Sociolinguistic variation in Saudi English: syntactic, morphological and phonological features

A Alhamazany

PhD 2021

Sociolinguistic variation in Saudi English: syntactic, morphological and phonological features

Amal Alhamazany

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Manchester Metropolitan University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Languages, Information and Communications
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Manchester Metropolitan University

2021

List of figures

List of tables

List of abbreviations

ENL	English as a national/native language
ESL	English as a second language
EFL	English as a foreign language
ICE	Inner Circle Englishes
OCE	Outer Circle Englishes
ECE	Expanding Circle Englishes
VS	Variationist Sociolinguistics
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
IL	Interlanguage
ENSs	English native speakers
L1	First language
L2	Second language
SIT	Social Identity Theory

Abstract

This study investigates variation in an English variety in an Expanding Circle country, Saudi Arabia (Kachru, 1985), which has resulted from globalisation and modernisation rather than colonisation. Employing variationist sociolinguistic methods of data gathering and analysis, the study examines syntactic, morphological and phonological features in Saudi English, which is a variety that has been discussed in relation to some of its grammatical features (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014) yet that has never been examined in relation to its speakers and the social contexts in which it has emerged.

Applying rigorous quantitative analysis, this study uncovers variation in five variables: verb *be*, *-s* inflection in third-person singular verbs, the definite and indefinite articles, and in the labiodental fricative /v/. It explores variation in relation to linguistic factors such as the influence of Arabic and context complexity within English; social factors such as gender, tribalism, and age; and other factors such as attitudes, education, social identity (Tajfel, 1972), and social networks (Milroy, 1980). The study also investigates social factors which have been studied in SLA research either separately or in relation to English as an Inner Circle variety.

Using qualitative analysis, concepts such as *standard English*, *correctness*, *native-speakerism*, and *westernisation* are investigated in relation to the increasing use of English in Saudi. In addition, motivation of Saudi English speakers, which has been presented in SLA research as having binary fixed characteristics (either instrumental or integrative) is explored through the concept of *investment* (Norton, 1995) and *imagined community* (Anderson, 1991). The participants' types of investment are investigated in relation to identity by allowing the speakers to express their needs, desires, and future plans in interviews and to elaborate on their responses in the questionnaires.

The results of the quantitative analysis demonstrate systematic patterns of variation in all five features. These patterns are linguistically constrained in that Arabic influence may not be the only or primary factor, and socially constrained in that the speakers' social or educational backgrounds seem to result in different language use.

The qualitative results show the participants' contradicting views regarding the status of English in Saudi. Issues such as *fear of Arabic loss* and *westernisation*, on one hand, and *standard English*, *native-speakerism*, and *correctness*, on the other, seem to have resulted from conflicting ideologies in Saudi. These can be seen as educational ideologies that favour and promote standard English as the language of the west, and religious ideologies that present the west as the enemy making English the language of the enemy. The results also demonstrate that Saudis in this study have three types of investment to use English: investment in children's English education, investment in English for career advancement, and investment in English as an international language.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been used in any other submission for another academic award, and that it has been composed solely by myself. To the best of my knowledge, I declare that the work presented is entirely my own except where I state otherwise by reference or acknowledgment.

Acknowledgements

1: Introduction

This dissertation is located within a variationist sociolinguistic framework, following the steps of sociolinguists (e.g., Labov, 1966; Trudgill, 1974; L. Milroy, 1980; Eckert, 1989) in employing rigorous quantitative analysis of language practices. The main goal of this study is to investigate English in Saudi Arabia from a variationist sociolinguistic perspective, examining whether English has evolved through contact with Arabic and gained features of its own, arguably making it Saudi English rather than a foreign or second language. This is complemented with systematic qualitative examinations of attitudes and ideologies to explore the processes at work in the formation of a new variety of English. While the earliest sociolinguistic research relied mainly on quantitative methods to study linguistic variation by correlating broad social factors with linguistic variables, recent researchers have explored social meanings of linguistic forms as they emerge from the interaction between different linguistic, social, educational, attitudinal and ideological factors, which, in turn, are produced and reproduced through linguistic forms (e.g., Sharma, 2005; Bonnici, 2010; Drummond, 2011; 2012a; 2012b). In previous second language acquisition (SLA) research, which was conducted in Saudi Arabia, Saudi English speakers were portrayed as passive respondents on whom exonormative linguistic rules have been imposed. In recent variationist sociolinguistic studies however, speakers were seen as having a degree of agency since the goal of variationist sociolinguistics is to explore the interaction between language, society and culture, because without the "human component language itself would not exist" (Tagliamonte, 2012, p.1). Thus, in addition to the quantitative analysis in this dissertation, a qualitative analysis will be used to investigate the ways Saudis' language practices shape and are shaped by linguistic and social factors, as well as attitudes to and ideologies surrounding the language. This over-arching approach allows us to explore language variation in new settings in which the role of English as a valuable global commodity has influenced and has been influenced by social, religious, educational and political ideologies. This dissertation aims to answer the following questions:

1. What specific features emerge in the English of Saudi speakers, and do these features vary in linguistic environments to an extent that they contribute to the creation of a separate variety of English in a similar way to features of, for example, African American English and Sri Lankan English?

2. If so, to what extent can Saudi English be seen to play a role in the construction of Saudis' identities?

3. What are the attitudes that Saudis hold towards English and its use in an Arabic and Islamic society?

1.1 English in Saudi Arabia

Although the exact date that English was first introduced as a foreign language in Saudi education is not fully clear, it is believed that it was before the establishment of Saudi Arabia in 1932. According to Al-Shabbi (1989), English was first introduced in Saudi Education in 1924, when the General Directorate of Education was founded. Baghdadi (1985) also assumes that English was introduced in Saudi elementary schools for the first time in 1924. On the other hand, according to Faruk (2013), English was first introduced to the Saudi Education system in the 1930s with the integration of Saudi Arabia with the world system through contact with two English-speaking countries: the UK and the USA. In addition, Al-Johani (2009) claims that in the 1930s English was introduced after the discovery of oil and was used only in certain business domains that required communication with non-Arab workers. Mahboob and Elyas (2014) argue that it was the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), established in 1933, which promoted both the Saudi economy and English language teaching. According to them, the company encouraged Saudi locals to learn English and offered them classes in order to be able to communicate with its foreign employees. However, the expansion of English language teaching was very slow at the time of integration with the modernised world when Saudi Arabia was still a very young and poor country (Faruk, 2013). According to Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996), in 1949 the first college in Saudi was established in Mecca. In this college English was taught as a compulsory subject for 2 hours per

week for 4 years. Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi add that in 1957 the first Saudi university, King Saud University, established its English department.

The rapid development of the economic sector attracted many American companies and personnel, which led to the employment of a substantial number of Americans in Saudi Arabia in the 1970s (Zuhur, 2011). In addition, the huge inrush of other skilled and unskilled foreign workers in the 70s and the 80s (Niblock, 2006) and millions of international pilgrims led to the significant expansion of English language teaching (ELT). Businesses and banks also added to the expansion of ELT, as English proficiency was a job requirement in companies like Samarec, Dallah, and Saudi Airlines, and in multinational banks like Saudi American, Saudi British, Saudi French, and Saudi Dutch. According to Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) some of these companies offered English language teaching programs for their employees. However, since 2005 Saudi Arabia has been trying to shift its dependency on oil industry to a knowledge-based economy through investing in human resources and education; education has consistently received more than a quarter of the Saudi national budget. Consequently, the total number of government and private universities had increased to 36 by the end of 2015 (Alshahrani, 2016).

Between 1970 and 2004, the Saudi government issued a significant amount of fundamental legislation on English teaching. In public schools, the English curriculum started from a few hours per week starting in high school[1] (three years of English education). Then, four times per week in middle school[2] (six years of English education). Recently, English was included in grade six in primary school[3] (seven years of English education) (Szyliowicz, 1973; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). However, private schools are completely different, typically providing English education from the first grade since the beginning of the 1970s (Faruk, 2013). At the

---

[1] Secondary school (starting from year 10) in the UK, and high school (starting from grade 10) in the US.
[2] Secondary school (starting from year 7) in the UK, and middle school (starting from grade 6) in the US.
[3] Year 6 in the UK, and primary school (starting from grade 5) in the US.

university level, English was first taught for 2 hours per week for 4 years in the Islamic law college in Mecca in 1949 (Faruk, 2013). Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) add that in the 1970s-80s most Saudi universities had English departments and language centres or translation institutes (including King Saud University (1957), King Abdul-Aziz University (1961), Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud University (1974), King Fahd University (1975), King Faisal University (1976), and Umm Al-Qura University (1980)).

According to Elyas (2008), from 2000 there has been a shift in the teaching and learning of English in Saudi as English was introduced gradually to primary school curricula during this period. In addition, Faruk (2013) argues that the new vision of Saudi Arabia that changed significantly to develop a knowledge-based economy, has led to a revolution in education and has affected the teaching of English in the country significantly.

Since the reign of King Abdul-Aziz, 1876-1953, the Saudi government has been sponsoring students to study Arabic and Islamic studies in Arab countries such as Egypt and Lebanon. In addition, in the 1960s more Saudis were to study different fields abroad, such as in the United States and Europe; however, only a few working in academia and some industrial domains benefited from the scholarship program. In 2005, King Abdulah established the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme (KASP) to include different fields of studies: humanities, art, science, medicine, economics, and business. Through this program a substantial number of Saudi students have been sent abroad with full funding support. In the first two years, students have to take English classes abroad and pass the IELTS test[4] before applying to universities, which further expanded the importance and status of English in the country and directly linked linguistic proficiency in English with advancing to Educational and Professional excellence in Arabia.

---

4 The International English Language Testing System measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is used as a language of communication.

According to Taleb (2005), this reform in the English education, especially KASP, attracted different opinions. On the one hand, it was welcomed in that English was viewed as a tool to spread Islam. On the other hand, it was criticised as propaganda to westernise Saudis.

In addition to its important role in Education, English has become one of the main requirements for employment (Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi, 1996). Use of English has also increased in other sectors, as it has been playing a crucial role in electronic and print media in Saudi Arabia (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Faruk (2013) maintains that the Saudi government used the media to disseminate their language policy and ideology and gain Saudis' approval for or facilitate teaching English in schools. Accordingly, a number of leading daily newspapers in English saw the light of day, such as Riyadh Daily, Arab News, and Saudi Gazette, as well as a number of English Saudi channels, such as Al-Arabya, MBC2, MBC4, MBC Action, and KSA-2 channel.

According to Faruk (2013), English has played a significant role in the lives of Saudis since its introduction to the Saudi educational system. However, he argues that Saudis have been using English simply as a means to build their nation, advance their careers and spread Islam. He explains that the objectives of English teaching in Saudi, as stated by the Ministry of Education in 2004, aim at developing Saudis' English proficiency to improve the socio-economic situation of the country, to spread Islam, and to facilitate international communication. On the other hand, Mahboob and Elyas (2014) and Al-Rawi (2012), argue that English in Saudi has been integrated in Saudis' lives and nativized to reflect local cultural practices and that it has its own grammatical features. Mahboob and Elyas (2014, p. 138) argue that "Saudi English can also be seen as construing and projecting a local sociocultural worldview". Similarly, Al-Rawi (2012, p. 33) maintains that "a local Saudi English with certain indigenous features has arisen, reflecting the Saudi culture". Both studies, which will be discussed in chapter 2, showed that, besides being used as a means of education or in business domains, English has been localised by Saudis to represent Saudi sociocultural norms.

To add to the findings of Al-Rawi (2012) and Mahboob and Elyas (2014), in the current study I will use a variationist sociolinguistic approach to investigate whether Saudi English can be viewed as a new variety that has its own features. In addition, I will explore notions such as *westernisation*, in relation to education and the increasing use of English in Saudi society. I will examine English in relation to its new status as a crucial part of Saudis' lives as a medium of education, a job requirement and as a language of international communications. Finally, I will investigate Saudis' English use, attitudes, feelings, and identities as a way of uncovering and explaining the social meanings of Saudi English features.

1.2 Structure of the current study

This dissertation is organised as follows. In chapter two, I will review the literature in different linguistic fields related to this study and based on which the context of this dissertation was constructed. In chapter three, I introduce the syntactic, morphological and phonological features of Saudi English, which have been commonly cited in interlanguage error studies. These features are variation in *be*, variation in articles, variation in -*s* inflection in third-person singular verbs, and variation in the fricative sound /v/. In the fourth chapter, I detail the methodology used in this study including the methods I used to select and approach the participants, and the methods of analysis. I explain the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, and their importance to my study. In chapter five, I outline the steps of the quantitative analysis, the results of the distribution analysis for each feature across linguistic and social factors and the results of the multiple regression analysis of each feature, and present the linguistic and social factors that were found to have a significant influence on each variable. Then, I discuss these quantitative findings in relation to previous studies, and demonstrate how they build on knowledge from previous variationist sociolinguistic research and add to our understanding of English in Saudi. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the findings to answer the first research question. In the sixth chapter, I outline the steps of the qualitative analysis. Then I discuss the results of the

qualitative analysis, exploring the content of the interviews and the results of the questionnaire. I show how the results help to provide a detailed picture of how English is perceived in Saudi in relation to religion, social norms, different ideologies, westernisation, and Saudis' needs and future plans which in part shape their motivation and which might explain variation in Saudi English. Finally, I discuss the qualitative findings in relation to the quantitative findings to answer the second and third research questions. In the final chapter, I briefly summarise the findings and the major arguments I made in the discussion of the results to answer the questions of the study. Finally, I conclude this chapter by demonstrating how this study adds to previous research of English in Saudi and the current variationist sociolinguistic research more widely, before providing suggestions for future research.

2: Literature review

2.1 World Englishes

The primary goal of this study is to explore English in Saudi Arabia from a variationist sociolinguistic perspective, and to investigate whether, through contact with Arabic, English has evolved and gained features of its own. Therefore, it is important to explore the status of English in Saudi and determine where it fits in the current classifications and models of English as an international language and as a lingua franca. In addition, it is important to explore how English has been studied and presented in SLA research in Saudi Arabia mostly conducted by Saudi researchers (e.g, Alshayban, 2012; Alsamani, 2014; Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015; Ahamed, 2016) and how it has been studied in World Englishes studies (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). In this section, I review the current classifications of English as an international language. I start with the traditional classifications: English as a national/native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). Then, I review B. B. Kachru's (1985) three-circle model, discussing its advantages over the traditional classifications and its shortcomings. In addition, I will review Schneider's (2003) Dynamic Model. Then, I present arguments regarding the notions *standard English* and *native speakers*. Finally, I will conclude this section by looking at implications of the traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications in research in Saudi Arabia as compared to the only two studies that have examined English in Saudi Arabia from World Englishes and sociolinguistic perspectives (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

2.1.1 Traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications

The traditional and most common classifications of varieties of English, which have until now been extensively used by linguists and SLA researchers, are the ENL, ESL and EFL classifications, which provides a tripartite view of the world role of English (Quirk et al., 1985). The ENL classification includes varieties spoken in countries where the majority of people speaks English as a primary or native language, the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The ESL classification refers to institutionalised Englishes, spoken mainly in previously colonialised

countries in which English is an official language but not the main language, such as India, Nigeria, Malaysia and the Philippines. Finally, the EFL classification includes varieties spoken in countries like Saudi Arabia, Japan, and China, in which English is only used in specific areas like schools, universities and certain business domains (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

This traditional point of view has influenced many researchers in Second Language Acquisition including, importantly, Saudi linguists and researchers. Most studies that have examined English in Saudi Arabia, have investigated errors, in that they present one or more ENL varieties as the superior version of English against which any variation is labelled as errors (Alshayban, 2012; Ahamed, 2016; Al-Quyadi, 2016). In that sense, they 'cautiously' encourage learning English as a medium of gaining knowledge that ENL countries have to offer, asserting the fear that, being a foreign language, over time English may replace the Arabic language and undermine the Saudi culture (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996; AlJarf, 2008).

Although widely adopted, these classifications, as Kirkpatrick (2007) points out, have been critiqued for two main reasons. First, the term *native* language could be misunderstood to entail that all English speakers in ENL countries speak one variety of English, which is far from reality. As variationist sociolinguistic studies have consistently revealed, there is a great deal of variation in ENL speakers' speech (e.g., Labov's, 1966; Trudgill, 1974; Milroy, 1980; Eckert, 1989; Dubuois & Horvath, 2000). Additionally, variation in English has been studied in ESL (e.g., Beebe, 1980; Bayley, 2005; Sharma, 2005; Herat, 2005; Drummond, 2011; 2012a; 2012b), and in EFL (e.g., Stanlaw, 2004; Xu, 2010).

In addition, Milroy and Milroy (1999) argue that language standardisation (see also section 2.1.4) is socially and ideologically rather than linguistically motivated, to promote the most prestigious variety, giving the example of how *h*-dropping was not publicly stigmatised as it was found in literary texts in the 13th and 14th centuries. Besides the local variation within each English variety,

if ESL/EFL speakers were to follow one ENL model, which one is the perfect ENL model, since American, British, Australian, Canadian, New Zealand Englishes, although very similar, have differences (Jenkins, 2009). Therefore, it would be fallacious and discriminative to assume that there is one superior ENL model that ESL/EFL speakers should follow, when ENL speakers themselves vary in their speech.

The second reason the traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications have been critiqued is that with the spread and increasing use of English globally, the classification between ESL and EFL contexts is not as clear as it seems to be. Kirkpatrick (2007) argues that it is difficult to accurately classify varieties spoken in whole countries, such as Japan and China where English is increasingly playing an important role as EFL; rather, the ESL/EFL classification could be better applied between big and small cities because their residents have different opportunity and need to use English. Similarly, the importance of English in Saudi Arabia has been increasing, that it is now used along with Arabic in all government official websites, it is the language of instruction in some universities and it is used and promoted in the Saudi media.

2.1.2 Kachru's three-circle model
For the two reasons mentioned above, as an alternative to the traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications, B. B. Kachru (1985) proposed the *three-circle model*, which includes Inner Circle Englishes (ICE), Outer Circle Englishes (OCE) and Expanding Circle Englishes (ECE), and in which, as B. B. Kachru argues, "English now has multicultural identities" (p. 357). The Inner Circle refers to the countries seen as providing the traditional cultural and linguistic roots of English, such as the US and the UK. The Outer Circle includes countries that have gone through extended periods of colonisation, such as the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Ghana, which have institutionalised non-native varieties of English. The Expanding Circle represents countries where varieties of English are used in EFL contexts and do not have any historical or governmental role, such as China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the Middle East in general. In this model, the Inner Circle countries are

seen as norm-providing, whereas the Outer Circle is norm-developing, and the Expanding Circle is norm-dependent.

B. B. Kachru's model has an advantage over the traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications because it takes into account the pluralisation and localisation of English; however, it has some shortcomings. His model is based on geography and history rather than on how English speakers actually use and identify with English (Jenkins, 2009). Furthermore, positioning native English countries in the centre of the model implies the centrality of the native Englishes with their cultures, along with the terms 'inner', 'outer' and 'expanding' that have discriminative undertones. This led B. B. Kachru to modify his concentric model, as shown in Figure 1, to overlapping circles, in Figure 2. However, B. B. Kachru's second model allows for a certain amount of fuzziness and lack of fluidity that implies each circle is unchangeable and unaffected by the other circles. Jenkins (2009) argues that there is a grey area between the Inner and the Outer circles, that is B. B. Kachru's model fails to include speakers from the Outer circle countries whose first language is English, as well as speakers who use English at home rather than just for professional purposes. She also points out that the model excludes native speakers with low proficiency. In addition, Kirkpatrick (2007) argues that B. B. Kachru's model underestimates the growing important role of English in Expanding Circle countries in which new varieties of English have been established, such as Chinese English. Kirkpatrick (2007) maintains that English has been increasingly implemented in public education in China. English is now used as a lingua franca (ELF) of business and trade, as well as in computer mediated communications. The same could be argued for the status and the importance of English in Saudi Arabia where English is used in different domains so that now it has been localised to reflect the Saudi Islamic and Arabian culture (Mahboob's & Elyas's, 2014).

