participate. This is an important limitation of the

current research, and one that could be addressed in the future through the use of a randomised sample in a similar research context.

In addition to self-selection bias, generalising findings from the current research site to other contexts in which Omani instructors teach English as a second language to tertiary-level students encounters the inevitable question of whether results obtained from respondents employed at a public institution can be readily applied to those in private colleges and universities. Even if it was possible to argue that these results could be readily applied as political, social and religious concerns across these institutions share more similarities than differences, Oman's somewhat "unique" history and cultural composition within the region (see Sections 1.5.2) means extrapolating findings to education institutions elsewhere in the GCC may be problematic.

Despite this potential limitation, however, Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010) claim that when interpreting results of case studies it is important for the reader to ultimately determine whether results are applicable to their own specific contexts. Moreover, one of the stated goals of the current research is to bring Omani participants' attitudes in these areas in from the periphery of the current Gulf research and thus, by doing so, provide a space for those living in this often overlooked part of the Middle East in which to be heard. Closely tied to this belief is the hope that the current research will encourage the kind of renewed interest in the topic of attitudes towards English and its speakers that is currently being experienced in the neighbouring country of the UAE.

Another potential limitation of the research is the use of a questionnaire that has thus far received little attention in the literature. The choice of Malallah's (2000) questionnaire with one scale from Gardner's (2005) IAMTB was, as outlined in Section 3.6.2, a deliberate one that sought to circumvent the almost continuous process of redesigning topic-related attitudes questionnaires in the region by seeking support for an established instrument. The main concern here is that, while Gardner's scale of "Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English" has received a great deal of attention in the literature, Malallah's two scales have received far less. The current research did, nonetheless, provide ordinal alpha coefficients for Malallah's two scales, with these results proving more than satisfactory. However, as noted in Section 4.3.1, these coefficients are based on such a small sample that they must necessarily be interpreted cautiously. For these reasons, further research with a much larger sample

is needed to confirm the psychometric qualities, with a special focus on validity-related evidence, of Malallah's scales.

There are also a number of issues related to the use of a Likert response key questionnaire. These include the possibilities of social desirability and central tendency biases. The former bias here is probably the biggest concern, especially given the finite population under study and the fact that any potentially negative attitudes reported may reflect badly upon respondents, their workplace (the current research site), the university, and even Omanis and Omani society in general. I have attempted to deal with this potential source of bias through the use of a mixed research approach though, as has been noted above, the lack of negative attitudes emerging from the interviews compared with the fairly neutral attitudes towards native English speakers reported in the questionnaire may suggest social desirability bias could have been a factor during at least the qualitative part of this research.

On the other hand, central tendency bias, or the tendency of respondents to avoid the extremes of strongly agree and strongly disagree on the response key, was probably not an important factor here given the large spread of responses reported for most items and the relatively high medians reported for at least the first two scales. Moreover, the potential for acquiescence bias was also dealt with through the provision of both positively- and negatively-worded items on the first two scales, though, again, it cannot be ruled out as a potential source of influence for Gardner's (2005) scale which contained, due to the social and political reasons outlined in Section 3.6.2, only positively-worded items.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of the current research, however, may be the identity of the researcher and how that may have made a significant impact on the results. In keeping with the post-positivistic paradigm adopted, I cannot claim to be a "neutral" investigator of a social phenomenon, but rather an actor who plays a number of roles in the research site including colleague, officially-approved researcher, and physical embodiment of the numerical dominance of native English speakers over Omani teachers in the research site. Added to this, I am also a cultural, linguistic and religious outsider, whose very act of inquiring into participants' attitudes was bound to cause some form of reaction that would likely alter the way those attitudes were reported and ultimately recorded.

There is, unfortunately, very little that could have been done about this situation that did not involve the complete reworking of the research in ways that

were incompatible with the approval granted from the research site's ethics committee. However, future research into Omani citizens' attitudes towards English and its speakers may avoid some of these potential biases if Omani researchers operated as interviewers and questionnaire administrators and/or if these data collection procedures were carried out in Arabic rather than the English language. Such an approach, coupled with the use of a randomised sample, would also help avoid any issues related to the way my position as a Western English-speaking male may have deterred some members of the population from participating in the research.

5.6 Future Research.

In addition to the potential for future research about the questionnaire's psychometric qualities with larger, random samples and the positioning of Omani researchers as investigators of the Omani/Arab attitudes featured in the current study, there are also a number of associated areas that may prove to be worthy of further investigation. The first would no doubt be moving the current research beyond its case study parameters to include members of other professions and social groups either in Oman or in the greater Gulf region. This could start with a comparison of the teacher group studied here and, like much of the existing Gulf research, university students. For example, of the current Gulf studies outlined in Section 2.7, only Al-Khwaiter (2001), Randall and Samimi (2010) and, to a lesser extent, Alresheed (2012), sought to examine the attitudes of non-university-bound populations in any meaningful way. A good precedent for research into the attitudes of the wider Omani community, however, exists in Jones et al.'s (1993) study of various strata of Bruneian society. Seeking to bring Jones et al.'s, A-Khwaiter's and Randall and Samimi's wider social focus to the Omani and/or Gulf contexts could be a productive next step given the increasing popularity of research into students' attitudes in at least some nations of the GCC.