Figure 1: B. B. Kachru's concentric circles   Figure 2: B. B. Kachru's overlapping circles.
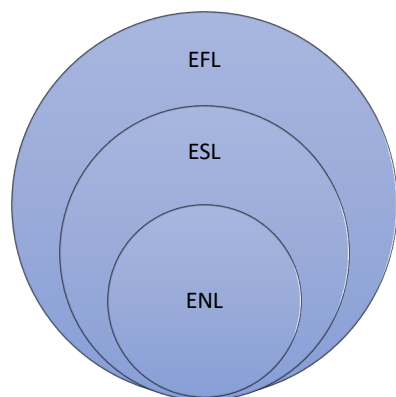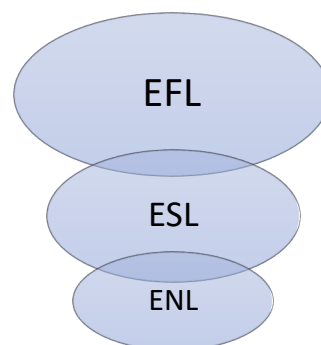
In addition to his above models, B. B. Kachru (1992) proposed three *phases* through which any variety of English passes. First, during the *non-recognition phase* speakers of the local variety reject it in preference of the native speaker variety that they view as Standard English. In the *second phase,* the local variety co-exists with the imported variety where the local variety is used in specific local contexts, but it is believed that it is still. In the *final phase*, the local variety becomes socially accepted, and consequently it is adopted in various professional and educational contexts. Similarly, Moag (1992, p.233-252) suggested a developmental cycle of five processes for non-standard Englishes. The first process is the 'transportation' process through which English arrives in a place where it has not been used before. Then, comes the 'indigenisation' process through which a new variety emerges that reflects the local culture and norms. Then, the 'expansion in use' process is marked by an increase in use of the local variety for more purposes, which leads to some variation within the local variety. In the fourth phase, locals begin to use the local variety in education and in literature. The last phase, which not all varieties go through, is when the local variety use declines due to promotion of other local languages, such as Tagalog in the Philippines and Malay in Malaysia.

2.1.3 Schneider's dynamic model

B. B. Kachru's model was based mainly on geographic and historical facts which failed to take into account how speakers start to construct new identities related to the new variety. Schneider (2003), on the other hand, proposed his Dynamic Model that is based on sociolinguistic, and socio-political aspects. *The Dynamic Model* accounts for identity reconstruction of both the new settlers and the indigenous people as a result of long periods of contact. Schneider also argues that all postcolonial Englishes go through five stages.

First, the *foundation stage*, through which settlers move to a new country and introduce their language with different dialects to the indigenous nation of the stolen land. In this phase, because the relationship between the settlers and the indigenous people is still distant, both the settlers and the indigenous people maintain their identities. In addition, the colonisers borrow words, such as place names from the indigenous language, while levelling and simplifying their own language. In this stage, a minority of the indigenous people learn the new language for communication as they start working with or for the colonists.

Second, in the stage of *exonormative stabilization*, the contact between the two groups increases which results in more borrowing from the indigenous language. Consequently, the colonisers' language moves slowly towards the indigenous language. The number of indigenous people who speak the foreign language increases, forming new identities as local English speakers, and the settlers form new identities as English locals. Typically, in this stage, the colony becomes politically independent, and English is used in administration, law and education.

Third, in the *nativization* stage, which Schneider views as the most important and dynamic phase, the new settlers accept the new country as their homeland. The indigenous people and the new settlers accept each other which results in reducing the gap between them. Both groups undergo new identity reconstruction in relation to the new language and culture. During this phase, the indigenous people develop a specific accent of their own, and as a result of borrowing from their

first language (L1), morphological, phonological, and syntactic changes appear.

Then, during the *endonormative stabilization* stage, the local variety, with its informal linguistic norms, becomes accepted in formal contexts after being codified. In the final stage, which Schneider calls the *differentiation* stage, a new variety has been established, and other local varieties begin to develop marking different ethnic identities.

Similar to Moag's (1992) developmental cycle, Schneider's dynamic model fails to account for the new status of English as a lingua franca or a global language in contexts that may or may not involve native English speakers. In addition, similar to B. B. Kachru's model, it explains the development of post-colonial Englishes spread by settlers. Indeed, as Bruthiaux (2003, p. 172) argues "no model of a complex phenomenon such as language variation can hope to account for every local twist in the sociolinguistic plot." Therefore, all previous models exclude countries such as Saudi Arabia where English spread by means of modernisation and globalisation rather than colonisation and has been adapted to reflect local norms and thus has developed its own features as a new variety of English (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

2.1.4 Standardisation

A standard language, as Jenkins (2009, p. 33) defines it, "is the term used for that variety of a language which is considered to be the norm." It is the language variety that is viewed as suitable for education and that is considered proper or prestigious. As a result, a standard variety is used as "a yardstick against which other varieties of the language are measured." Jenkins adds that a standard variety is typically the language of a minority of speakers who often hold powerful positions and who give that variety its *standard* status. According to Milroy & Milroy (1985, p. 19) standardisation is a historical process that "is motivated in the first place by various social, political and commercial needs". The goal of language policy rooted in standardisation is to preserve prescribed language rules that speakers are expected to follow to ensure mutual comprehensibility which does not tolerate variability. Trudgill (1999) describes standard English

as a social dialect that has greater prestige, that does not have an associated accent and is different from other dialects. He adds that standard English in the UK is spoken by 12-15 per cent of the population who speak it with different regional accents. In sum, Milroy & Milroy (1985) argue that standardisation is an ideology, and a standard language is "an idea in the mind rather than a reality – a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent."

Milroy & Milroy compare prescription in English to other human behaviour to explain how prescription is imposed by society. They give an example of how forks and knives are arranged differently in North America and in Britain. Any deviation from the culturally accepted prescribed norms will be noticed immediately and "considered to be bad manners" (p. 1). Similarly, any deviation from the socially accepted standard English will be considered as improper. Milroy & Milroy were discussing prescription and variation in English in L1 contexts, but by extending the example to other countries where people speak local varieties of English, this example illustrates how bizarre it is to expect people from other countries to follow the norms of the US or the UK. It is unreasonable to expect Saudis, for example, to use the left hand in eating as the socially acceptable norm in Saudi is to use the right hand, and it is equally unreasonable to expect Saudis to follow exonormative English rules. Even if Saudis were to follow the rules of standard English, which standard English should they use, standard American English, or standard British English?

Milroy & Milroy explain that the label 'standard English' is a loose term used to refer to what are considered acceptable linguistic conventions by influential people. L. Milroy (1999, p. 174) describes standard American English as the English variety that is left when other American English varieties spoken by 'disparaged persons' such as African Americans, Hillbillies, Southerners, New Yorkers, and Valley Girls are set aside. Similarly, in the UK Received Pronunciation (RP), which is perceived as a class-based accent, is the variety that is left after setting aside other regional varieties, such Brummie, Geordie, and Scouse. In Australia, Jenkins

(2009) explains that until the 1970s educated Australian English was considered as an inferior non-standard variety. She argues that "it is no surprise, then, that non-standard native varieties and both standard and non-standard non-native varieties have not so far met with similar success" (p. 37).

2.1.5 The *native/non-native* debate

Jenkins (2009) provides us with an important and incisive example of the significance of the *native* vs *non-native* debate in English Language learning and use. She notes that in the early 1990s, Quirk and B. B. Kachru debated the legitimacy of World Englishes, in a debate that was published in the journal *English Today*. To summarise, in 1990, Quirk published his article, *Language varieties and standard language*, in which he argues for the validity of the distinction between native and non-native English. Quirk argues that non-native speakers have different intuitions and judgments of grammar correctness, therefore they should learn standard English to increase their freedom and career prospects. He labelled teaching and studying non-native varieties as 'half-baked quackery' and viewed opposing teaching standard English as an inability to acquire 'real English' (p. 8-9). B. B. Kachru (1991) published a response to Quirk in his article *Liberation linguistics and the Quirk concern*. B. B. Kachru explains that Quirk looks at the spread of English and its use in international contexts from the perspective of monolingual societies. He adds that while native speakers may have different intuitions about grammar regarding their L1, non-native English speakers have intuitions that are connected to their own multi and sociolinguistic contexts which reflect the different educational and pragmatic functions of English in those contexts that are different from the functions of English in monolingual societies. Furthermore, B. B. Kachru lists the false assumptions on which Quirk based his argument: that English is learned in the Outer and Expanding Circle countries to interact with native speakers; that English is learned to learn about the values and norms of the Inner Circle countries; and that it is learned to achieve native-like competence. B. B. Kachru adds that World Englishes are

varieties in their own right that reflect the realities and identities of their multilingual speakers. For a more detailed summary of the debate, see Jenkins (2009, p. 66-70).

2.1.6 Research in Saudi Arabia

The Quirk-Kachru debate mirrors the division between SLA linguists in Saudi Arabia. Since the 1980s when Saudi linguists began to publish research on English in Saudi Arabia, their studies have been influenced mainly by the traditional type of ENL, ESL and EFL classifications, which resulted in many *error* investigative studies (e.g., Hashim, 1980; Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015); these presented ENL as the superior English, against which any variation was labelled as *errors* no matter how frequent they may have become. On the other hand, researchers in Outer Circle countries have embraced different World Englishes and Variationist Sociolinguistic perspectives in dealing with English, which led to the identification of consistent or emerging consistent variations from the standard as comprising the existence or the emergence of new varieties (for example, Singapore English, (Platt & Weber, 1980); South African Indian English, (Mesthrie, 1992); and Sri Lankan English, (Heart, 2017). Many Saudi researchers continue to separate the English language from the Saudi society and keep pointing out *errors* despite the evidence and the perspective that these might actually be features of a new developing variety resulting from the agency of its speakers. For example, Hashim (1980) and Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015) conducted studies investigating Saudi English learners' grammatical mistakes, which echo the results of many other similar studies. However, the grammatical variations which they labelled as mistakes resemble those found in Outer Circle varieties. One of the examples that Hashim (1980, p. 23) provided shows the use of zero *be* (signalled as Ø) in the past tense, for example, *in the past there Ø a shortage and once the roads Ø not good*, which bears a resemblance to an example in Sri Lankan English, *one day I said I'm going to stop near a boutique and everyone Ø getting ready to come out of bus* (Herat, 2005, p. 194). In addition, Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015, p. 91) provided an example of zero *-s* inflection in third-person singular verb *My mother **get** cold*

and also fever which is similar to Van Herk's and Walker's (2005) example in in African American English *My wife **send** her love to you both* (p. 114).

Since linguists in Saudi, such as those mentioned above, continue to consider English as an exonormative language, providing exonormative rules and owned only by its speakers from Inner Circle countries (mainly Americans and British), the English language is usually viewed as a western culture importer. Therefore, Saudi studies display two different points of view when examining the possible cultural influence on Saudis' norms, culture and linguistic competence. First, some researchers have argued for the positive impact the English culture might have on Saudi English learners in enhancing their English learning experiences. For example, Alsamani (2014) argues that Saudis' lack of awareness of the 'target culture' could negatively influence Saudi learners' performance in using the English language. According to him, without having knowledge about English native speakers' culture, English cannot be accurately learned or manipulated in real-life situations. Therefore, he argues that English programs in Saudi should cover real-life native speaker culture. Similarly, Hagler (2014) advocates for improving Saudi students' awareness of the West, which, he argues, will have an impact on their motivation to learn English. He argues that students who show positive attitudes toward Western culture and have integrative motivation to learn the language "are better placed to learn English" since they recognise "its usefulness in the global market and wanting to associate themselves with the West through its language" (p. 10). On the other hand, there have been concerns among Saudi researchers that the spread of Western norms through English might undermine the local Arabic and Islamic cultures. Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) expressed concerns that the spread of the English language might threaten the status of the Arabic language. Similarly, AlJarf (2008) voiced the same fear that the English language might endanger the Arabic language, therefore, she argued for establishing new strategies to protect Arabic because it is "facing a serious threat by the dominance of English" (p. 207).

Although all these researchers have different views regarding the potential influence of the Western culture on Saudis' norms and values, they all assume that English has one unified culture. However, as B. B. Kachru (1985) pointed out, no country could claim custody over the English language since it has been adopted, and appropriated to reflect local norms, in different countries. In addition, he maintains that due to the global diffusion of the English language, the number of its non-native speakers exceeds the number of its native speakers, which makes the latter group a minority. Therefore, one could argue that English being an international language is cultureless, which makes the Western culture effect irrelevant.

Two researchers have taken a different approach in examining the status of English in Saudi Arabia. Al-Rawi (2012) adopted a World Englishes perspective in investigating Saudi English grammatical features as an ELF variety. Her results revealed variations in four grammatical features: *be* deletion (They Ø not able to hear anyone); *the* insertion (*The* children are better when it comes to language learning); *a/an* omission (When I grew older, I want to be Ø doctor); and third person singular –*s* omission (My father always *teach* me how to discover my capabilities) (p. 36-37). Mahboob & Elyas (2014), on the other hand, examined Saudi English from a sociolinguistic perspective. Their results showed variation in English grammatical features similar to Al-Rawi's (2012) findings, for example, *a/an* omission (Look at this box. Make Ø sentence from it); and third person singular –*s* omission (He is a keen tennis player and he also *like* swimming) (p. 137). In addition, they argue that English has been localized by Saudis to project cultural practices, exemplified in the use of the male pronoun *he* in reference to both males and females (For example, a student may need 120 credits to graduate. If *he* takes an English course, *he* will get 10 credits.) (p. 140). Al-Rawi's (2012) and Mahboob's & Elyas's (2014) findings reveal a glimpse of how Saudi English is evolving this resisting most Saudi researchers' attempts to restrict its development and classify it as a foreign language, rather than a local variety that is capable of reflecting local identities, norms and values.

2.2 Theoretical framework

As the primary focus of the current study is to uncover possible sociolinguistic variation in Saudi English in ESL and EFL settings, which has never been explored before, it is essential to look to different disciplines in linguistics to establish a theoretical framework for this study. This section reviews research in Variationist Sociolinguistics (VS) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). I discuss how VS methodology has informed SLA research. Then, I review relevant SLA research done in Saudi. Finally, I will discuss the primary social factors presented in previous VS research, which will be examined in the present study.

2.2.1 Variationist Sociolinguistics

Variationist sociolinguistics is founded on the notion that variation in all natural languages occurs due to the interaction of external social factors and internal linguistic factors that lead to, as Weinreich et al. (1968) describe it, an orderly heterogeneity, as opposed to random variation. Tagliamonte (2012, p.1) maintains that the general goal of Variationist Sociolinguistics is to explore the interaction between language, society and culture, because without the "human component language itself would not exist". The pioneering work of Labov (1963, 1966, and 1972) on language heterogeneity in L1 speech shows that language variation cannot be explained solely from a linguistic perspective; rather it can be understood through the interaction of a group of factors, and the primary goal of variationist research is "to discover patterns of usage, which pertain to the relative frequency of occurrence or co-occurrence of structures, rather than simply to their existence or grammaticality" (Poplack, 1993, p. 252). Tagliamonte (2006) explains that this goal is based on three facts: that language is systematically heterogeneous, that it changes perpetually, and that it conveys more than purely linguistic meanings. In earlier research, such as Labov's (1966) study in New York and Trudgill's (1974) study in Norwich, sociolinguists sought to observe variation in the vernacular of everyday life, which is defined in those studies as the non-standard speech of working-class locals as opposed to standard language. Later, vernacular was defined as speakers' most natural speech, which Eckert (2012) calls 'personal vernacular'. In this

sense the ideal target of sociolinguistic investigation is everyday speech, or *real language use* (Milroy & Milroy 1985) in which speech is given minimum attention.

Linguistic variables are, as defined by Tagliamonte (2006, p. 9), "linguistic items which vary amongst themselves with the same referential meaning". Speakers use diverse linguistic variables at various language levels to accomplish the same functions, or, as Labov (1982, p. 49) simply puts it "two or more ways of saying the same thing". According to Tagliamonte (2006) the task of sociolinguists is to find order and system in variation chaos; however, because linguistic variables do not vary haphazardly but systematically, they can be quantitatively modelled. Whenever a choice between different variants of the same variable is made as a result of social factors, a useful way to explore and explain this variability in relation to its social context is by employing statistical techniques, which sets sociolinguistics apart from some other fields of linguistics.

In defining linguistic variables, Tagliamonte (2012) makes a comparison with synonyms, which are supposedly completely interchangeable in every possible context. She argues that the variant use of linguistic features, unlike synonyms, is inherently systematic; that is, there is structure in their heterogeneity. While synonyms could be linguistic variables, however, variants of a linguistic variable are more than just synonyms because some variants of a linguistic variable have social meanings, if they are viewed as stigmatised or prestigious forms for example; thus, examining these variants in relation to their embedded social meanings could provide insights into the society and period in which they occur. Tagliamonte explains that the primary task of variationist sociolinguists is to correlate dependent variables with independent variables, which include external variables, such as social factors, and internal variables, such as grammatical, or phonological constraints. In addition, she points out that what is important in understanding linguistic variation is the contexts in which these variants are used, that is their patterns of use, rather than the absolute rate or the frequency of their use. By investigating speakers' recurrent

linguistic choices within the grammatical and social contexts in which they occur, these choices can be assessed statistically to uncover meaningful patterns. Tagliamonte argues that through these recurring patterns we can understand the underlying variable grammar of the speakers and, if sufficient data are gathered, the grammar of their community as well.

Eckert (2012) explained the development of Variationist Sociolinguistic (VS) studies and categorised them into three waves. These three waves, she points out, are not presented chronologically, rather in terms of what "each wave adds to the preceding" (p. 27). While all waves of VS studies have similar data gathering and analysis approaches, they differ in how they explain social meanings of variation. The first wave of VS research relied on surveys to gather demographic information based on which speakers were grouped. This wave gave a general overview of the distribution of variables across broad social categories, such as social class, gender, and ethnicities. Labov's (1966) study of the social stratification of English in New York City is an example of first wave variationist research. In his study, Labov used the variable (r) as a social differentiator in all levels of New York City speech. His study was replicated in other cities and countries, such as Trudgill (1974) in Norwich, L. Milroy (1980) in Belfast, Eckert (1989) in Detroit, Dubuois and Horvath (2000) in Cajun English in the US, and Bonnici (2010) in Malta. The variationist paradigm was very quickly extended to the study of variation in English as a second language, such as Beebe (1980) in Thai English, Bayley (2005) in Vietnamese English, Sharma (2005) in Indian English, Herat (2005) in Sri Lankan English, and Drummond (2011; 2012a; 2012b) in English variation in the speech of Polish speakers in Manchester.

In explaining variation, this wave of VS studies started with the assumption that certain variables are directly linked to certain social categories. For example, working or middle class speakers would use less standard forms than upper class speakers. These studies also showed speakers' awareness of the social status different variables indicate, in that they changed their speech to

be more or less standard in different speech styles. For example, Trudgill (1974) found that speakers in different social classes in Norwich used fewer local variants in formal speech.

The second wave, although similar to the first wave, had a narrower scope when it comes to social categories, that is, how variables are used at a local level. Eckert (2012, p. 6) explains that second wave studies employed ethnographic methods "to get closer to the local dynamics of variation." For example, these studies showed that using standard variables to avoid stigma might not be "the only form of agency in variation". L. Milroy's (1980) study in Belfast is an example of second wave VS research in which she investigated the use of local vernacular in working class settings. Milroy found that having more local and tight social networks, and working and interacting with the same people from the same social class, enforce the use of local variants which may be stigmatised in middle or upper class. Eckert (2012, p. 13) argues that the second wave studies provided more local views on the findings of the first wave studies. However, both waves viewed variation as local articulations of local categories "and did not deal explicitly with the nature of the indexical relations between variables and social categories."

Eckert (2012, p. 14) explains that third wave studies focus on practice rather than the structure of variation in relation to social categories. Through focusing on practice, that is on "the day-to-day activity in which human beings make sense of their lives and move their projects along in the face of constraints imposed by social structure and the power relations that keep that structure in place", agency is given its place in the analysis. The social meanings of linguistic forms are understood through indirect indexicality where variables indirectly index categories by being associated with characteristics of those categories. Eckert's (1989) study of high school adolescents in Detroit is an example of a study which employs both second and third wave approaches and interpretations. She found that two groups of high school girls, Jocks and Burnouts, represented socioeconomic hierarchy. The Jocks were predominantly upper/middle class, and the Burnouts were predominantly lower/working class. The Jocks and the Burnouts

opposed each other in several ways, such as in clothing and in language resources. Eckert's primary findings showed that both groups used different variants which aligned with their socioeconomic status. The Burnouts used urban variants more than the Jocks, which, Eckert argues, reflect their urban identity. Eckert explains that:

> These data suggest that social stratification unfolds in very local ways – that broader class correlations are not simply the fallout of education, occupation and income, but reflect local dynamics rooted in practices and ideologies that are in turn shaped by class. The data also suggest that patterns of variation are not set in childhood, but serve as resources in the construction of adolescent social identity. (P. 12)

This finding locates Eckert's study in the second wave as she examined language variation as a reflection of aspects of local identities. Her further findings illustrate how this study adopts third wave understanding where the study explores variation as indirectly indexing identity features that are associated with local social categories. Eckert found out that being Jocks or Burnouts are identities in which some of their aspects are associated with certain language variables which were adopted by adolescents in the suburbs of Detroit.

2.2.1.1 Second language acquisition and sociolinguistic variation

Since the 1970s, Second Language Acquisition research (SLA) has mainly been influenced by Selinker's (1972) *Interlanguage* concept (IL), which has nevertheless been challenged ever since by variationist sociolinguists, World Englishes and ELF researchers (Jenkins, 2006). According to IL theory, language learners acquire a temporary language system that differs from their first language and falls short of a complete second language, or as Davies (1989, p. 460) defines it "as the language of the learner", which is "a point on the way to a full natural language" (p. 461). Success in SLA is considered as developing through IL level to perform in the target language in a way identical to native speakers' performance (Selinker, 1972). Therefore, IL theory entails that norms against which learners are judged are provided by native speakers, leaving no space for linguistic innovation. In addition, in the situation of World Englishes, the IL concept is generalised to a whole community of speakers as Selinker (1972, p. 38) puts it:

> Not only can entire IL competences be fossilized in individual learners performing in their own interlingual situation, but also in whole groups of individuals, resulting in the emergence of a new dialect (here Indian English), where fossilized IL competences may be the normal situation.

As a result, in this view any innovation and any deviation from the target forms are interpreted as first language interference or transfer (Jenkins, 2006). Similarly, non-native varieties of English have been labelled as interference varieties (B. B. Kachru, 1986). A number of World Englishes scholars pointed out problems in applying IL theory especially in contexts where new English varieties have developed. Brutt-Griffler (2002) argues that the main problem with SLA studies is that they focus on individual acquisition and IL errors rather than the acquisition patterns of a whole speech community. Additionally, Sridhar & Sridhar (1986) argue that the temporary instability of a learner's interlanguage cannot be compared to the on-going stability of varieties of English. Similarly, B. B. Kachru (1982) argues that the fossilised features in Indian English that Selinker (1972) were referring to are in fact stable features of the variety that have persisted over generations.

Another problem with the IL concept is that it assumes that native speakers' input is available for learners to fully acquire the target language, which might not be true, especially in EFL or Expanding Circle countries like Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the IL theory entails that the norms learners are aiming for are native speakers' norms, which could be far from reality in situations where learners are aiming for localised, indigenised norms. Jenkins (2006) argues that not all English speakers, as Quirk (1990) claims, are trying to identify with native speakers to produce an exonormative variety of English, which is irrelevant to their sociolinguistic reality. Additionally, there is a presumption in some SLA research that the ideal motivation for English learners is *integrative* which means admiration of native speakers' language and culture. For example, according to Alsamani (2014, p.149) English cannot be accurately learned or used in real-life situations without being aware of English native speakers' culture, which includes "[l]earning

how facial expression and tone of voice affect ENSs' understanding of each other". Hagler (2014) also advocates for improving Saudi students' awareness of the West, which, he argues, will have an impact on their motivation to learn English. However, this assumption that English learners admire native speakers' varieties and cultures is not always true, especially in situations where English has been localised and appropriated to reflect speakers' own identities and culture. As B. B. Kachru (1983, p.109) argues "Indianisms in Indian English are, then, linguistic manifestations of pragmatic needs for appropriate language use in a new linguistic and cultural context". B. B. Kachru (1994, p. 414) echoes this, arguing that the IL theory is irrelevant in contexts, "in which a second or an additional language has definite societal roles in the linguistic repertoire of its users", an observation which could be applied to Saudi Arabia.

To break away from *the straightjacket of the monolingual native speaker bias*, Ortega (2013a; 2013b, p. 16) proposed the concept of a *bi/multilingual turn* to reframe the goal and scope of SLA research in investigating L2 learning/acquisition. Ortega argues that in studying L2 acquisition researchers should investigate "the working hypothesis that the human language faculty is potentially by default bi/multilingual" (Ortega, 2013b, p. 17). In addition, the concept of the *bi/multilingual turn* entails that L2 learning is possible across all ages. That is, acquiring a second language at any age is as possible as acquiring a first language. Therefore, L2 acquisition should be studied in its own right without comparing it to the acquisition of its L1 speakers. Ortega's argument echoes Bley-Vroman's (1983) *comparative fallacy* argument that SLA researchers should focus on L2's specific and unique features rather than as a deficient version of native speakers' language. Similarly, Cook (1992) proposed the concept of *multicompetence* and argued that L2 speakers' acquisition and production processes are different from that of monolinguals; hence, it should be studied alone without pointing out their similarities and differences. Ortega (2013b, p. 17) explains that in shifting SLA in a more multilingual direction,

> … L2 acquisition becomes as worthy of study as any other type of acquisition—neither more unique nor less interesting or less pure—and full with opportunities for reciprocal flows of knowledge and transdisciplinarity. Explaining how late bilingualism is possible

and even normal, not impossible or exceptional, would be part of this overarching research program.

The turn towards multilingualism in SLA has been championed by researchers such as Mendoza (2020) who argues that SLA researchers from countries where English is used as an L2 have a responsibly to produce original studies on English beyond the traditional native/non-native language use dichotomy. As presented in section 2.1.6, and as will be discussed in section 2.2.1.2, SLA studies in Saudi have not moved towards multilingualism and away from the native/non-native distinction.

Although the two fields of SLA and VS began and developed at the same time in the late 1960s, and are similar in that they investigate systematic variation, it is only relatively recently that the two fields have been combined to study variation in English as a second language. Bayley (2005) argues that the previous limited influence of sociolinguistics on SLA research can be attributed to SLA researchers' misunderstanding of variationist concepts and methodology. He explains that one problem affecting interlanguage variation studies is the tendency to interpret variation based on one contextual factor rather than multiple linguistic and social factors. He argues that variationist sociolinguists, on the other hand, examine different, linguistic and social, causes to explain variation, whether in native or non-native varieties. Therefore, in order to understand interlanguage variation, researchers should include in their analysis several factors, such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, the nature of the task and the topic of the discussion, as well as linguistic environments surrounding the variable.

Subiabre Ubilla (2015), Bonnici (2010), Sharma (2005), and Drummond (2011; 2012a; 2012b) are examples of studies investigating variation in English as a second language. Subiabre Ubilla (2015) used a VS approach to investigate variation in Chilean English in relation to linguistic and social factors. Bonnici (2010) also found sociolinguistic variation in Maltese English through applying VS methods. Sharma (2005) studied variation in Indian English in an ESL context. Drummond (2011;

2012a; 2012b), too, found variation in the speech of Polish English speakers in an ESL context which correlates with social and linguistic factors. Similarly, the current study aims at examining variation in English as second/foreign language in Saudi through applying VS data gathering and analysis methods.

Bayley (2005, p. 5) explains that SLA and variationist studies differ in that whereas SLA studies typically focus on *linguistic incompetence*, variationist studies focus on *sociolinguistic competence*. Mougeon et al. (2004, p. 408) set up a contrast between Type 1 variation as alternating between native and non-native variants "to express a given notion that is conveyed in the target language by only one form". They argue that in Type 1 variation, second language (L2) speakers use invariant forms in the target. Sociolinguistic competence or Type 2 variation, as Mougeon et al. call it, refers to acquiring variant features in the target language "where native speakers display sociolinguistic variation" (p. 409). Bayley's (1996) study of variation in the speech of Chinese English speakers in the US is an example study of Type 2 variation. He found that Chinese who used informal English with American speakers used consonant cluster reduction in t/d, which is a variable feature in American English. The current study will investigate variation in ESL/EFL speakers' language, that is, variation within an English variety. It does not investigate the speakers' language competence or their acquisition of variable features in ENL speakers' language.

2.2.1.2 Variationist and SLA studies in Saudi Arabia

Despite the accumulating evidence against applying IL theory, especially in countries like Saudi Arabia where English spread by means of modernisation rather than colonisation and in which there is insufficient native speaker input, Jenkins (2006, p. 168) argues:

> …the literature on teaching English still regularly contains advice for teachers in both outer and expanding circles on how to reduce IL errors and how to reverse fossilization, while the testing of English remains wholly predicated on the concept.

Jenkins' observation is particularly valid in the case of teaching or researching English in Saudi, as mentioned earlier, Saudi SLA studies have not moved away from the native/non-native and standard/non-standards distinctions towards the bi/multilingual turn.

Since the 1980s when Saudi and other researchers started to conduct research pertaining to the English language in Saudi Arabia, and until now, the focus of their research has been IL errors in Saudis' language (Abdelrady and Ibrahim, 2015; Ahamed, 2016; Alshayban, 2012; Al-Quyadi, 2016; Hashim, 1980). In this section I will discuss the results of these studies collectively to illustrate how their consistent findings of what they labelled as errors could be, in fact, features of a new variety as compared to features of other English varieties. These studies will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

Hashim (1980), Alshayban (2012) and Ahamed (2016) conducted studies to investigate grammatical errors in Saudi students' writing. Their results showed similar patterns of copula variation, which they all attributed to negative L1 transfer. Hashim (1980, p. 24) argued "the cause for such errors [zero *be*] is the absence of a syntactic equivalent in Arabic". Alshayban (2012, p. 77) explained "the negative transfer from L1 to L2 plays an important role in copula omission among ESL/ EFL learners". Similarly, Ahamed (2016, p. 196) argued that the use of [zero *be*] "can be attributed to non- existence of the copula in Arabic language besides its multiplicity of forms". Despite their similar findings of constant [zero *be*] in their studies, they all attribute the variation to L1 transfer.

In the same vein Ahamed, (2016), Al-Quyadi, (2016), and Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015) conducted studies to investigate Saudi students' ability to apply Standard English grammars. Their findings showed patterns of [zero *-s*] marking for third-person singular verbs, *My mother **get** cold and also fever* (Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015, p. 91). They explained their findings as a failure to master Standard English grammar and L1 negative transfer. However, zero *-s* marking

for third-person singular verbs is found in African American English *My wife **send** her love to you both* (Van Herk and Walker, 2005, p. 114) and a common feature in ELF varieties *She **look** very sad* (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 220), which will be examined in this study.

While the majority of Saudi researchers focus on IL errors in their research, recently there have been attempts to examine English in Saudi from a different perspective, mainly World Englishes (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Mahboob's & Elyas's (2014) data was based on an English language textbook used in Saudi public schools. Their results showed variation in four English grammatical features:

a. In the use of present perfect tense markers instead of past tense:
   - He has had two or three jobs since he returned to the Kingdom. He **has worked** for Saudi Radio for two years. Then he **has interviewed** people for various programmes on TV for six months. He is soon going to have his own programme 'In Focus'. (P. 136).

b. They also found variation in the use of articles:
   - Hamza got off and **Ø** porter carried his luggage into the building.
   - Look at this box. Make **Ø** sentence from it. (P. 137).

c. In marking subject-verb agreement:
   - He is a keen tennis player and he also **like** swimming. (p. 137).

d. Number (singular/plural '–s'):
   - But that's another **subjects**. (p. 137).

In addition, they discussed how Saudi English could be seen as demonstrating local and sociocultural views by analysing the content of the textbook. For example, they argue that the use of the male pronoun *he* in reference to both males and females projects a cultural view, that

is, the use of the male pronoun for generic reference in Saudi as in:

- For example, a student may need 120 credits to graduate. If **he** takes an English course, **he** will get 10 credits.
- Who uses physics in **his** work. (p. 140).

Similarly, they argue that the use of Islamic and cultural phrases, for example, *Assalamu Alaikum* (peace be upon you) instead of its English equivalent 'hello' could be seen as an indicator that English in Saudi is being localized to project cultural practices (p. 139).

While Mahboob & Elyas (2014) claim that their study is the first that explores Saudi English from a World Englishes perspective, Al-Rawi's (2012) study is the first to examine English in general and Saudi English in particular in a more social context rather than educational. Although some of the speakers in her study were students and part of her data was recorded in classrooms, she also interviewed professionals and businessmen. She collected her data through recordings of natural speech from 16 well-educated and professional speakers between the ages of 30 to 50 years in three settings: chat shows from a Saudi TV English Channel, business meetings, and English classes in public schools. In addition, she interviewed 20 high school students, and 20 male and female university students. The interviews lasted 10 minutes and included general topics such as life experiences, or personal interests. Her results revealed variation in four grammatical features:

- *be* deletion:
The participants in her study varied in their use of the variable *be,* in which she found 66.7% instances of *be* realization and 33.3% instances of *be* omission; for example, *They ϕ not able to hear anyone* (p. 34). She also found that the educated professionals and the university students used the Standard form more than the high school students. She explained the variation in copula realisation as a result of substrate influence on Arabic. Her findings coincide with Hashim (1980)

in his IL error study, *The journey to Makkah Ø long and tiring* and *But now people Ø used to travel by planes* (p. 23); and Heart (2017) in Sri Lankan English, *And my brother Ø also in Kedah* (p. 200).

- *the* insertion:

Her results show a tendency among all three groups to add the definite article in noun phrases which do not require one in English. She argues that the definite article in Saudi English has additional functions beside its function as a definite marker, similar to the functions of ʔal- 'the' in Arabic, which are found in other world Englishes (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, p. 51), for example:

- Plural count noun with generic reference – e.g. *The children are better when it comes to language learning.*
- Names of languages, cities and countries –e.g. *I can understand the Tagalog as I visited the Philippines.*
- Names of social and domestic institutions –e.g. *I graduated from the school three years ago.*
- Names of geographical areas, public institutions, buildings and streets – e.g. *We took him to the Fakeeh hospital that is located in the Palestine Street.*
- Terms of parts of the day, week or year – e.g. *The Thursday is the best day of the week, and the Hajj is the most spiritual month in the year.*
- Names of festive days and seasons – e.g. *The Hajj Eid is the occasion that the whole family is waiting for.* (Al-Rawi, 2012, p. 34-35).

- *a/an* omission: When I grew older, I want to be Ø doctor

Additionally, she found a higher rate of variation in the use of the indefinite articles in which all three groups showed a higher rate of zero a/an. For example, *When I grew older, I want to be ɸ doctor* (36), which coincides with Alhaysony's (2012, p. 60) findings in an IL error study, *….is big ɸ family*. She argues that the omission of the indefinite articles in Saudi English is attributed to Arabic in which the lack of an article indicates indefiniteness.

- third person singular –*s* omission

The three groups showed similar high rates of using zero –s inflection in third-person singular verbs. For example, *My father always teach me how to discover my capabilities* (p. 37). She explained the tendency to use zero –s marking to L1 influence in which Arabic verbal sentences show a default third person singular morpheme on the verb:

ya- ðhab-u   Ɂal-tˤaːlibu   Ɂila   Ɂal-madrasati

3.PRES.MASC-go-SG   the-student-NOM   to   the-school-GEN

'The student goes to school' (p. 37).

While Al-Rawi (2012) mentioned some social factors, such as gender, age, and occupation, Mahboob and Elyas (2014) and Al-Rawi (2012) did not examine the relationship between social variables and linguistic variables, nor did they examine the linguistic environments that could influence the variation in their findings. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap in the literature concerning Saudi English, as it aims at integrating both linguistic and social variables to better understand language change and variation in Saudi Arabia.

In addition to the two studies mentioned above, the use of English has been investigated in other Arab countries, for example, Boyle (2010; 2012) in the UAE, Dashti (2015) in Kuwait, and Hillman and Ocampo (2018) in Qatar. Despite the lack of applying VS methods to study variation in English in Saudi, there are a few variationist sociolinguistic studies that investigated variation in Saudi Arabic. For example, AlAmmar (2017) in Ha'il, Al-Bohnayya (2019) in Al-Ahsa, and Al-Essa (2008) in Jeddah. In these studies, social factors, such as gender, age, and social network, predicted Arabic variation in different Saudi dialects. Similarly, VS methods were incorporated in studies to investigate variation in other Arabic varieties (for example, Al-Wer (2007) in Jordan; Horesh (2015) in Palestine; and Haeri (1997) in Egypt).

2.2.2 Primary social factors

2.2.2.1 Social class and tribalism

The earliest variationist sociolinguistic studies began with the correlation of language change and social class, as Labov (1972, P. 212) argues, "the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behaviour." Milroy and Gordon (2003, p. 40) also argue that in sociolinguistic studies social class is a crucial variable "that a socially accountable researcher cannot avoid considering it at least at some level of the analysis." However, the definition or the nature of the concept of social class has been controversial in sociolinguist studies. The notion of social class is commonly measured by a person's economic status as compared to other members in any society. For example, early sociolinguistic research demonstrated that more prestigious variants are associated more with upper/middle class members and vernacular or local variants are used more by working classes (Labov, 1966; Trudgill, 1974). This basic stratification of social class is based on Karl Marx's conflict theory that divides society into two conflicted classes, Upper class and working class. However, according to Tagliamonte (2012), sociolinguistic research has used different metrics or theories to establish the meaning of social class in western countries, exemplified in Max Weber's model that describes social class as a complex set of social actions. For example, Labov (1966) used education, occupation, and income as indicators of social class, Trudgill (1974) in Norwich used a more complicated index (income, education, type of housing, locality, and father's occupation), and Haeri (1997) in Cairo used parent's occupation, speaker's education, neighbourhood, and occupation to define social class.

A number of sociolinguists have used Weber's theory of social class stratification that includes three components: individuals' economic status, lifestyle and life chances. As opposed to Marx's theory of social class, Weber's theory captures the agency of individuals in participating in creating their social status through social behaviour (lifestyle), as well as their aspiration and attitudes (life chances). For example, Cedergren (1973) in defining social class took into consideration criteria tailored to the community of his study, which included local indicators such

as the proportion of houses as well as general indicators like education and occupation. Similarly, Talcott Parsons' functionalist or consensus theory conceptualises social class as social actions, which differ from one society to another (Meyerhoff, 2011). According to Milroy and Milroy (1992), the functionalist theory stratifies social class as a group of people with shared values and general social consensus; thus, class forms a continuum with different values assigned to different occupations. The survey studies of Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1974) adopt the functionalist consensus model explaining that this social stratification is derived from the shared values of the members of a community, a definition that Labov extended to describe the concept of a speech community (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). A speech community, according to Labov, is defined as a group of speakers who share similar values, norms and attitudes towards language (Labov, 2007).

On the other hand, some sociolinguists (Labov, 1972; Rickford, 1986) have followed Karl Marx and employed his conflict theory, which entails that modern society has two classes: The bourgeoisie are the owners of the means of production and the proletariat are the workers who are being exploited by the upper class, hence, creating a conflict between these two classes. From this perspective, social class stratification within a society forms a binary division, for example, upper class/ white-collar vs. working class/ blue-collar, which correlates with standard/prestige variants vs. non-standard/local variants, respectively (Holmes, 2001). According to Milroy and Gordon (2003, p. 96), "the vitality and persistence of non-standard vernacular communities is more readily interpreted as evidence of conflict and division in society than as evidence of consensus". An example of such studies is Rickford's (1986) study of language variation in Cane Walk in Guyana in which he argues that the linguistic differences of that community reflect division rather than consensus among the social groups. The working class of that village used distinct vernacular to show in-group solidarity. Another example is Labov's (1972) study of Martha's Vineyard in which the inhabitants of the island used fishermen's pronunciation as a marker of local identity as opposed to tourists. In both studies, the use of local

linguistic features indicates division and conflict of social groups in one society rather than sharing similar values and norms.