Another future area of research may involve moving away from the demographic features examined here towards a different set of variables. It has to be noted that this exploratory case study found very little by way of relationships between the demographic variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree and attitudes towards English and its native speakers. This result was largely predicted by the

literature, with only number of visits to English-speaking countries, time spent in English-speaking countries, college major and future intended use of English, thus far offering any apparent differences in reported attitudes to English and its speakers, although it is necessary to reiterate that Al-Khwaiter (2001) did find a number of differences in the strength of agreement in these areas among participants based on gender, parental level of educational attainment, school location, and nationality.

However, despite the fact that this fairly comprehensive list of demographic variables has thus far offered very few meaningful differences in the attitudes studied does not mean that other variables, such as level of professional use of English, degree of interaction with native speakers at work, the holding of, or desire to obtain, an English-language certificate (such as IELTS or TESOL), employment in the private or public sector and so on would not be worthy of exploration. Moreover, the potential existence of a slight gender difference between attitudes towards native speakers reported in the current study may, as suggested in Section 5.3, prove an interesting topic of research. In addition, although the difference in agreement about whether native English speakers are trustworthy on one questionnaire item based on the country in which higher level studies were completed may seem a minor aside, it could nonetheless be informative to examine these attitudes in relation to the experiences of those Omanis and other Gulf Arabs who have lived in Western nations for prolonged periods.

Finally, now that the attitudes of Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors towards English and its native speakers have been explored, albeit still in an exploratory manner, it may also be worthwhile to explore what relationship, if any, these attitudes have towards actual classroom practice. In particular, it may be interesting to explore how attitudes towards native speakers may influence the way in which Western culture/s are introduced and/or taught in the English-language classroom, or whether positive attitudes in these areas are linked to the provision of more student-centred learning environments.

5.7 Conclusion.

This research was a case study examination of Omani university-level English-language teachers' attitudes towards the English language and its native speakers. It took, as its foundation, the premise that language acts as a carrier of culture, and that those values and beliefs transmitted by the English language may be

incompatible with the values and beliefs commonly ascribed to Muslim Gulf Arabs. This incompatibility was posited as a potential cause of tension between the Omani participants of the current research, especially as they have experienced long exposure to the study and use of English both in Oman and, for many, as students and residents overseas, and as public servants on the vanguard of an "Omanisation" program which aims to replace foreign expatriate labour in the country with citizen workers.

However, despite the theoretical potential for the existence of this tension as outlined in the first two chapters, examples of negative attitudes towards the English language itself, both as a global phenomenon and as it is used within Oman, and its speakers, were largely absent from the investigation of the following research questions:

1. What are Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors' attitudes towards the English language?

2. What are their attitudes towards the place of English in Omani society?

3. What are their attitudes towards native speakers of English?

4. What relationship, if any, do the variables of age, time spent in English-speaking countries, number of years spent teaching English, gender, country of birth, first language, level of educational attainment and country in which highest level degree was obtained, have with these attitudes?

In fact, the data gathered from documentary analysis, questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews tended to focus on the empowerment that can be gained through access to the English language, with there only appearing some limited concerns about the way English's prominent place in Oman may act to marginalise those without access to the language. Despite these largely favourable leanings, however, participants' attitudes towards native speakers of English were far more mixed, although, again, a certain disparity existed in this area between the neutral and negative responses of the questionnaire and the more positive responses offered during the interviews.

These results, therefore, tend to confirm a trend that appears in much of the research reported in Chapter 2. That is, Muslim users of the English language often tend to focus on the positives that knowledge of the language allows, although there is often a great deal more ambiguity towards the Western culture/s and people who use

English as a native tongue based on religious, cultural and, often, political, concerns. To account for this level of complexity, a conceptual framework based on Rahman's (2005) responses to English and informed by Adaskou et al.'s (1990) fours senses of language learning was reinterpreted to allow for areas of overlap between the middle response of pragmatic utilisation and the two extremes of assimilation and acceptance and rejection and resistance. Such an interpretation allows for an explicit acknowledgement of the way the English language can be used by Muslim learners and speakers in ways that contribute to their social, economic, educational and, perhaps even, spiritual progress, while also allowing room for an explicit recognition and rejection of potentially harmful foreign values conveyed by the language when and where they arise.