The previous studies examined language variation in L1 settings in western societies; however, the Saudi society has a very distinct and more complex social class stratification; therefore, the Saudi society requires unique criteria to determine social status and its influence on language variation. While for people in the west and in other Arab countries, the concept of tribe has a stigma of being pre-modern, tribalism has high value in Saudi, as it constitutes the hierarchy of its society (Maisel, 2015). Metz (1992) explains that tribalism in Saudi constitutes a major social status category based on bloodline. She adds that at the top of the tribal hierarchy is the *qabila*: there are families that could claim to possess *Asl* (honor), which means nobility of origin as the descendants of two eponymous Arab ancestors, Adnan or Qahtan and therefore claim superiority over *Alhader* or nontribal families. To some extent, tribalism could be correlated to occupation, thus, manual work was considered demeaning.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consists of five main regions that have diverse tribes or populations: the north that has Šammar and Anezah as dominant tribes; the middle or Najed; the eastern region with its substantial Shia population; the western region which used to be ruled by Al-ashraf; and the south that is inhibited by tribes that has cultural links to Yemen such as Bani Ğamid and Zahran (Metz, 1992; Maisel, 2015). After modernisation, tribes had to abandon the nomadic lifestyle and move to cities, as they had to adapt to new political, economic, and social realities; however, tribe affiliation and identity partly influences Saudis' perception of social status (Maisel, 2014). Although tribes now live in rural and urban areas, some neighbourhoods or areas within big cities are inhabited by groups with similar backgrounds to assert their tribal identities. The rapid transformation or modernisation of the Saudi society did not lead to detribalisation but rather to its survival as tribalism now dictates certain behaviour based on shared values and norms that its members must sustain (Maisel, 2015).

Maisel (2014) adds that although tribal and non-tribal Saudis may live in one community and may work together, there is a mental divide between the two groups. Saudis with different tribe affiliations may work and live in the same community, however, there is a mutual understanding that their interactions should be limited and regulated based on tribal norms. Being tribal is an identity that differentiates tribal and non-tribal Saudis, and which young tribal Saudis like to display to show loyalty to their tribes. According to Maisel (2014, p. 111), "public displays of tribal loyalty can be seen in the graffiti sprayed at walls and houses to indicate that members of a particular tribe live in this neighborhood." Tribalism and its norms influence both men and women who are expected to adhere to traditional values. Therefore, intermarriage between tribal and non-tribal Saudis has been prohibited to maintain the *qabila* status (Metz, 1992). According to Metz (1992), in modern Saudi new social status categories based on education, wealth, and occupation might undermine the significant influence of tribalism. However, tribe leaders continue promoting their political, religious and lifestyle views through literature and the media to maintain tribalism (Maisel, 2015).

Thompson (1963) defines class as a group of individuals who have similar dispositions and behaviour with which they identify and show in-group solidarity:

> When we speak of a class, we are thinking of a very loosely defined body of people who share the same congeries of interests, social experiences, traditions and value-systems, who have a disposition to behave as a class, to define themselves in their actions and in their consciousness in relation to other groups of people in class ways. (P. 939).

Applying Thompson's definition of class to tribalism in Saudi, a tribe is a group of people who share and maintain similar values, dispositions, norms and behaviour that constitute their tribal identity and distinguish them from other tribes. Being tribal might mean having tight social networks based on kinships and having to follow certain tribal norms. On other hand, being non-tribal could mean living in a less strict community. As a result, Saudis' social status might influence

their life choices and aspirations. Therefore, the factors tribalism (tribal or non-tribal) and education will be examined in this study to stratify social class in Saudi.

2.2.2.2 Age

Age is considered as a social construct as it can be used as a reflection of historical and social changes; therefore, it could give insights into certain linguistic variation. Earliest sociolinguistic studies adopted the *apparent time hypothesis* which entails that the linguistic choices of speakers of different generations can be seen as representations of the process of language change at different times (Tagliamonte, 2012). The speech of a 70-year-old is different than that of a 50-year-old or a 30-year-old, thus, comparing the speech of the three generations allows researchers to make diachronic and synchronic inferences (see Milroy & Gordon, 2003). For example, in 1968, Trudgill (1974) conducted a synchronic study in which he examined the variability of the backing of (e) before /l/, as in *help* or *hell* in Norwich. There are three variants [ɛ], [ɜ] and [ʌ], with [ɛ] the RP variant and [ʌ] the most extreme local pronunciation. Whereas the older speakers (aged 50 and older) showed style shifting between the variants, the younger speakers (aged 30 and younger) used the local variant more frequently, especially in their casual speech. Trudgill concluded that there was a change in progress in Norwich, which was led by the younger generation. In 1983 Trudgill (1988) recorded further speech from seventeen Norwich speakers aged between 10 and 25 to confirm his previous findings. The young group in this study used the local variant more frequently than the young group in the previous study, especially in their formal speech. Trudgill explained that the change had now reached completion, that is *hell* and *hull* are now synonyms in casual speech. In 1968 the local variant was stigmatised which led the younger speakers to use it less in formal speech than the young speakers in 1983 when the variant became more accepted in the community.

Although age, unlike social class, seems less complicated and can be quantified by assigning a numerical age to each speaker, to understand the relationship between age and linguistic

variables researchers have to group speakers in more meaningful ways that reflect important life or historical changes, as Eckert (1997, p. 155) notes "age has significance because the individual's place in society, the community, and the family changes through time". In addition, Milroy and Gordon (2003, p. 39) emphasise the importance of classifying samples in accordance with clear defensible principles arguing that "age by itself has no explanatory value; it is only when examined in the context of its social significance as something reflecting differences in life experiences that it becomes a useful analytical construct." Accordingly, sociolinguists have used various approaches of stratification to study age-based variation in relation to previous social and educational changes. For example, Hazen (2000) was interested in the dynamics of social change in North Carolina and its influence on language, specifically public school ethnic integration. His sample consisted of 45 speakers, 15 speakers of three ethnic groups: Native Americans, African Americans, and White Americans. Because he was interested in the change in ethnic relations during that came with public school integration and the linguistic consequences of that change, he divided his participants into three age groups: "those speakers who went to segregated schools exclusively, those who were in school during the time of integration, and those who began school after integration" (Hazen, 2000, p. 9).

The current study will use generation-based stratification to classify speakers to examine whether certain social, educational and economic developments reflected by age has any influence on language variation in Saudi. In addition, through grouping the speakers in different generations, this will examine age as a reflection of different language use in different generations. Since the main goal of the current study is to examine and document Saudi English features, age stratification in this study will reflect three stages concerning the introduction and spread of English in Saudi Arabia see section 1.1. Therefore, to capture the stages of the spread of English in Saudi and to examine the use of language variation throughout these stages, the subjects of this study will be divided into three groups (those who were born in the 70s, the 80s and the 90s).

2.2.2.3 Gender

Gender is another social construct whose influence has been studied in relation to language variation since the earliest variationist research. The effect of gender was explained with reference to social class, in which women were said to prefer prestigious or standard varieties more than men in a similar social class. On the other hand, some variationist research shows that women can also lead the spread of some stigmatised variables that used to be associated with working class men, which contradicts with the traditional assumption in earlier variationist studies that women tend to use prestigious norms more than men. For example, Mees and Collins (1999), and Holmes (1997) found that women led in spreading a working-class male variant in the middle class in Britain and New Zealand, respectively. Milroy and Gordon (2003) observe that while men tend to maintain local variants and lead to the introduction of stigmatised variants, women lead the introduction of the supra-local linguistic variables, whether prestigious or stigmatised. Gender-differentiated language variation was studied in L1 variation (Dubuois & Horvath, 2000) in Cajun English in the US; Cravens and Giannelli (1995) in Central Tuscan in Italy; Haeri (1997) in Cairene Arabic in Egypt; and AlAmmar (2017) in Arabic in Saudi, and in English as a second language (Major, 2004; Bonnici, 2010; Drummond, 2012b).

In this study *gender* is used to refer to the social construct of the biological term *sex* as it is more representative of the different social norms imposed on women and men in Saudi, as Eckert (1989) argues:

> Like age, sex is a biological category that serves as a fundamental basis for the differentiation of roles, norms, and expectations in all societies. It is these roles, norms, and expectations that constitute gender, the social construction of sex. (P. 246).

In addition, Eckert (1998, p. 66) argues that gender-stratified linguistic variables "differ considerably from culture to culture, from place to place, from group to group, living at the intersection of all the other aspects of social identity". Gender role makes sense with reference

to other social or historical meanings, which differ in other communities, thus, in order to understand the complex relationship between gender, society, and language, researchers should take into consideration the context in which gender is performed. For example, social roles available for women in Saudi Arabia are more restricted than those available for British women; accordingly, their manifestation of their gender identity through language may differ. Similarly, Meyerhoff (2011) notes that due to unequal educational and social opportunities for women and men in Arab communities, it is important to establish the social roles played by both genders to understand the relationship between gender and language variation.

Le Renard (2008, p. 610-614) argues that *Saudi women* is a separate category that is 'spatially segregated' and 'discriminated against' as a result of social norms which define Saudi women's identity as "as pious and virtuous, modest, educated, financially comfortable, and devoted to her family." Le Renard adds that in some jobs in Saudi women and men are prohibited from working together which may limit women's career choices as men are viewed as the primary providers. Saudi women's daily life experiences are different from men's especially when it comes to work and education. According to Al-Asfour et al., (2017), Saudi women face several social challenges that hinder their career advancement, including excessive workload caused by a lack of having a balanced family-work at home, a lack of freedom of mobility, and a lack of equity.

Despite the fact that Saudi women and men have different social roles and realities, the relationship between gender, society and language has not yet been studied in SLA research. There has always been an assumption that findings of SLA studies in Saudi are applicable to women even though women are often excluded from the samples of those studies. This could be because male researchers do not have access to women's spaces. As a female researcher, I have an advantage that it is possible for me to meet both women and men. Therefore, the present study will examine the influence of gender, in conjunction with other social factors, on language variation in Saudi English.

2.3 Other factors influencing L2 variation

2.3.1 Language and Identity

Identity is another factor that has been studied to relation language variation. Traditionally identity was viewed as a fixed psychological phenomenon, which can affect language but cannot be influenced or changed by language, however, recent research has studied identity as relational and discursive, and as something which emerges in interaction (Stets & Burke, 2000; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) define identity as a social and cultural phenomenon, thus, it is, "the product rather than the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices" (p. 585). Hence, when people communicate in one language or another, they are not only expressing ideas or giving information, they are also engaging in identity formation and negotiation through language. Identity is part of the surrounding society where it takes different shapes in different interactional situations and one could manifest an identity or identities through language. Moreover, Joseph (2004) argued that people's language choice and use could both reflect and make them who they are. Hence, when Saudis choose to use English in certain situations, they engage in different identities formation and negotiation. For instance, when they choose to speak English with some friends but not others, or when they write Islamic expressions in English, such as *Insha' Allah*, they could be expressing different aspects of their identity as Muslim Arab English speakers. The following section will provide an overview of general notions related to identity underpinning the current study. It will start by exploring the concept of identity in identity theory, social identity theory and in variationist sociolinguistic studies. Then it will present the available studies that focused on identity in Saudi Arabia. Finally, it will conclude with a review of the research on the concept of imagined community and its application in the field of SLA.

2.3.1.1 Identity theory and social identity theory

In identity theory, identity has been defined as the identification of the *self* as an occupant of a role or position and the incorporation of the meanings and expectations associated with that role

into the *self* to guide its and others' behaviour accordingly (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Self-identification depends on the differentiation of the *self* from the *other* by naming the *self* and the *other* which includes understanding of the meanings and expectations associated with each role or position (Stets & Burke, 2000). On the other hand, social identity means individuals' sense of the *self* as members of their society. Tajfel (1972) defined social identity as ''the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of the group membership'' (p. 292). According to both social identity theory (SIT) and identity theory, the *self* is reflexive, meaning that one can reflect upon oneself as an object and classify or categorise oneself according to different social contexts (Turner, Hogg, & Oakes, 1987; Stets & Burke, 2000). In any society, an individual has multiple personal *selves* that belong to different social groups (e.g., family, social status and religion). Therefore, people may act or show different - national, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic - identities in accordance with various social groups. In addition, within any social context the *self* could occupy different identity roles or positions (Burke, 1991). For example, a Saudi could be a Muslim in the wider Muslim community, an Arab who belongs with other Arabs in other Arab countries and an English speaker in a larger community that includes all English speakers.

The relationship between the *self* and society is reciprocal (Stets & Burke, 2000). On one hand, the society influences the *self* through imposing already existing meanings, values and norms which members of a certain group should act upon. On the other hand, the *self*, by occupying social roles, builds the society and maintains its norms and values (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Stets & Burke, 2000). Furthermore, it has been argued that individuals derive their social identity from perceived memberships of an already structured society; that is, social classifications precede individuals who then derive their sense of belonging from those classifications (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Although in SIT people may all seem equal and similar as being members of one society, within that society, according to identity theory, people vary as they claim different roles and

positions. They use titles to identify themselves and each other (doctor, teacher, student, mother, and daughter) which invokes certain expectations that guide their behaviours (Stets & Burke, 2000).

In any given society, individuals go through two important processes to establish their social identity: *self-categorization* and *social comparison*. In the self-categorization process, members cognitively try to assimilate with other group members and represent certain social prototypes that define their own group and distinguish it from other groups by accentuating both in-group similarities and out-group differences (Turner et al., 1987; Hogg & Abrams, 1988). On the other hand, through the social comparison process individuals seek to achieve positive self-esteem at the expense of other groups by negatively evaluating the out-group (Stets & Burke, 2000). They attempt to enhance their self-image by selectively showing positive norms of their own culture and contrasting them with the norms of other cultures. Furthermore, Ellemers et al., (1997) argue that once in-group identification has been achieved, individuals become strongly committed and attached to their social group even if their in-group has a low status, which could be explained by the concept of *depersonalisation*. An activation of in-group identity entails *depersonalisation* of the *self*, meaning that members become social prototypes constituting the whole group rather than unique individuals (Turner et al. 1987). In the process of *depersonalisation*, one perceives certain norms and values specific to one's in-group and acts accordingly. This concept of *depersonalisation* is important to the current study because it could explain some of the contradictions of Saudis' language attitudes found in previous studies (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996) and any contradictions I might find in my study. Although identity theory and social identity theory explain two different (macro and micro) processes of the *self* (Stets & Burke, 2000), one aspect of the *self* could constrain or contradict another as will be explained below.

2.3.1.2 Identity in variationist sociolinguistics

The study of identity in variationist sociolinguistics has increasingly been linked with the study of style, which, traditionally, has been understood as a unidimensional continuum between standard language and vernacular (Moore, 2004). Speakers in the first and second wave variationist sociolinguistic studies, discussed in section 2.2.1, were not seen as having agency because identity was viewed as fixed and predetermined and was defined by assigning social meanings to linguistic variation through correlation with broad social categories, such as gender, age, and social class (Drummond & Schleef, 2016). Labov's (1966) survey study in New York is a good example of these studies, in which he examined the linguistic variable (r) as a social differentiator in the speech of the staff of three department stores in Manhattan ranking from the top, middle, and bottom of the price and fashion scale. Following Labov, other sociolinguists used more local and specific social categories along with linguistic variation as an indication of identity. For example, Trudgill (1972) argued that women in general prefer to use more 'standard' language to "secure and signal their social status linguistically" (p. 182) because, unlike men who are judged based on their work, women have less secure social position and are judged based on their appearance including their language.

Identity in these studies is viewed as reflected through language use; that is, identity is viewed as fixed and predetermined based on the correlation of linguistic variables and certain social groups that share similar norms, and beliefs. Speakers with similar language use in the same social space are viewed as passive respondents who adjust their speech to external changes, and, therefore, seen as having similar identities or identity types, such as 'working class', 'middle class' (Moore, 2004). This conceptualisation of identity is similar to the self-representation in SIT, in which members of any community become social prototypes constituting the whole group rather than unique individuals by activating in-group identity (in this case by using similar linguistic variants) and depersonalising the *self* (Turner et al. 1987).

More recent third wave variationist sociolinguistic studies offer a different view of style as multidimensional including linguistic and other semiotic practices for the construction of identity in interaction (Eckert & Rickford, 2001). Style is much more than just a linguistic system; that is, it includes other multiple social resources, which makes language one, not the only, feature which speakers manipulate in the process of identity construction and negotiation (Moore, 2004). By using different styles, speakers are seen as social agents who negotiate their identities and positions based on their personal interests and their understanding of the salient social groups or activities with which they want to assimilate or distinguish themselves (Irvine, 2001). Whereas in the previous studies, identity is the product of a fixed set of linguistic variants and social factors, identity in recent variationist sociolinguistic research is constructed and reconstructed by speakers in interaction through using a range of linguistic variants available in a given community. As Drummond & Schleef (2016) explain:

> For the identity concept to be of value to TWVS [Third Wave Variationist Sociolinguistics], it has to be reconceptualised. In TWVS, identities are regarded as being constructed and reconstructed; they are dynamic and changeable. Language and identity cannot be separated or correlated; they are co-constitutive. (P. 53).

In addition, as Moore (2004) argues, speakers create social meanings for linguistic variants and themselves in a way similar or different to other speakers in the same sociolinguistic community. Therefore, in order to observe how speakers negotiate and construct their identities in interactions, "we must be able to observe what individuals do as social beings, rather than simply assign individuals category membership on the basis of who they appear to be" Moore (2004, P. 380). Eckert's (1989) study of high school adolescents in Detroit is an example of the study of identity in third wave variationist sociolinguistics, reviewed in section 2.2.1. Eckert found out that the social categories 'burnouts' and 'Jocks' do not simply index different groups of girls. She found that using language variants associated with these two categories indexes activities and stances with which speakers, female or male, identify.

Howard Giles' (1973) conceptualised accommodation theory which is relevant to social identity theory and language. The main claim of accommodation theory is that people attune their speech according to the interaction using two strategies, *convergence* or *divergence*. That is people use certain language features to emphasise in-group solidarity and to distance themselves from other groups. The convergence strategy is used to increase commonalities between speakers and addressees through approximating their speech. The divergence strategy entails using language to show differences between groups. Meyerhoff (2011) maintains that speakers may use divergence strategies to shield and foster positive attitudes about their in-group. She adds that this process of attunement can be conscious or below the level of consciousness. Speakers may be aware of the process by which they alter their speech to fit in a group with which they identify; however, they may not be aware of the specific linguistic feature they use during that attunement process. On the other hand, she argues that speakers may change their speech behaviour unconsciously.

Milroy & Milroy (1985) add that there are two types of sociolinguistic norms, *social norms* and *community norms*. Social norms refer to "wider social acceptability of linguistic variants" (p. 92) which in the English-speaking context are based on standard English. On the other hand, community norms, which correspond to the construct of social identity in SIT, reflect non-standard English varieties where variants are used as markers of group identities. They argue that low status or stigmatised variants are considered as crucial symbols of group identity, and that for some speakers it is more important to project their in-group identity than accept social norms regardless of their status. As an example, Milroy & Milroy reflect on Singaporean English and its non-standard features which appear to be increasing in educated Singaporeans' speech. In addition, they point out that there is evidence that some influential Singaporeans, such as businessmen and politicians, prefer to sound and identify as Singaporeans rather than Englishmen. So, as they put it, it is inappropriate to label Singaporean English as inferior or substandard. Platt and Weber (1980) argue that attempts to eliminate and stigmatise non-

standard varieties as inferior are seen as attacks on the norms, values and social identity of their speakers. They also argue that negative attitudes to non-standard varieties which favour enforcing irrelevant standard or Inner Circle Englishes (ICE) norms stem from ignorance of other varieties and the social norms they may represent. The context of English in Saudi Arabia is different as it is an EFL variety that did not result from colonisation. Regardless of how the language came about in Saudi Arabia, the origin of the language is the same, ICE varieties. Therefore, the current study will investigate whether Saudis, just like Singaporeans, might be using English variants they identify with to accentuate their own norms and reflect their own identity and to diverge from ICE variants and any associated cultural norms.