In these ways, the seemingly opposing Western and Arab Muslim worldviews espoused in chapters 1 and 2 need not be a source of friction for those Muslim people who use English as part of their professional and private lives. Rather, these worldviews can become enriched through what was cited by Dan et al. (1996) as a fundamental duty of every Muslim - the constant seeking of knowledge. Therefore, as far as the current research is concerned, Smith's (2011) positioning of English-medium higher education in the Gulf as existing along a "great cultural fault-line" of Arab-West relations did not appear to hold true for the Omani tertiary-level English-language instructors of the case study. How this applies to other non-university bound groups within the wider realms of Omani society and across the many different citizen-groups across the rest of the GCC and even the greater Arab and Muslim worlds, however, is an area that requires further research to be more fully understood.

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Appendix A: The Questionnaire

Part 1: Background Information.

Please circle the response to the question that best describes you.

1. What is your gender?

Male **Female**

2. What is your age?

20-30 **31-40** **41-50** **51-60** **61+**

3. Where were you born?

Oman **Other: What country?_____**

4. What is your first language?

Arabic **Other: What language?_____**

5. What is your highest level university degree?

Bachelor **Graduate Certificate/Diploma** **Master** **Doctorate**

7. If Master or Doctorate, in which country did you study at post-graduate level?_____

8. How many years have you been an English language instructor?

0-5 **6-10** **11-15** **16-20** **21+**

9. How many times have you visited English-speaking countries for work, study or travel?

0 **1-3** **4-6** **7-9** **10+**

10. In total, about how many months have you spent in English speaking countries for work, study or travel?

0 **1-6** **7-12** **12-24** **24+**

Part 2: Your Opinions.

Please read the following statements carefully. After each statement, indicate your opinion by circling the response that best describes you. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

1. The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

2. I find the English language interesting.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

3. It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

4. Learning English enables Omanis to communicate with others abroad.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

5. I hope to put my children in a private English school so that they speak English fluently.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

6. It is important to take postgraduate studies abroad in English.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

7. You can always trust native English speakers.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. More and more jobs in Oman (eg in banks, airports, companies) will require English language proficiency.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. I don't like watching English language programmes on TV.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. I prefer the English language to the Arabic language.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. If Oman had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. When I speak English, I feel that I'm more "educated".

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. The English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. I find the English language boring.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. I don’t like speaking English.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. To be an academic expert in Oman, you have to learn English.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. I find the English language easy.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

22. The English language is the language of prestige in Oman.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

23. Oman society is so proud of the Arabic language that it feels no need to learn English.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

24. Learning English will harm the Islamic religion.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

25. Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

26. I find speaking English is prestigious.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

27. Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

28. I would like to know more native English speakers.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

29. Many Omani parents put their children in private English-medium schools so that they will speak English fluently.

Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix B: Questionnaire Scales

Scale 1: Attitudes towards the English Language

1. I find the English language interesting.

2. I don't like speaking English.

3. I don't like watching English language programmes on TV.

4. I find the English language easy.

5. I prefer the English language to the Arabic language.

6. I find the English language boring.

7. I find speaking English is prestigious.

8. When I speak English, I feel that I'm more "educated".

9. I hope to put my children in a private English school so that they speak English fluently.

Scale 2: Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society

1. The English language is the language of prestige in Oman.

2. Many Omani parents put their children in private English-medium schools so that they will speak English fluently.

3. It is difficult for someone to learn the English language in Oman.

4. Learning English enables Omanis to communicate with others abroad.

5. The English language in Oman will harm the Arabic language.

6. It is important to take postgraduate studies abroad in English.

7. More and more jobs in Oman (eg in banks, airports, companies) will require English language proficiency.

8. Learning English will harm the Islamic religion.

9. The English language is the language of science and technology in Oman.

10. To be an academic expert in Oman, you have to learn English.

11. Learning English means gaining Western habits that are not required by Omanis.

12. Oman society is so proud of the Arabic language that it feels no need to learn English.

Scale 3: Attitudes towards English-Speaking People

1. If Oman had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.

2. Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.

3. I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends.

4. Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.

5. Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.

6. I would like to know more native English speakers.

7. The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.

8. You can always trust native English speakers.

Appendix C: Guiding Questions for Semi-Structured Interviews

Attitudes towards the English Language

In general, what do you think about the English language?

Why did you decide to become an English language teacher?

What do your family and friends think about your career as an English language teacher?

Attitudes towards the Place of English in Omani Society

What are some of the main areas of English use in Omani society?

What are some of the positives of the place of English in Oman?

What are some of the negatives of the place of English in Oman?

Attitudes towards Native English-Speaking People

Do you know many native English speaking people? If yes, what are they like?

What is your relationship with native English speakers like?

Do you relate differently with them than with Arabic speakers? If yes, how?