2.3.1.3 Identity and imagined community

The term *imagined community* was first introduced by Anderson (1991) to describe the idea of nations and how "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 6). Thus, by imagining ourselves as members of a community where we share the same beliefs, norms, culture and language, we develop a sense of unity that connects us with other members of that community. In the field of SLA, the notion of imagined community has been used as a theoretical construct to examine the relationship between learners' linguistic identity and their desire to learn a language (Seilhamer, 2013). The goals they hope to achieve and the identity roles they want to have impact their desire to learn a second language. According to Norton (2000), L2 speakers develop a vision of a community of the target language, and its imagined identities, that is accessible to them only through their imagination but motivates them and impacts their learning outcomes. Norton and Toohey (2011) also argue "a lack of awareness of learners' imagined communities and imagined identities could hinder a teacher's ability to construct learning activities in which learners can invest" (p. 422). Pedagogical practices may limit the number of possible identities available for L2 learners' and assign them subordinate and less powerful identities, which eventually could demotivate them and affect their L2 learning

progress (Norton and Toohey (2011). An example of that, Ramanathan (2005) conducted a study to examine the relationship between pedagogical practices (Gujarati-medium or English-medium) and L2 learners' progress in English-medium colleges. She found that learners who received education in English schools did better than those who were schooled in vernacular. Moreover, she concluded that pedagogical practices may limit L2 learners' progress and opportunities to achieve more powerful identities. Language teachers should be aware that language is not a mere linguistic system but rather a social practice through which different identity positions are developed, experienced and negotiated.

Nowadays, English is arguably no longer related specifically to a certain culture or country, rather, it is associated "with an international global culture and community – one in which, as citizens of the world, they are already at least legitimate charter members" (Seilhamer, 2013, p. 9). Although this proposed interpretation of imagined global community has a sense of unity, every L2 speaker has their own vision of what are perceived to be the norms and culture of their imagined global community. However, the one common feature of the diverse imagined global communities is English as an international language (Seilhamer, 2013). In most SLA research on English in Saudi, English learners/speakers have been considered merely as learners of English as a foreign language (Al-Nafisaha & Al-Shorman, 2011; Abanomey, 2013); that is, they have one identity position as outsiders rather than insiders in the global English community. Wallace (2003) argued that methodologies of studies of English as a foreign language constrain learners' identities by making them fit in with the dominant cultures of native speakers rather than allowing them to claim ownership of the language as members of the global English community. This minor identity position as EFL learners is being enforced by those teachers and linguists who focus mainly on grammar and mimicking native speakers who are presented as the only owner of the language and who present the perfect form of English, see sections 2.1.6 and 2.2.1.2. However, the concept of *imagined community* in relation to English in Saudi Arabia has started to attract some attention recently. For example, Al Harthi (2014) examined the concept of

imagined community in relation to motivation to learn English and in relation to identity among female high school students in Saudi. She found that some of the participants imagined idealised future communities where they positioned themselves as English speakers. For example, Amal, one of the participants, "imagined the language communities as a hero who will free her from all the social restrictions" (p. 78). One of the aims of this study is to add to Al Harthi's findings and investigate whether Saudis have imagined communities as well as identities that inspire them to learn English. In addition, since this study will be conducted in general social settings, it will investigate whether Saudis have envisioned identities beyond the EFL role proposed in schools and developed a sense of belonging to the global English community.

2.3.1.4 Studies of identity in Saudi Arabia

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) maintain that social identity is constituted "through social action, and especially through language" (p. 588). The *self* -with its many representations (identities) - is a reflection of society, thus, the most effective way to understand identity is by examining social interactions through which identity emerges and is being negotiated (Stryker, 2000). The literature on identity/social identity in Saudi Arabia is sparse, and especially with respect to investigating the relationship between language and identity or social identity, which is the focus of my research. There are a few studies that have tackled the relationship between religion or politics and Saudis' national identity (e.g., Al-Rasheed & Piscatori, 2005); however, regarding the relationship between bilingualism and identity in the Saudi society, there are fewer studies (e.g., Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996; Mustafa, 2017). Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi's (1996) study focused on the effect of speaking a second language on (national) identity. One of the aims of Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) was to find out whether learning and using English had any negative influence on Saudis' national identity as a form of westernisation. They collected their data from questionnaires completed by 1,176 undergraduates. They reported in their results that Saudis learn and use English as a means of contributing to the development of Saudi Arabia and that they were not attached to the language or the Western culture it may represent. In addition, they

found that:

> 78.9 percent agree that we should not use foreign terms as they are when translated into Arabic; these terms should be Arabicized to guarantee a maximum use of Arabic. The participants are thus far clearly sentimentally and instrumentally attached to Arabic because it is the native language, whereas English, the non-native language, is used in domains such as the preaching of Islam, in business, and in international communications. It is worth mentioning that participants' commitment to Arabic and their Islamic values is verified by their rejection of the idea of sending their children, brothers, and sisters to foreign schools. (p. 311)

However, there are contradictions in the responses that Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi left unexplained because their argument relied solely on quantitative analysis. For instance, they ignored the fact that half of their participants think that the use of English in some *life affairs* is *not* an indication of cultural backwardness and 43 % think the use of English in some *life affairs* is an indication of *cultural advancement*. If English were indeed perceived as the language of the out-group (the West), hence, Saudis use it instrumentally to achieve certain goals and are not sentimentally attached to it, why would they consider using it in some life affairs as a means of cultural advancement? As mentioned before, the concept of *depersonalisation* could explain this contradiction. On the level of social identity, as Muslims and Arabs they think English is the language of the *other* / the non-Muslims; therefore, they should reject it. On the other hand, on the level of personal identity, English is the language of the advanced world and a sign of modernisation. Mustafa's (2017) study, based on interviews with 12 Saudi women, reflects on the concept of social identity and personal identity in relation to learning English as an EFL. He found that Saudi women use English to assert their identities that oppose the social roles ascribed to women in Saudi. He argues that Saudi women in his study consider being an English speaker as a part of their *ideal selves* which is in part based on their understanding of their *private selves* as society dictates. He adds that Saudi women minimise their ideal L2 selves to not disturb and instead maintain social power balance, but, on the other hand, they maximise their ideal L2 selves to challenge social norms imposed on women. Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) and Mustafa

(2017) examined aspects of Saudis' identities in relation to English as a foreign language in Saudi. However, whereas Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) did not specify whether they included Saudi women and men in their study and relied only on questionnaires, Mustafa (2017) used questionnaires and interviews but only included Saudi women. Since the study of language and identity in Saudi is sparse and that language variation and identity has not been examined in Saudi, the present study fills a gap in the literature by including both genders and providing both quantitative and qualitative analysis of identity, as negotiated through language, in different social settings in the Saudi society. Furthermore, this study will investigate the relationship between English as a new variety (their own language rather than the out-group language) and identity.

2.3.2 Ideology

As discussed previously, in section 2.2.1, language is not fixed, pre-existent with unchangeable prescribed rules and forms; it is rather emergent, flexible, socially and historically constructed through communication. Since language is a social construct, when people communicate, they do not only exchange linguistic forms but social and ideological ideas and beliefs. The purpose of this section is to explore what these social and ideological beliefs are and how they influence people's language practices. It starts with a brief explanation of the term *language ideology*, which is "a mediating link between social forms and forms of talk" (Woolard, 1998, p.3). I then discuss how ideology could be a source of power in keeping the *status quo* in any society. I also discuss the ideology of *nativeness* and *standard English* by contrasting the old EFL/ESL models with the variationist sociolinguistics perspective. Finally, I review the prevailing ideologies relating to foreign language learning in Saudi Arabia. I discuss the political ideology that favours and supports the Standard English notion through official websites in education and the media. On the other hand, I discuss the religious ideology that warns Saudis of the possible negative influence that learning English might have on religion. This concern was reflected in various studies by Saudi researchers who justified learning English by rendering it relevant to Islam,

claiming that English is just a *tool* to spread faith (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996; AlJarf, 2008; Al-Rawi, 2012; Faruk, 2013; and Mahboob, 2013).

2.3.2.1 Language and Ideology

Ideology is a complex construct and can be defined differently in different fields. Even in the field of language, as Kroskrity (2005, p.496) argues "although interdisciplinary scholarship on language ideologies has been extremely productive in recent decades… there is no particular unity in this immense body of research, no single core literature, and a range of definitions." Silverstein (1979, p. 193) defined ideology as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use". Heath (1989, p. 53) defined it as "self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group". Although these two definitions, which are the most cited in the literature, seem similar in the fact they describe ideology as beliefs about language, they differ in other aspects. Silverstein (1979) assumes speakers' consciousness when it comes to their language ideas and beliefs, which is not always true especially when those ideas and beliefs have been normalized as indisputable facts. Heath (1989) implies that certain groups have linguistic ideologies which could be different from other groups within the same society, which is not always the case. Woolard's (1998, p. 3) general definition of linguistic ideology is the closest to what is intended by ideology in this study, which is "representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world". This more general and unconstrained definition describes language ideology as conscious or unconscious representations of language whether through overt talk about the language or through people's linguistic practices that might reveal embedded ideas, beliefs, conceptions and expectations about language held by one or a group of speakers in one society. Ideologies are historically contingent and socially shared systems of beliefs that, when powerful enough, can define the boundaries between social classes and maintain internal social hierarchy. When certain ideologies are accepted, they become

naturalised, unquestioned and taken for granted as common sense, hence, gain more power (Eagleton, 2007). Ideologies can be considered effective or powerful when all society members accept the status quo, therefore, social change would be undesirable and unacceptable, even though the accepted status is advantageous to only a group of people or a certain class. Fairclough (1989, p. 32) argues that having ideological power means being able to "project one's practices as universal and 'common sense'". Thus, one way of illustrating the relationship between power and ideology is when the elites' beliefs and values are adopted by the rest of the society as given and unchallengeable rules or facts. However, Williams (1973) argues that dominant ideologies could be resisted, renewed, recreated or substituted by other opposing ideologies. The power of any ideology is dependent on the hegemony of its creators, e.g., the ruling class, which is usually socially or financially contingent. Hence, any other strong group within the same society could spread their own opposing ideologies which is the case in Saudi Arabia where there are two powerful, opposing, yet widely accepted ideologies at the same time: political and religious.

As discussed in section 2.1, the old EFL/ ESL models of English along with B. B. Kachru's (1985) and Schneider's (2003) World Englishes models, explain the spread of English and the emergence of new varieties based on historical factors alone, which as Pennycook (2003, p. 4) argues does not take into account the "broader political context of the spread of English." They fail to account for other circumstances that might affect the status of English, such as social, political and religious, in different contexts other than the typical post-colonial setting. Furthermore, these models unintentionally reinforce the ideologies of *nativeness* and *standard language* by establishing a native/non-native dichotomy based on postcolonial nations and geographic factors (Milroy, 2001). The new status of English as an international/global language, that makes its acquisition indispensable, is the current reason behind the spread of English nowadays. However, Phillipson (1992) argues that even the new role of English as a global linguistic commodity is linked to the colonial project and that the spread of English, with its many varieties, is a form of

linguistic imperialism. According to Phillipson, linguistic imperialism is achieved through education, media and politics by giving privileges to the language of a powerful nation over other languages or varieties. He also argues English education reinforces the standard English ideology through using materials developed in western countries about western cultures and based on their own criteria that might not fit into other culture's norms. Phillipson's views, although dated and problematic, are valid and to this day influence SLA research. For example, in Saudi only ICE varieties are being taught and enforced in education, as discussed in sections 1.1 and 2.1.6. In addition, SLA research in Saudi echoed Phillipson's view of English as an imperialistic language (e.g., Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996; AlJarf, 2008).

As discussed in section 2.1.4, Milroy and Milroy (1985) argue that the notion of *standard* English is just an idea in the mind that real spoken speech may or may not reflect. Standard forms are usually derived from the speech of a prestigious class, which means that the attachment of *correctness* with the standard language is merely political. This political process of associating correctness to the language or dialect of the upper class becomes naturalised and forgotten, as people become part of the process by accepting those ideologies as common sense. Education and the mass media reinforce the standard language ideology and help naturalise this political process by providing the correct usage of language and telling us what is not acceptable (Joseph, 1987). However, Pennycook (2003) states that English learning today is not simply a form of the spread of a dominant world language; rather, English has evolved to reflect local norms in different settings resisting *centre* ideologies. In Saudi Arabia, for example, non-centre materials that reflect the Saudi society and its culture have been developed which may have facilitated the emergence of a Saudi English variety (Mahboob, 2013; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Therefore, a hegemonic view of the spread of English fails to consider the creative uses of English that help speakers to represent their global/local identities. In addition, Bruthiaux (2003) suggested linguists should abandon the nation-state models as a unit of analysis and investigate language

from a holistic perspective including historical, local, and global factors that influence English use and ideologies.

Since linguistic ideologies are inclusive of all social meanings and values that may influence language, the most effective way to explore them is to investigate people's attitudes, which may involve evaluative expressions on how language should work and what certain accents or use of language mean or connote (Jaworski et al., 2004). The relationship between attitudes and ideology is reciprocal. While ideology may evoke attitudes, it is through attitudes that we can infer and understand *some* of the social and linguistic ideologies. Not all language ideologies are expressed through attitudes; some ideologies about language are implied and have been naturalised so might not rise to people's consciousness and can only be seen through their language use. Investigating linguistic attitudes along with general social ideologies may help understand the changes and differences across generations or social groups by focusing on speakers as social agents who challenge or support ideologies through language beliefs and practices.

2.3.2.2 Ideologies in Saudi Arabia

English was introduced in Saudi in 1924 even before its establishment as a state in 1932 with the support of two English-speaking countries, the US and the UK (Faruk, 2013). However, the ideologies that might lie behind teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia have not been fully explored. The existent studies that did include ideologies in relation to English teaching/learning focused on the Standard English ideology, observing the possible influence of Western cultures, supposedly transferred through English, on local Saudi and Islamic values, which contradicts the findings of other studies that English has evolved in Saudi and gained features specific to the Saudi society (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob, 2013; Mahboob & Elyas 2014). Even these studies that explored English in Saudi from a world Englishes perspective do not provide an interpretation of the possible reasons or ideologies that led to this change. The influence of American linguistic

imperialism, the British 'colonial' background and globalisation on the status of English is completely unexamined in Saudi Arabia. The incorporation of language ideologies and practices within an examination of Saudi English variation might help unravel the processes at work in the formation of new varieties of English and might offer clues as to the directions future studies of Saudi English should go.

2.3.2.2.1 Political ideologies and the promotion of the English language

As mentioned above, in Saudi Arabia there are two main, yet contradicting, ideologies at play: political and religious. According to Faruk (2013), English was introduced into Saudi education to accelerate the country's integration with the rest of the world, which took place through contact with the UK and the US. However, when oil was discovered in 1940, the balance of power swung in favour of the United States, which founded an oil company, Aramco, which shares 50% of the profits, completely operated by Americans. The company arranged English classes for Saudi workers to be able to communicate with the Americans, which was the starting point of introducing English in public schools. The existence of the British Council in the capital city, Riyadh, symbolises the significant role the UK plays in Saudi. The main goal of the British council, Phillipson (2012) argues, is to disseminate the standard English ideology, and perpetuate the dominant status of British English, and culture.

The idealisation of Standard English and its speakers can be seen in education and in the workforce, as well. As the largest producer of oil, Saudi has attracted large numbers of foreign expatriates who constitute a third of the total population. According to Jones and Omran (2015), 75% of the positions in the private sectors are held by foreigners, leaving the nationals with scarce employment opportunities. Foreign expatriates hold an advantage over Saudis due to their higher levels of educational achievement and eloquent English skills (Zuhur, 2011). As Jenkins (2009) notes, in many countries the varieties of English that are favoured are Standard American and British; the teachers that are sought after are native speakers of other varieties

and the tests used are those that measure learners' competence against native speakers' norms. In Saudi, foreigners with high proficiency in Standard English, with or without academic qualifications, are offered higher wages to give English classes either in private schools or universities (Zuhur, 2011). In addition, Taylor & Albasr (2014) explain that although 54% of Saudi students study in different countries around the world, almost the same number, 46% of the students, were *sent* to the US, which shows preference for the US over any other English-speaking country. Favouring Americans and their language over Saudis is a phenomenon that Phillipson (2012) calls *linguicism*: "a favouring of one language over others in ways that parallel societal structuring through racism, sexism and class" that "serves to privilege users of the standard forms of the dominant language" (p.442).

Despite the evidence of the pivotal position that English holds in Saudi as an important job requirement, and a compulsory subject in schools and universities, and alongside the huge number of English-speaking workers in Saudis, until recently English has been described, in SLA research in Saudi, as merely a *tool* or a *means* of gaining knowledge and spreading Islam (Al-Rawi, 2012 & Faruk, 2013). The findings of sociolinguistic studies show that the English language has moved beyond the foreign/second language status in several countries where different varieties of English have emerged as a result of being integrated with local languages and norms (Milroy and Milroy, 1999). The same case could be made for the current status of English as a part of the linguistic ecology in Saudi, which the current study will argue. In fact, Al-Rawi, (2012), Mahboob (2013), and Mahboob and Elyas (2014) found several patterns of linguistic features specific to Saudi English, which suggests that Saudis may have adopted and integrated English with Arabic into their daily life usage.

In addition, government official websites for Saudis, such as the civil affairs website, were designed in both English and Arabic wich exemplifies the integration and equalization of Arabic and English. Although Arabic is the national language, and the majority of Saudis typically are

expected to speak Arabic as their mother language, the government designed their websites in English along with Arabic even while knowing that they are specifically for Saudis. The spread of American restaurants and cafes such as McDonald's and Starbucks, which could be considered as a form of *Americanisation*, is another illustration of the influence of US culture on Saudi society.

In addition, the media is agency of ideologies that sets a way of shaping politics, societies and cultures by circulating, and encouraging, the adoption of certain core values as the truth, and marginalising and dismissing other competing ideas. Hall (1982) argues that through mass media people with power practice and reinforce hegemony. Instead of reflecting reality as it is, media represents events by giving them certain meanings to support the dominant ideology. As Hall puts it "representation is a very different notion from that of reflection. It implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping; not merely the transmitting of an already existing meaning, but the more active labour of making things mean" (p.64). The power of media as a source of spreading and reinforcing Standard English can be seen in the Saudi MBC Network, of which three channels are presented in English and dedicated to American movies and TV shows. Faruk (2013) argues that after the discovery of oil and the hiring of Americans and other foreigners, "the Saudi government tried to construct a favourable English language ideology and tried to gain the citizens' consent for [Saudi English Language education policies] through the media" (p. 76). Therefore, the number of English programs has increased on TV and radio. In addition, three English newspapers have been established: Riyadh Daily, Arab News, and Saudi Gazette. The fact that the English language constitutes part of the Saudi linguistic ecology reflects the government's political ideology that prefers English, provides privileges to its speakers and promotes Western culture via English.

2.3.2.2.2 Religious ideologies

While the general political ideology in Saudi promotes Standard English and Western culture, the religious ideology—Wahhabism—on the other hand, promotes rejection of any other culture, especially that of non-Muslims. The *Islamic* textbooks taught in Saudi schools, until recently, used to foster an ideology of extremism and intolerance. They instruct students not to befriend, imitate or even greet non-Muslims (Shea et al., 2006). Therefore, imitating non-believers could include learning their languages. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education (2005) justifies learning English as a way of 'spreading Islam' (p.3), a phrase that has been exploited by many Saudi researchers without explaining the ideology behind it (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996; AlJarf, 2008; Al-Rawi, 2012; Faruk, 2013; Mahboob, 2013). For example, Faruk (2013, p. 78) claims that the government has managed to get Saudis' consent, giving English "a prestigious status in Saudi official documents when it is stated that English can be used to spread 'the faith of Islam'." All of these researchers have linked the English language to Islam by giving it a religious meaning in order to justify using it. It seems that English has a negative connotation as a means of Westernisation in the view of the religious ideology; hence, it has to be given an Islamic meaning or value in order to be approved and accepted.

2.3.2.2.3 Ideology research in Saudi Arabia

Most research on English language use in Saudi Arabia is based on and reinforces the Standard English ideology, typically British and American English varieties; it therefore, examines English as a tool of spreading Western culture. Saudi studies regarding ideologies have taken two different directions, although serving the same purpose of disseminating the Standard English ideology. Some Saudi researchers have compared Arabic and English and focused on the question of which language is better or preferred. It seems that they presume that Arabic is losing its status as more Saudis prefer to use English for their daily life tasks, which can be inferred from their choice of words. For example, AlJarf (2008) maintained that new strategies should be established for "protecting and developing the Arabic language" because it is "facing a serious threat by the

dominance of English" (p. 207). Similarly, Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) expressed the same concern that the fear of the students "that English threatens to some extent the status of Arabic is justifiable". They suggested that in order to preserve its status, "Arabic should be widely used and scientific technology should be translated into Arabic" (p.311). Furthermore, their study addresses the influence of western values, norms and ideas, which technology and modernisation have transferred to the Saudi society, on Saudis' attitudes, national identity, and religious commitment. Both studies reflect a common fear among some Saudi educators and researchers, rather than among ordinary Saudis, that English may replace Arabic, hence, lead to loss of Arab identity; this ignores the fact that in many countries people are bilingual who speak two different languages fluently without losing their own mother tongue nor their culture. On the other hand, some researchers argue for introducing the English culture to Saudi students in order to enhance their English learning experiences, assuming the superiority of Standard English, whether American or British, and native speakers' cultures, leaving no room for change or variation (Alsamani, 2014; Hagler, 2014).

As mentioned earlier, Milroy and Milroy (1999) argue that English Standardisation is motivated by social and political needs for functional efficiency purposes, which makes it an ideology rather than a reality that reflects real language use. Despite having different perspectives regarding the Western culture and its potential negative or positive impact on language learning, by shifting the focus from Saudis' actual use of the language, and how it may reflect their own culture, to the notion that English is an imperialistic, post-colonial language, it can be inferred that researchers like AlJarf (2008) and Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) were ideologically, rather than linguistically, motivated. As discussed above, linguistic ideologies are inclusive of all social meanings and values that may influence language, which could be explored through investigating people's attitudes to and views on how language should work (Jaworski et al., 2004). Saudis' attitudes and beliefs about the English language and its different varieties along with their attitudes towards its speakers, constitute their linguistic ideologies, which, in this study, will be

explored and potentially reified through sociolinguistic interviews and compared to their actual use revealing other embedded ideologies. As a sociolinguistic study, to thoroughly examine the linguistic features of Saudi English, linguistic ideologies should be incorporated in the analysis to unravel the processes at work in the formation of a new variety of English.

2.3.3 Language Attitudes

As I mentioned earlier different ideologies (such as political ideologies, discussed in section 2.3.2.2.1, religious, in in section 2.3.2.2.2, or linguistic and educational, in sections 2.1.4-5) may have influenced Saudis' attitudes towards and perception of English, which may have an impact on their language use. As this study aims at studying English variation in Saudi, it is important to study Saudis' attitudes to English and its status in Saudi Arabia, adding to the existing research on language attitudes carried out mostly by Saudi researchers. Therefore, in this section, I review current studies that have investigated perception and its impact on language investment. Then I review three studies that discuss the potential positive or negative effect of Westernisation on attitudes and motivation. I review two attitudinal studies that investigate Saudis' attitudes toward different varieties of English. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of different notions of motivation, *L2 Motivational Self System*, *imagined community*, and *investment*, through which motivation will be examined in this study.

2.3.3.1 Perception, attitudes and language investment

Globalisation and modern technology have helped increase the use of English in the world in general and in Saudi Arabia in particular, where it has been going through a process of localization through time from being merely a foreign language to a local means of communication, not only with other speakers of English but among Saudis themselves Mahboob and Elyas (2014). Appel and Muysken (1987) observe that languages are not objective and socially neutral but rather linked up with social and ethnic groups, which subject them to social evaluations that influence learners'/speakers' attitudes towards those languages. Language attitudes and perceptions are

the factors that may activate or deactivate social or personal identities which are discussed in section 2.3.1.

Therefore, ideologies about a language, attitudes towards that language and speakers' identity representations through language are interconnected. In this study it is important to understand the ideologies and attitudes that influence language use to understand language variation in Saudi. In addition, the status of any language especially in the global market may have a strong impact on attitudes toward that language and, consequently, encourage individuals to invest in learning that language expecting a good return such as access to resources that are otherwise unavailable to them.

Marschak (1965) introduced the concept *economics of language* arguing that investing in learning languages could help people find better job opportunities. Similarly, according to Pavlenko and Norton (2007), in contrast to postcolonial contexts, other countries for which English is not a postcolonial language promote learning English in an alignment with powerful western countries in order to gain access to the global market. Lamberton (2002) proposes that language is "a key ingredient in human capital; a second language is a bankable asset. Language affects job qualifications and ability to find employment" (p. 7). In addition, Vaillancourt (1983) argues that the language of the marketplace and technology determines the language of work. Indeed, according to Mahboob and Elyas (2014) the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), which is the backbone of the Saudi economy, promoted English teaching in the country to enable Saudi workers and locals to communicate with foreign employees which started the spread of English in Saudi.

Language investment and attitude have been investigated in some Saudi studies, which find that having a positive attitude towards a certain language and to the outcome of acquiring that language could lead to investment in that language. For example, Al-Samadani and Ibnian (2015)

studied the attitudes of Saudi university students towards learning English, the influence of their attitudes on their academic achievements, and the factors that shaped their attitudes. Their results showed positive attitudes among the 112 participants towards learning English. In addition, the authors examined the correlation between having positive attitudes and students' academic achievement. The findings show that there is a strong positive correlation with the high GPA students having the most positive attitudes towards learning English, followed by the medium GPA students, and finally the low GPA students. It could be argued having high GPA or mastering English might have resulted in having positive attitudes to English. Either way, Al-Samadani's and Ibnian's study showed that there is a relationship between using English well and having positive attitudes towards English. Finally, the researchers conducted interviews with some of the students (although they failed to mention the number of the participants) to explore the factors that may have influenced the students' positive attitudes and their keenness to learn English. One factor relevant to the current study is that they are investing in English, as it is an international language that will help them find better job opportunities and pursue better education abroad. Although there is arguably not enough evidence in their study to support this final claim, it reveals how Saudis' attitudes towards and perception of the powerful status of the English language have led them to invest in the language, which is one of the main points that will be investigated in the current study.

Alkaabi (2016) conducted a similar study that investigated attitude and investment among Saudi students. The aims of her study were to investigate Saudi students' motivation for learning English. Her study explores Saudis' attitudes toward learning English and toward the native English speakers in the U.S, in addition to the relationship between their motivation and attitudes and other different variables, such as academic level and, length of stay in the U.S., and gender. In addition, she addresses Saudi students' willingness to invest money and effort to learn English. Data collection was based mainly on a Likert scale questionnaire, which consisted of 27 items followed by structured interviews with 7 participants. Her results show that the majority of the

participants have positive attitudes toward learning English, showing strong agreement with items 2 (I think the number of English classes in schools, in Saudi Arabia, should be increased) and 3 (I think all Saudi students need to learn English), giving Mean scores of 4.30 and 4.04 out of 5, respectively. More importantly, the findings revealed an agreement on item 1 (In Saudi Arabia, people who speak English are more respected than those who don't), which indicates that the participants acknowledge and recognise the importance of being bilingual in Saudi Arabia (Alkaabi, 2016, p. 37-38). In addition, most participants showed willingness to invest effort and money in learning English as a second language.

Furthermore, Alkaabi (2016) conducted more statistical analysis to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between males and females regarding their language attitudes. The results indicate that the attitudes of the Saudi female group toward learning English were more positive than the attitudes of the Saudi male group. This finding could be explained through exploring the different social roles assigned to Saudi women and men. We have already seen in Al Harthi's (2014) study, reviewed in section 2.3.1.3, that Saudi women in her study imagine an idealised community in which they position themselves as English speakers and that is socially less restricted. The results of the questionnaires were complemented with qualitative results from the interviews with 7 participants. Alkaabi (2016) conducted structured interviews consisting of questions concerning their perception of the status of the English language and their attitudes toward learning it. Their responses reveal Saudis' awareness of the important status of English, especially in their daily lives, for example:

P4 female:
I am a big foodie. I enjoy foreign dishes and I like cooking. I am also curious about the ingredients and preparations of some recipes, and most cooking programs that I like to watch is in English, so I need English to keep up my interest. (P. 51).

In completing their education and getting a good job:

P5 female:
There are different reasons that encouraged me to learn English. English is the most commonly used language among foreign languages, and people who speak English can earn more money than those who don't...Knowing English will help me to teach English to my children perfectly. (P. 51).

Another study that investigated language investment in Saudi is Mansory's (2019) study in which he interviewed Saudi parents regarding their children's language use. He interviewed 10 Saudi parents who studied in the UK, and whose children started or attended school there. His study explored an area and a type of language investment that have not been studied before, that is language use at home, and which the current study aims at investigating. Mansory found that the parents in his study are invested in their children's education such that at home the majority communicate with their children in English. He stated that the parents' in his study want their children to be bilingual, however, they prioritise English over Arabic; consequently, most of the parents reported that their children could not speak Arabic. Additionally, Mansory discussed identity in relation to language investment. He found that some of the parents had concerns that their children might lose their Arab identity if they have not learned Arabic properly. As English is becoming a prominent language in Saudi and because it has been increasingly used as a language of communication at home due to the fact that many Saudis have been studying abroad, the linguistic reality in Saudi has changed. Language use at home, especially with children, and the fear of losing Arabic in relation to identity will be examined in the current study.

2.3.3.2 Motivation and attitudes towards English and Westernization

As I discussed in section 2.1.4, learning and using English, especially the notion of standard English, is politically and socially influenced. Mansory's (2019) study highlights an important issue that speaking English might result in identity loss. Speakers may have concerns regarding the loss of Arabic and their Arab identity as they might perceive English as being associated with a western culture. Attitude towards Western culture has been the focus of several attitudinal

studies in Saudi Arabia as Westernisation has been linked with the English language and its potential threat to the Arabic language and culture.

On the other hand, some researchers argued for the positive impact of teaching Western culture on learners' attitudes and motivation, and on improving language education in Saudi Arabia. Alsamani's (2014) study investigated Saudis' lack of awareness of the *target culture* and its influence on their performance in using the English language. According to him, without having knowledge about English native speakers' culture, English cannot be accurately learned or manipulated in real-life situations. Therefore, he argues that English programs in Saudi should offer real-life native speaker culture. The participants of his study included 70 English major students from two different levels, 9 EFL teachers and 7 experts in the field of teaching EFL. The students took a Culture-awareness Diagnostic Test to examine their level of cultural-awareness about English speaking people. The test had multiple choice questions consisting of hypothetical situations to which students are supposed to decide how English native speakers would react. The results of this test revealed that both groups (the second level students and the fourth level students) had a very low level of foreign culture awareness. In other words, Saudis who live in Saudi showed no awareness of how an American, British, or Australian person would react in hypothetical situations.

Alsamani (2014, P. 147) argues that teachers' *ignorance* of the English culture contributed to the fact that the students did not gain any cultural knowledge even after a considerable period of learning the language. Another reason, he explains, is that "EFL classrooms do not provide students with a sufficient, if any, cultural knowledge of the target context". Alsamani failed to mention which English culture he was referring to. However, it can be inferred that the author assumes that all English speakers have a unified culture. As I discussed in section 2.1.4, if Alsamani meant standard English, there are at least two standard Englishes, American and British. In addition, the very fact that the advanced group did not have any knowledge about the *target*

culture demonstrates that learning a language is possible without learning about the culture of its speakers.

Furthermore, Alsamani (2014) conducted Culture-Awareness Needs Assessment that included all the three participant groups in which the participants were asked to evaluate cultural aspects that students might need to learn about in foreign language classes. The tests included items such as:

- Learning how facial expression and tone of voice affect ENSs' understanding of each other.
- Learning how the ENSs make friends.
- Developing awareness of the different cultural beliefs and values to avoid misinterpretation when communicating with ENSs.
- Learning about money and means of payment in the ENSs' culture. (P. 149).

It can be understood from these items that the author assumes that the goal of learning English is to communicate with English native speakers, ignoring the fact that speakers of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca vastly outnumber native English speakers (Jenkins, 2009). What Alsamani (2014) proposes, that EFL speakers should be able to think like *native* English speakers, is one of the false assumptions B. B. Kachru (1991) listed in his response to Quirk (1990). That is, English is not learned in the Outer and Expanding Circle countries to interact with native speakers (see section 2.1.5). In addition, impersonating native speakers of any language and learning how they frown, or smile does not facilitate or hinder learning or communicating in that language. In other words, *native* speakers' body language is probably irrelevant to the majority of English speakers in Saudi. Alsamani did not state whether the participants included women and men, but it could be assumed that his sample only included men given the fact that his study was conducted in a male dominated country. If so, then this is another problematic assumption

in his study that he assumed Saudi women and men would have the same language learning experiences and motivation.

Similarly, Hagler (2014) advocates improving Saudi students' awareness of the West, which, he argues, will have an impact on their motivation to learn English. However, unlike Alsamani (2014), he identifies the West or the English culture as American and British culture, which is also problematic for two reasons. First, there are other English-speaking countries with their own specific cultures. Second, how is learning about someone else's culture is going to affect Saudis' English language who are living and have been using English in Saudi? Hagler's (2014) sample consisted of 98 male and 112 female university students majoring in humanities and science at King Saud University in Riyadh. To collect data, he used open-ended questionnaires written in Arabic. The questionnaire included questions about the respondents' feeling about the West, their opinions regarding the good and the bad aspects of the USA and the UK and the reasons they are learning English. Similar to Alsamani (2014), Hagler (2014) assumed that there is a link between learning English in Saudi and the culture in the US and the UK. The results reveal that the majority (62% males and 70% females) show positive attitudes towards the West with responses such as, "Good, I like it very much"; and "I respect it" (P. 6). In addition, 17% males' and 14% females' responses reflect neutral disposition toward Western culture, such as "I don't know" and "I have no feeling", while the rest have negative responses, including, "I don't like it at all"; "I don't like it"; and "Very bad" (P. 7). In response to the second question, "What is good about the USA or the UK?", the majority, 42% of male students and 35% of female students, listed lifestyle, customs, entertainment, freedom as cultural aspects they found most appealing in the USA and the UK (p.7). However, some of the students responded with "nothing" and "I don't know" (p.7). Regarding the third question, "Do you need to learn about the culture of English-speaking countries? Why or why not?", Hagler classified the responses as either integrative or instrumental. Integrative responses (66%) included, "Yes, English is used world-wide."; "Yes, so you know how to treat them and so they know how to treat you."; "Yes, knowing the culture

helps us to communicate with them.". The influence of the false assumption that being able to communicate with *native* speakers is the reason people learn English, which could be enforced by education, can be seen in the last response. In addition, Hagler found what he labelled as instrumental responses (30%), "No, it is not important."; "No, we only need to learn the language."; "No, English is only needed to talk to others."; and "No, I have no desire to do so." (P.7).

Hagler (2014) identified two types of motivation based on which he judged and labelled the participants' attitude to English. Having instrumental motivation/attitude "deems language as separate from culture then the learner can be seen to take an instrumental attitude toward the language i.e. s/he views it as any other subject such as mathematics or geography, rather than as a part of his/her identity." Being integrative, Hagler explains, "deems it necessary to acquire a language through immersion into the culture" (p. 2). He argues that students who show positive attitudes toward Western culture and have integrative motivation to learn the language "are better placed to learn English" since they recognise "its usefulness in the global market and wanting to associate themselves with the West through its language. (P. 10).

Hagler' study presented an assumption that 'the global market' only or mainly includes western English speakers. In addition, he argues that having negative attitudes toward Western culture could impede language acquisition. However, since having integrative disposition means using English in settings beyond just work and education, that is in daily-life situations, by assuming that students who have integrative motivation are going to use English as a means to communicate mainly with English speakers (specifically American and British), is another way of being instrumentally motivated. Hagler, like many other linguists who have studied English in Saudi, have been asking the wrong questions by assuming that Saudis, who live and will probably continue to live in Saudi Arabia, and have been learning English in Saudi for years, have as their ultimate goal to communicate with English native speakers and assimilate to their cultures. One

might think that is an exaggerated interpretation of Hagler's argument; however, he clearly suggested that "teachers should view this as an opportunity to give such students [who hold negative views about the West] a constructive experience with a Westerner, thereby increasing the likelihood of positive associations with the West" (p. 10).

Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi (1996) conducted a similar study investigating attitudes toward Westernisation in Saudi. The purpose of their study was to investigate the validity of the common fear among Saudis that using English will result in Saudi Arabia becoming westernised. Therefore, they address the influence of western values, norms and ideas, which technology and modernisation might have transferred to the Saudi society, on Saudis' attitudes, national identity, and religious commitment. The population of Al-Abed Al-Hag's and Samdi's (1996) study included 1,176 Saudi university students with age range from 18 to 23. They collected data through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, which consisted of 30 items, 8 of which investigate Saudis' attitudes toward Westernisation and their perception of the status of English, for example:

- My knowledge of English makes me more prestigious socially.
- I believe that there are imperialistic purposes behind the spread and promotion of English in KSA.
- Learning English is an indication of Westernisation.
- Learning English is a national duty to protect KSA from cultural backwardness. (P. 310).

The results show that the majority (65.9%) think that the English language has a prestigious status and is socially valued. In addition, 64.8% of the students disagree with the statement that using English is a form of Westernisation, which Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi (1996) argue is an indication that "English to them is merely an instrument", without providing any evidence to support their claim. In fact, 77.6% of the respondents think that learning English will enrich their cultural experiences, which Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi failed to discuss. Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi also investigated whether Saudis view English as an imperialistic language, that is the language of

colonisers who make "great efforts to impose their values along with their languages" (p. 311). The responses to this statement were almost equally divided regarding the view that there are imperialistic purposes behind the spread and promotion of English in Saudi Arabia (38.8% disagree, 30.5% agree, and 30.7 undecided), which again they explain as an indication of instrumental attitudes toward English without any evidence. In fact, 43.7% agree that using English "is an indication of cultural advancement" (P. 310), which they mentioned but did not discuss. Researchers with variationist sociolinguistic views can read their results differently. It can be seen that the authors designed their questions to elicit answers that reflect their point of view that Saudis have instrumental attitudes toward learning and using English with which the respondents agree, neglecting the two questions that prove English is more than just a tool to gain access to better education and employment.

The researchers above seem to be divided over the potential negative or positive effect of Western culture on English education or on the possible loss of the Saudi culture and the Arabic language. Alsamani (2014) and Hagler (2014) seem to think that all English native speakers have a unified culture or similar cultures, which they argue should be introduced to Saudi students in order to enhance their English learning experiences. On the other hand, Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi (1996), although they concur with the notion that English has one culture, believe that learning English could transfer western norms that might undermine local values. However, one can argue that English being an international language is cultureless, which makes the Western culture effect irrelevant. Therefore, while researchers as human beings cannot be completely objective, some of the researchers in those studies seem to have designed their questions to explicitly reflect their own views of English as a colonising language, which led them to ignore some signs that could reflect how English has been localised in Saudi Arabia to mirror local Arabic and Islamic norms (Mahboob & ELyas, 2014).

Saudi linguists are the product of the very same institutions from which they recruited their study samples. For years now, linguists have been conducting studies investigating English in Saudi Arabia based on traditional ESL/EFL views, in which Standard American or British English varieties are considered as the original and the only correct varieties. Therefore, Saudis have been trained in schools and universities not to master the English language *per se* but to approximate to native speakers and to achieve a target-like competence; this may explain the orientation of Saudi linguists, such as Alsamani (2014), who argues for imitating native speakers' facial expressions. Having said that, the present study challenges the dominant traditional ESL/EFL paradigm by investigating Saudis' attitudes toward Saudi English, and their perception of English as an international language and the impact of that perception on their future plans. In addition, Saudis' attitudes to English derived from their statements in the interviews and responses in the questionnaire will be compared to their actual use of the English language.

2.3.3.3 Attitudes towards other varieties of English

Beside the apparent interest among researchers in investigating Saudis' attitudes toward English and Western culture, others examined Saudis attitudes towards other varieties of English. Al-kahtany (1995), for example, conducted an attitudinal study in an ESL setting to investigate Saudi students' awareness of and attitudes towards three varieties of English: Standard American English, African English and Indian English. The participants listened to recordings of different speakers of the three English varieties reading the same passage, and rated each speaker based on different personality traits including, intelligence, honesty, and trustworthiness.

Personality-wise, the results show that the majority favoured the Standard American English speaker over the other two speakers. The participants also chose Standard American English as the most appropriate variety for education. In addition, Al-kahtany found a correlation between students' motivation type and their attitudes towards the three varieties. The results revealed that students with integrative motivation favoured the Standard American English speaker more

than those who had instrumental attitudes. Al-kahtany's findings are somehow expected, since Standard English is the only variety that has been taught in Saudi schools and universities. As Jenkins (2009) notes, being a native speaker is the main, if not the only, qualification many teachers need to work in countries like Saudi Arabia. Until now, Saudis have been trained to master and sound like native speakers, therefore, it is expected and inevitable that the participants in Al-kahtany's (1995) would prefer Standard American English, because it is the only variety they recognise as correct and legitimate.

In the same vein, Al-Dosari (2011) conducted a study investigating Saudi students' attitudes toward two English varieties (South African English and Indian English) in EFL contexts. The purpose of his study was to investigate Saudis' attitudes towards two speakers of South African English and Indian English in two aspects, foreign accent and comprehensibility. The results show that the listeners found the South African speaker reading the sample texts to be less *accented* than the Indian speaker. In terms of comprehensibility, the students found the Indian English speaker harder to understand than the South African English speaker. In addition, they rated the South African speaker's accent more positively than the Indian speaker in terms of attractiveness, professional desirability, educational attainment and wealth.

While Al-kahtany (1995) and Al-Dosari (2011) are the only Saudi researchers, so far, who have examined Saudis' attitudes toward other varieties of English, their results reveal, more or less, the same idea that English is perceived as a Western language. The participants in Al-kahtany's (1995) study rated the American speaker higher than the other speakers, which indicates that Saudis have been trained for years in schools that native English speakers are the only legitimate owners of English. On the other hand, the respondents in Al-Dosari's (2011) study had to choose between South African English and Indian English, and favoured the South African English, which could be due to the fact that it is more similar or closer to British English than Indian English is.

2.3.3.4 L2 Motivational Self System, imagined community, and investment

The three previous studies (Alsamani, 2014; Hagler, 2014; Al-Abed Al-Hag & Samdi, 1996) differ in their contexts, participants and data collection and analysis approaches. However, what they have in common is that they linked the participants' type of motivation (integrative or instrumental) or attitude towards the west with learning English. They studied motivation based on the theory of *integrativeness* developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972), which ranges from L2 speakers showing openness towards the L2 culture, to wanting to integrate with both the L1 and L2 cultures, and ultimately a desire to identify with the L2 culture and withdraw from the L1 culture. Ushioda (2011, p. 202) argues that given the global status of English now, being integratively motivated "may be better explained in terms of our desired self-representations as *de facto* members of these global communities, rather than in terms of identification with external reference groups." As discussed in 2.1, English now is being viewed beyond the traditional ENL, ESL and EFL classifications, and other varieties of English have been acknowledged and studied in SLA research. In addition, English is being used as a language of communication in international settings that may or may not involve *native* speakers (Jenkins, 2009). Therefore, it would not be accurate to describe Saudis' motivation to learn English and their attitudes to English as a desire to integrate with a western culture or the lack thereof.

Shifting the focus from external factors to self-representations led Dörnyei (2009) to propose a new model of L2 motivation, the *L2 Motivational Self System*. This model entails that an L2 learner has *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self*. The *ideal L2 self* represents what the learner aspires to be which has a *promotion* focus, which is motivation is shaped by desirable personal, social, and professional self-images (Ushioda, 2011). The *ought-to L2 self* represents what the learner must do to achieve their *ideal L2 self*, which Ushioda argues, has a *prevention* focus to avoid failing in learning the L2 or disappointing one's parents and which corresponds with having instrumental motivation. In this model, integrative and instrumental motivation are not separate; that is, *integrativeness* and *instrumentality* are viewed as processes that help L2 learners to

achieve their *imagined future selves*. This latter concept corresponds to the concept of *imagined community*, discussed in section 2.3.1.3, that entails L2 speakers imagine L2 communities and imagine themselves as L2 speakers situated in those communities which motivate them and enhance their L2 learning. The difference between the traditional notion of motivation and the *L2 Motivational Self System* and the concept of *imagined community* is that L2 speakers have agency to decide their needs and the purpose for learning the L2, to imagine themselves as competent L2 speakers and to decide what they need to achieve to become competent. Ushioda explains that viewing motivation as possible future selves enables learners "to engage directly with their possible future selves as users of the L2, but within the scope and security of their current communicative abilities, interests and social contexts" (p. 8), where native speakers and ICE exonormative rules are irrelevant.

Investment is another notion that complement the concepts of *possible future selves* and *imagined community* where the relationship between identity and language learning is central (Norton & Toohey, 2011). The traditional classification of motivation described L2 learners as having fixed and unitary characteristics, either motivated or not. Therefore, interpreting failing to acquire a second language as not having enough desire to learn the language, although in Alsamani's (2014) study the advanced group were classified as not being integratively motivated. The construct of *investment*, proposed by Peirce (1995), draws on economic metaphors such as *cultural capital* from the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) that refers to "the knowledge, credentials, and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups" and that "has differential exchange value (or 'currency') in different social fields" (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 420). In the notion of *investment*, L2 learners are viewed as having different desires to engage in various social interactions and different communities of practice; therefore, L2 learners have complex identities "which change across time and space, and which are constructed on the basis of the socially given, and the individually struggled-for" (Norton and Toohey, 2011, p. 420). Viewing motivation to learn a language as an investment may explain discrepancies in the

findings of some SLA studies such as Alsamani's (2014) study where some speakers had advanced English skills but were not interested in the cultural aspects of English as a foreign language. It could be argued that they were invested in using the language in different contexts relevant to them as speakers, rather than not being integratively motivated. How integrative with an irrelevant culture does one have to be to validate English use with children at home, as seen in Mansory's study?

The current study will also explore Saudis' attitude and type of motivation. However, it will investigate Saudis' attitudes towards English in Saudi, its use in education, the media, and government official websites, rather than Saudis' attitudes to English as the language of the west. In addition, it will investigate their attitudes to their and other Saudis' use of English in Saudi. As I stated earlier in 2.3.3.1, this study will explore Saudis' opinions regarding English use at home and in relation to their identities. By doing so, I acknowledge that Saudis are English speakers rather than just learners. The speakers in my study will be asked about their attitudes to other varieties of English to uncover the ideologies at play that might have resulted from ICE-oriented education in Saudi or the media and which might have influenced their attitude to English in general and to their own use of English. Additionally, motivation will be investigated in the current study; however, from a different perspective, that is in terms of having different types of investment. I will investigate the contexts in which English is used and the reasons Saudis prefer to use English whether for leisure, for work, for education, with friends, with their children or family and at home. In my study, Saudi women, and men will be given equal chances to express their opinions, hopes, and aspirations regarding English through interviews which will complement their responses in a questionnaire. Instead of classifying the speakers into fixed presupposed categories, integratively or instrumentally motivated, the speakers will decide and say what motivates them to not only learn English but also use it.

3: Features of Saudi English

As a consequence of its unprecedented spread globally, English has become the major second/foreign language to be taught in schools, colleges and universities around the world, including Saudi Arabia (Liton, 2012). According to Bolton (2004) the estimated number of first-language speakers of English is around 375 million and the number of second and foreign language speakers is over 1,000 million. The fact that the number of non-native speakers has exceeded the number of native speakers requires new classification paradigms and teaching that consider Englishes as representations of evolving identities, and local as well as global norms (Bruthiaux, 2003). Any new variety of English is likely to receive local acceptance if local standards rather than native standards are used in schools and promoted by the educated members of that society. For example, in some countries such as the Philippines, Singapore, and Nigeria, English has moved beyond exocentric standards to endonormative standards that have evolved naturally as a result of ongoing language contact and have become accepted in education (Kirkpatrick, 2007). However, this implementation has been rejected in other countries, despite the wide spread of their own local varieties. For example, in Saudi Arabia local idiosyncratic features tend to be evaluated negatively and described as *errors* and *mistakes* against English native standards (Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015; Ahamed, 2016; Alfallaj, 2013; Alhaysony, 2012; Al-Quyadi, 2016; Al-Mohanna, 2014; Alshayban, 2012; Binturki, 2001; Hashim, 1980; Hago & Khan, 2015).

This chapter will start with a review of the distinction between varietal features and errors. Then, I will explore the features of English in Saudi which have commonly been presented in 'error' studies, but which will be investigated in the current study as potential features of Saudi English, starting with the zero be, variation in articles, zero -s inflection, and concluding with /v/ devoicing.

3.1 Features or errors?

According to Selinker (1972), fossilization is a central characteristic of any Interlanguage, represented in phonological, morphological and syntactic features in the speech of L2 speakers that are different from the target language even after years of education. Therefore, as discussed in section 2.2.1.1, any form of innovation in English that represents local cultures and identities has been automatically rejected and considered as negative L1 influence by those researchers who adopted the IL theory. Similarly, in relation to Saudi English, Saudi researchers, so far, describe what may be systematic features of Saudi English in their findings as Interlanguage errors instead (e.g., Alhaysony, 2012; Al-Mohanna, 2014;).

World English scholars (Bamgbose, 1998; Gupta, 1994; B. B. Kachru, 1992; Schneider, 2007; Kachru & Smith, 2008) all discuss the critical question concerning the distinction between innovation and errors within any English variety, as Bamgbose (1998) noted:

> The main question that arises with innovation is the need to decide when an observed feature of language use is indeed an innovation and when it is simply an error. An innovation is seen as an acceptable variant, while an error is simply a mistake or uneducated usage. (p.1–2).

Although many scholars provide different factors or criteria in relation to the difference between errors and innovations within a variety, the literature in general agrees that this is, to a great extent, a subjective judgment. B. B. Kachru (1992) makes a distinction between *mistakes* and *deviations*, arguing that while the former may be unacceptable to native speakers of English, the latter may not since they are produced in the new setting of English and are systematic within a variety. According to Bamgbose (1998) codification and social acceptance are the most critical factors in terms of standardising features of any variety of English since English has never had unified central standards. Public usage along with codification in dictionaries gave the inner circle Englishes authenticity. For example, the recognition of Australian English resulted partly from the production of the Macquarie Dictionary (Jenkins, 2009). Bamgbose (1998) explains that it is users'

attitudes that determine the status of any variety and that acceptance and positive attitudes can mostly be achieved by codification.

Gupta (1994) concurs with that by explaining that the aspect of prestige plays an important role in determining what is acceptable and appropriate. Schneider (2007) suggests setting the usage of "the educated members of a society as the target and as an indigenous language norm" (p. 18). On the other hand, Gonzalez (1983) argues that local English features that have become common in the Philippines among educated and uneducated people should no longer be considered as errors. Kachru and Smith (2008) argue that if any feature that deviates from Standard English has become widely used among high and low proficiency speakers, then it would be more appropriate to call it a variant feature.

B. B. Kachru (1983) maintains that the main factor in determining whether a form is an error or a feature is the systematic linguistic processes that result in a new form. According to B. B. Kachru, errors are the result of random processes while features are innovations that result from systematic and productive processes, which make those features common among all members of any society whereas errors are individuals. Gupta (1994) explains that many features have been created as a result of systematic L1 transfer, which eventually stabilized and became common features of a new variety. An example is the use of zero copula in African American Vernacular English which resulted from the contact between American English and an earlier African creole that had categorical copula absence in many environments (Rickford et al., 1991; Romaine, 1982).

B. B. Kachru (1983) also argues that even though "the non-native models of English are linguistically identifiable, geographically definable, and functionally valuable, they are still not necessarily attitudinally acceptable" (p. 124). Therefore, even if an English variety is systematic and widely used, it is its status as prestigious that perpetuates its endonormative standards.

Hence, Kachru maintains that in the development process of any variety, people go through a 'linguistic schizophrenia' phase where their linguistic attitudes (overt prestigious external norms) contradict their linguistic behaviour (covert local solidarity norms). Schneider (2003) argues that at the early stages, after English has been transplanted in any society, two opposite norm orientations are likely to co-exist, until in the long run local norms prevail. With regard to the current status of English in Saudi, it could be argued that Saudis are going through the linguistic schizophrenia phase where Saudi linguists continue to find variable features of Saudi English among high and low proficiency speakers, yet they overtly prefer 'prestigious' external norms. Bamgbose (1998) formulates the dilemma as follows:

> Innovations in non-native Englishes are often not judged for what they are or their function within the varieties in which they occur, but rather according to how they stand in relation to the norms of native Englishes. (p. 1,2).

De Klerk (1999) raises the same issue with regard to African American English, especially in relation to how different varieties of English are used to express local norms:

> We should thus remain aware of the fact that the new standards may be evolving, guided by speakers of basilectal and mesolectal forms, who are in the process of adapting and nativising English to their particular needs. Indeed, native-like competence is not necessarily desirable for BSAE speakers, and sounding like an Englishman in Africa can actually be socially ridiculous: signaling identity and loyalties by retaining variant non-native forms is a vitally important component of what it means to speak English. (p. 314).

Saudi English has to date been studied and represented as an incomplete and imperfect version of other more authentic varieties, despite the fact that different studies showed similar and consistent results regarding its features. Thus, the main goal of the current study is to explore and examine Saudi English as a new variety of English with grammatical and phonological variable features of its own, taking the stance that it is misleading to judge the data in terms of other varieties of English, rather than in its own terms.

3.2 Saudi English features

In this section, I will review previous *error* studies that investigated some recurrent features of Saudi English: zero *be*, variation in the definite and indefinite articles, zero *-s* inflection in third-person singular verbs, and /v/ devoicing. I also review the only study that reported the same features as variables of Saudi English (Al-Rawi, 2012). In addition, I review studies on other varieties of English that documented these five features. Reviewing other studies, whether on Saudi English or other varieties, helps understand the contextual nature of variation in each feature. Bayley (2005) argues that:

> If speakers of different languages pattern in different ways and if the difference reflects a linguistic difference in their first languages, we might reasonably conclude that the difference is attributable to the effects of the first language. (P. 4).

All the studies on Saudi English including Al-Rawi's study, discussed below, attributed the variation in the five features to L1 influence; however, given that these variables exist in other Englishes that may resulted from contact with different L1s, it could be argued there are other reasons that may have led to the formation of these variables, such as complexity of the variable itself, which this study aims to uncover.

3.2.1 Zero be

Zero copula occurs when the copula or auxiliary *be* is absent in situations where Standard English would normally require one, as in *They Ø planning to keep it a secret,* as opposed to *They are planning to keep it a secret*. In the literature, the term 'zero copula' has been used to refer to both zero copula *My country Ø Saudi Arabia* and zero auxiliary *They Ø planning to keep it a secret* (Al-Rawi's, 2012, p. 110); in this study the term 'zero be' will be used to refer to both zero copula and zero auxiliary. Variation in *be* is a common feature of different varieties of English such as Sri Lankan English (Herat, 2005), African American Vernacular English (AAVE) (Labov, 1969; Romaine, 1982) and some varieties spoken by white southern Americans (Feagin, 1979). *Be* variation played an important role in the debate about the origin of AAVE, which took two different

directions: the Dialectologist and the Creolist approaches. The Dialectologist approach followed by Labov (1969) assumes that all the distinguishing features of AAVE, including zero *be*, originated from existing dialects of American English. According to Labov (1969) zero *be* occurs only in positions where *be* contraction is possible in Standard English and every deleted *be* represents an underlying form, therefore, zero *be* is a phonological, rather than syntactic, variable. On the other hand, Creolists argue that AAVE, having its own syntactic system, is a creole developed from an earlier creole, which had categorical zero *be* in many environments (Rickford et al., 1991; Romaine, 1982). Regardless of this debate, Labov's ground-breaking study (1969) led to zero *be* becoming one of the most studied features of new varieties of English. For example, Herat (2005) found variation in using *be* in Sri Lankan English, Platt and Weber (1980) investigated zero *be* in Singapore English, and Mesthrie (1992) in South African Indian English.

Labov's (1969) main claim about zero *be* is that *be* can only be deleted in positions where contraction is possible (*He's going to leave, He Ø going to leave*) as opposed to (*You should be there*, **You should Ø there;* or *What a beautiful picture it is!, * What a beautiful picture it Ø!)*. He substantiated his argument with a list of environmental constraints for zero *be*: before a progressive, before the verb *gonna*, before an adjective, before a locative and before a noun phrase. He also listed six contexts where zero *be*, as well as contraction, is disallowed:

a. Non-finite
   - *You have to Ø here.
   - You have to be here.

b. Imperatives
   - *Don't Ø late.
   - Don't be late.

c. Ellipsis
   - *I am a student, so he Ø.
   - I am a student, so he is.

d. Emphasis
- *He Ø tall.
- He *is* tall.

e. Inversion
- *What a beautiful picture it Ø!
- What a beautiful picture it is!

f. Complement extraction
- *I don't care who you Ø.
- I don't care who you are.

In addition, Labov (1969) shows that in AAVE the past forms *was* and *were* are invariably present in full forms, but different patterns have been found in other varieties of English. For example, *One day I said I'm going to stop near a boutique and everyone Ø getting ready to come out of bus,* In Sri Lankan English (Herat, 2005). Labov (1969) also shows that in AAVE among the present forms *are* is more variant than *is*. Similar variation in *be* was found in SLA studies in Saudi. For example, [zero are] in *But now people Ø used to travel by planes* (Hashim, 1980, p. 23) and [is realisation] in *The course is an ongoing thing* (Al-Rawi's, 2012, p. 110). Beside the grammatical constraints, Labov studied the phonological constraints in recorded speech and found out that zero *be* and contraction differed in accordance with the preceding phonological environment. According to Labov, in AAVE vowels favour *be* contraction *He's tall* and consonants favour *be* deletion *But local people Ø different* (Herat, 2005, p. 201), an observation which Labov uses to support his claim that zero copula is a phonological phenomenon.

Zero *be* has been the focus of a few ESL/EFL studies in Saudi Arabia (Alshayban, 2012; Ahamed, 2016; Hashim, 1980). However, it has not been investigated as a variable feature of Saudi English, except for Al-Rawi's (2012) study, which was the first attempt to document Saudi English grammatical features and presents zero *be* as a variant feature of Saudi English. Hashim (1980) investigated grammatical errors in 170 written samples conducted by Saudi high school students. His results showed evidence of zero *be* which he attributed to low proficiency or negative L1

transfer. However, from a variationist perspective, the examples he provided showed evidence that *be* absence or realization could be a variable feature of Saudi English. His findings showed similar patterns found in variationist studies of other varieties of English in which the present forms *is* and *are* were deleted (*The journey to Makkah Ø long and tiring* and *But now people Ø used to travel by planes*) (p. 23). Similarly, Alshayban's (2012) and Ahamed's (2016) findings showed similar patterns of variant *be* use in Saudi EFL learners' writings, for example *He Ø twenty four years old* (Ahamed, 2016). Al-Rawi (2012) conducted the first variationist study in Saudi English in which she interviewed 56 bilingual Saudis. Al-Rawi results showed a percentage of 33.3% of zero *be* which coincides with Hashim, Alshayban and Ahamed, however, she maintained that "copula-deletion is not a compulsory feature, rather variability of the copula is a feature of Saudi English" (p. 34).

In a variationist study on another variety of English, Herat (2005) found similar results in Sri Lankan English where both *is* and *are* were deleted. Although Labov (1969) claims that in AAVE *are* favours absence over *is*, Rickford et al. (1991, p. 105) argued that, "*is* and *are* behave similarly enough to be treated together, making the data pool larger and more robust". In addition, in a monolingual study, Feagin (1979) found similar patterns of *is* and *are* absence among white speakers in Alabama. Moreover, although Labov's study of AAVE, along with other researchers in other monolingual contexts, was confined to studying the present forms of *be*, multilingual studies show evidence of past tense *be* absence suggesting that the past tense *be* behaves in a similar fashion to the present tense *be* forms, e.g., in Sri Lankan English (Herat, 2005). Similarly, the examples Hashim (1980) provides show that *be* absence could be possible in past environments (*In the past there Ø a shortage* and *once the roads Ø not good*) (p. 23) which suggests that zero past tense *be* could be a variant of *be* in Saudi English. Hashim (1980, p. 25) also provided examples of *be* realization in environments where Standard English does not require one (Once people *were live in small houses*), which bear a close resemblance to examples given by Herat (2005, p. 193) in Sri Lankan English (*when they are accompany the tourists try to*

get maximum of them by way of selling products) and Ho and Platt's findings (1993, p. 34) in Singapore English (I *was improve* my English). Herat argues that *be* + stem forms could be an attempt by speakers to produce the target norm *be* + ing, however, the similarities between those findings for different varieties indicate that *be* + stem could be seen as a feature of new Englishes.

Be realization or absence in AAVE, Labov (1969) shows, depends to a great extent on the grammatical environments that follow or proceed. In Saudi English, it is somewhat difficult to establish the grammatical environments in which *be* realization or absence is possible as the research on *be* variation is scarce. However, the examples provided in Al-Rawi (2012) and Hashim's (1980) studies showed environmental constraints consistent with those listed for AAVE by Labov (1969) and presented in Herat's (2005) findings for Sri Lankan English: after nominative pronouns *I thought it Ø difficult to learn English* (Hashim's, 1980, p. 23), and demonstrative pronouns *That Ø what our religion taught us to do* (Al-Rawi, 2012, p. 110); before and after noun phrases *My country Ø Saudi Arabia and My daughter, Sara, Ø sick*; before adjective predicates *They Ø not able to hear anyone* (2012, p. 110); and before locative predicates *And my brother Ø also in Kedah* (Herat, 2005, p. 200). As only limited number of studies have investigated *be* variation and its environmental constraints in Saudi English, following the steps of the previous variationist studies on other varieties this study will examine *be* realization and absence in both past and present forms using some of the main linguistic environments explained by Labov (1969) and Rickford et al. (1991) for AAVE: Subject (nouns and pronouns), complements (adjectives, verb phrases, noun phrases and locatives), and the preceding phonological constraint (vowel or consonant). In addition, the data of my study will help determine what other linguistic contexts could be used to determine *be* variation. As this study is sociolinguistic, it will also include social, educational, and attitudinal factors that might favour, or disfavour *be* omission.

3.2.2 Variation in articles

The English system of articles is very complex, thus, it is subject to variation in many varieties of English including Inner Circle varieties, for example, *Take me to **the** hospital* in American and British English and *We're parched with **the** thirst* in Irish English (Wahid, 2013, p. 42). If the article system displays variability in Inner Circle varieties, it is expected to show variability in other varieties of contact.

The definite article *the*, as Quirk et al (1985, p. 265) formulate it, is used to refer to an individual or an entity "which can be identified uniquely in the contextual or general knowledge shared by speaker and hearer". According to Lyons (1977, p. 646-657) the definite article in English has two general functions: a pronominal that points to a specific entity or concept in a specific spatio-temporal location as in *The newspaper that is on the coffee table* and an adjectivalised deictic adverbial that refers to an entity rather than its specific spatio-temporal location as in the *The president*. Quirk et al (1985, p. 266-272) provided eight contexts in which the definite article can be used: Generic reference *No one knows precisely when the wheel was invented*; direct anaphoric reference *John bought a TV and a video recorder, but he returned the video recorder*; general knowledge *the Prime Minister*; immediate situation *The roses are very beautiful* (said in a garden), indirect anaphoric reference *John bought a bicycle, but when he rode it one of the wheels came off*; cataphoric reference *The girls sitting over there are my cousins*; sporadic reference *My sister goes to the theatre every month*; and logical use *When is the first flight to Chicago tomorrow?* In addition, the definite article is used to refer to geographic entities or public institutions as in *The Bahamas or the Atlantic* (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 288–97).

The functions mentioned above are based on two concepts, *unique identifiability* and *familiarity*, and are hearer-oriented (Epstein, 2002, p.334). That is choice of the definite article is based on the speaker's presumption of the hearer's knowledge. Epstein proposes a speaker-oriented, broad function "in which speakers construct discourse referents in such a way as to induce

hearers to accept the referents into the discourse under distinct guises (to further their own communicative purposes)" (p. 372). This function is used to introduce—even if for the first time--an entity that is prominent in the broader discourse context. For example, in *he had forgotten his tattered, 19-year-old blanket with **the** distinctive penguin design* (a line from a story) (p. 365), Epstein explains *the* is a clue that the *distinctiveness* of the blanket is from the point of view of the character in the story not the writer.

The indefinite article *a/an* is used when the conditions for the definite article do not apply (except before unspecific countable plural nouns and unspecific uncountable nouns). Therefore, it refers to something that has not been mentioned before or is unfamiliar to the hearer or reader (Quirk et al., 1985). The indefinite article can be used as a predicative adjective as in *My mother is a teacher*, it can be used for general reference in noun phrases that may not have a referent as in *Leonard wants to marry a princess who speaks five languages* (p. 273), and it can be used in a quantitative function with a variant meaning of *one* as in *Sally just bought a car* (p. 274).

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature, mainly in the field of second language research, on the variant use of articles among Saudi English speakers, for example, Ahamed (2016), Al-Mohanna (2014), and Alhaysony (2012). All previous studies that have reported article variation among Saudis have carried out error analysis for their findings; accordingly, the knowledge about variable use of articles in Saudi contexts is insufficient and needs more investigation from a variationist sociolinguistic point of view. Al-Mohanna (2014), in an error study, collected written samples from 274 university students to identify "the types of errors they make in the use of the definite/indefinite articles" (p. 79). Alhaysony (2012), in a similar study, investigated article errors in written samples of 100 university students. In the findings of these studies, the researchers identified nonstandard use of the definite article in positions where Standard English would not require one, as in *He broke his leg in **the** accident* (Al-Mohanna, 2014, p. 89). This example bears a close resemblance to an example in Singapore

English *Ya it's those computer is all the data in the computer readable format so you go to **the machine CD-Rom*** (Wahid, 2013, p. 36). Wahid argued that situational NPs showed high rates of marked definites in the Outer Circle varieties, which could be the case for Saudi English. Although the previous studies on article variation in Saudi English have suggested that it is evident in high rates (for example, 96% *the* addition and 75% *a/an* omission in Alhaysony (2012); and 35% *the* addition and 87% *a/an* omission in Al-Mohanna (2014)), judgments or generalizations about the nature of article variation in Saudi English cannot be made and more research is needed as the previous studies failed to provide enough examples in full contexts. Al-Rawi's (2012) study showed that Saudis also tend to use the definite article in nonstandard contexts to refer to names of languages *I can understand **the** Tagalog as I visited the Philippines*; places, institutions, or geographic areas *We took him to **the** Fakeeh hospital that is located in **the** Palestine Street*; as well as, specific parts of the day, week, month or year ***The** Thursday is the best day of the week, and **the** Hajj is the most spiritual month* (p. 110). Kachru (2003, p. 498) argues that it is reasonable to expect variation in terms of articles in all varieties of English "as a result of English being in contact with other languages in different parts of the world" since all languages utilize devices different from English to refer to the same realities that are expressed in English; as we have seen, research has indeed shown that multilingual speakers of English tend to use different systems of articles to express their own conceptual situations. In order to determine how Saudis utilise articles to express their own realities, there has to be a systematic account of the article system in Saudi speech performed in relation to bigger contexts, rather than separate instances, which is one of the aims of this study. This study will examine variation in the definite and indefinite articles in relation to social factors and linguistic environments. The linguistic contexts that might influence variation in the definite and indefinite articles will be determined based on the findings of Al-Rawi's (2012) study and on the contexts that emerge in the data. Regarding the definite article Al-Rawi provided a list of contexts in which the varies, listed in section 2.2.1.2, which will guide identification of the linguistic environments in this study.

3.2.3 Zero –s inflection in third-person singular verbs

Tense, as identified by Greenbaum and Quirk (1990, p. 47) "is a grammatical category that is realized by verb inflection" which "indicates whether an action, an activity, or a state is past, present, or future" (Hornby, 1999:78). According to Lyons (1995, p. 132), the term tense is derived from the Latin word 'tempus', which means time. The present tense is used to refer to a state that is currently going on or an event that is habitually performed or generally exists. Therefore, the present tense has four forms: simple present, present continuous, present perfect, and present perfect continuous tenses. The simple present tense, which is the focus of this study, is used to describe or refer to general facts or habitual or continuously repeated activities which are usually followed with adverbial expressions such as *always*, *usually*, *everyday* and *often* (DeCapua, 2008). There are two types of verbs used to refer to present tense: Stative verbs (e.g., be, have, like, sense), which refer to a state of being or single unchanging and unbroken states, and dynamic verbs (e.g., go, play, write), which have duration and show continuity or refer to progressive actions.

In Standard English, in the present tense, third-person singular verbs (except for *be* and *have*) are marked with *-s,* but this is subject to variation in other varieties of English (Van Herk and Walker, 2005). Research on the nonstandard use of verbal *-s* or un-inflected forms has been mostly restricted to EFL/ESL *error* studies in Saudi Arabia (Ahamed, 2016; Al-Quyadi, 2016; Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015). Ahmed's (2016) study was an *error* investigative study in which he collected written samples from 40 Saudi university students who had been taking English courses. His findings revealed variation in the use of the *-s* marking for third-person singular verbs, for example, *He **live** in Abha* and *He **study** in English Department*. Although he did not provide the total number of third-person singular verbs with or without *-s* collectively, the total number of verbs with zero *-s* inflection is 60, which he explained as errors "attributed to the incomplete application of rules and insufficient practice" (p. 197) and "ignorance of English language rule restrictions" (p. 207).

Al-Quyadi (2016, p. 135), in a similar study, investigated Saudi students' 'failure' "to handle the use of tense and aspect of English in a proper manner". He collected his data through two grammar tests: the first one consisted of 24 sentences with multiple choices and the second one was a short paragraph with multiple choices to test their ability to use the right verb forms in connected language. Regarding the variant use of the third-person singular -s marking, the results showed relatively high rate of zero -s marking with percentages of 44% in the first test and 52% in the second test. Ignoring the fact that the participants produced near-equal rates of presence and absence of -s, he characterised his findings as failure to master Standard English grammar. He concluded by urging the educational authorities in Saudi to prioritise teaching grammar over other components of the language because "teaching English can never do without teaching grammar" (p. 142). Al-Quyadi's (2016) results showed rates of standard -s marking use with percentages of 56% and 48% in the first test and the second test, respectively, which are as high as the percentages of uninflected verbs. However, he failed to comment on these percentages perhaps because they contradict his claim that the variant use of the tense inflection is due to low proficiency and insufficient grammar education. Based on Kachru's and Smith's (2008) observation, it could be argued from the fact that this feature exists in the speech of the high and low proficiency speakers, that it could be viewed as a variant feature of Saudi English.

In the same vein, Abdelrady and Ibrahim's (2015) study was grammar oriented to investigate "the occurrence of errors in inflectional morphemes, and to find out the types of errors and the most frequent errors that are made by the students" (p. 82). They collected 40 written samples from 40 university students from the northern region of Saudi Arabia. Regarding the third-person singular present, the results showed 7 instances of verbs with zero -s inflection and provided one example, *My mother **get** cold and also fever* (p. 91), with percentage of 13.2% without providing the total number of verbs with potential -s marking. Interestingly, however, their findings showed instances of variant use of the -s marking in positions where Standard English would not normally

require one, for example, *It can makes me terrify*, with a percentage of 15.1%. They explained their subjects' variation use of *-s* in these positions as an overgeneralisation of the third-person singular present rule. However, this phenomenon of the nonstandard use of verbal *-s* in the present tense has been found in other varieties of English. Van Herk and Walker (2005) found similar instances in African American English (AAE) in which non-adjacent pronouns favour *-s* inflection, *We all biages **begs** to you to please to intersied for us* (p. 119). They also reported instances of zero *-s* inflection, *My wife **send** her love to you both* (p. 114) and *af [,if] you dont thar will be bot a few liv [,alive] that **com** To Cap Mount* (p. 118), which are consistent with the findings of Ahamed (2016), Al-Quyadi (2016), and Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015).

All the studies on *-s* marking in English in Saudi followed the strategy common to all ESL/EFL studies, that is, the analysis of Saudi English as if it falls short of approximating to Standard English. None of the studies mention or comment on the frequency of standard use of verbal *-s*, which could suggest that their subjects were in fact aware of the standard way of applying the verbal *-s* inflection. In addition, finding instances of verbal *-s*, especially with relatively high percentage, for example, in Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015), contradicts their main argument that students simply failed to follow Standard English rules.

Al-Rawi (2012), in the first Saudi variationist study, argues that "deleting the third person singular *-s* is a further feature characterizing Saudi English" with percentages of 50%, 53% and 52% for educated professionals, university students and high school graduates, respectively. This finding also reflects Kachru's and Smith's (2008) observation that this feature is common among speakers with different language proficiency. As there has been only one variationist study that reported the variant use of verbal *-s* marking in Saudi English, this study aims at investigating whether zero *-s* inflection is a common variant feature of Saudi English. Therefore, following the approach of Van Herk and Walker (2005) for AAE, all verbs with reference to present time will be included, excluding irregular verbs (have, be, do) and any "verbs that either clearly had past

reference, and might therefore be subject to competing variable processes of zero-marking in the past" (p. 118). This study, then, will examine the linguistic constraints that might have an effect on the variant use of the *-s* inflection which have not been studied before by any Saudi researchers. Phonological environments preceding or following the verb could also lead to *-s* variation. For example, Van Herk and Walker (2005) reported for AAE that preceding sibilants favour zero *-s* marking *this Country of mine that **produce** them fortuns with but little money* (p. 118), which is consistent with an example in Saudi English provided in Al-Rawi's (2012) study *My father always **teach** me how to discover my capabilities* (p. 37). Therefore, the current study will examine the variable *-s* in relation to different linguistic constraints: phonological environments (whether the preceding or following sound is a consonant or a vowel); type of subject and adjacency (whether the subject is an adjacent pronoun, a nonadjacent pronoun, an adjacent noun or noun phrase, or a nonadjacent noun or noun phrase); and type of verb (whether the verb is stative or dynamic). Findings in previous studies, such as Van Herk and Walker (2005) and Al-Rawi (2012), will guide establishing what linguistic constraints might influence *-s* variation, based on the findings in the data. In addition, similar to the previous features, *-s* variation will be examined in relation to social factors.

3.2.4 /v/ devoicing

Several studies have been conducted to investigate variation with regards to pronunciation among Saudi EFL/ESL learners (Alfallaj, 2013; Hago & Khan, 2015; Binturki, 2001). One of the phonological variables that appeared in their results was the use of the labiodental fricative /f/ as an alternative to the standard voiced labiodental fricative /v/, which they justified as difficulty encountered by Saudi ESL/EFL learners in acquiring the pronunciation of /v/ due to negative L1 transfer.

Both Alfallaj (2013) and Hago and Khan (2015) conducted similar studies in which they investigated which English sounds showed variability in their subjects' speech, and both agreed

that Saudis tend to substitute the sound /v/ with /f/. Alfallaj (2013) failed to report any percentages of realization or variation in the given consonant as he collected his data from questionnaires. Hago and Khan's (2015) similarly failed to report the percentage of the variable /v/. In addition, they both failed to illustrate in what positions (initial, middle or final) and in what phonological environments variability occurred. Binturki (2001) conducted a qualitative study to determine the difficulty of pronouncing /v/ for five Saudi ESL speakers studying in the U.S. by using a word list and a short paragraph to elicit the target sound in isolated words as compared to connected language. The findings showed variability in /v/ in the two tasks, and in contrast to the previous two studies, he provided the percentages of the realization of [v] 42.5% and [f] 57.5%. This finding could indicate that the use of the variant sound [f] could be an emerging feature of the Saudi English phonetic system.

Alzinaidi's and Abdel Latif's (2019) study is another *error* study that investigated variation in /v/ in Saudis' speech. In their study, they included 40 female university students with different English proficiency levels (20 students with an intermediate English language proficiency level, and 20 with lower-intermediate level). They found variation in the pronunciation of /v/ in initial, medial, and final word positions. Both groups of speakers devoiced and voiced /v/ in all three-word positions but with different rates. The overall results showed that /v/ is more devoiced in initial position. Additionally, the intermediate level students had a higher rate of devoicing /v/ in final position compared to the lower-intermediate level students. This finding might mean that /v/ devoicing is not a result of L1 transfer as the researchers claim.

Variation of the labiodental fricative /v/ has been found in the speech of Dutch English speakers (Simon, 2010). In addition, it is a common feature in Southern British English (Verhoeven et al., 2011). Simon (2010) found variation in /v/ to be a feature of Dutch English which she attributed to L1 transfer. Her results showed that Dutch English fricatives, including /v/, are devoiced in prepausal position and preceding word-initial vowels, and voiceless fricatives are voiced when

followed by a word-initial voiced stop. She explained the latter two patterns as transfer of the L1 Dutch voice assimilation rule where coda sounds share some or all the characteristics of the following sound. Verhoeven et al. (2011) argue that word position is a crucial factor that leads to devoicing fricatives which are most often devoiced in final position. Verhoeven et al. found devoicing of /v/ to be a feature of Southern British English, although they did not clarify in which word position. In addition, they investigated variation in /v/ in relation to social factors. They found that women are more likely to devoice /v/ and that younger men to be more likely to produce devoiced /v/ compared to older men.

As there are very few studies that investigated /v/ devoicing in Saudi, and especially the contexts in which /v/ tends to be devoiced, the current study will examine the variant realisation of the sound /v/ in Saudi English. To add to the current knowledge that variation in /v/ might be a feature of Saudi English, /v/ devoicing will be investigated in relation to linguistic and social factors. This study will examine /v/ variation in different linguistic environments, that is, following and preceding sounds, and in word initial, medial, and final positions.

4: Methodology

4.1 Participants

The focus of this dissertation is: first, to document Saudi English features and, second, to examine any correlation between linguistic variables in Saudi English speech and social variables to determine whether the linguistic variables being studied can be viewed as systematic features of Saudi English that have social meanings and variable linguistic functions. The social factors under investigation include social class (i.e., tribalism), age, and gender. Therefore, the participants were Saudi men and women who speak English as a second language and who grew up and have resided for most of their lives in Saudi Arabia.

Table 1 shows the sample of my study. It was important to include participants of different age groups in order to fully explore the changes in the role of English in the Saudi Education system and society. These changes have seen it develop from being just a compulsory subject in schools and a job requirement, to a media language and to a language of communication (see section 1.1). Accordingly, the participants in this study can be divided into three age groups: 18-25, 26-35, and 36-45. In addition, as shown in Table 1, the participants were divided further based on the education stage when they started learning English education and the period of English education they experienced.

Table 1: The sample

Speaker N.	Sex	Age group	Tribal background	Region of origin	Residency at time of recording	English education	Years of English education	Occupation
1	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Primary school	11+ years	Student
2	Female	26-35	Tribal	Southern	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	professional

3	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
4	Female	18-25	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	3-6 years	professional
5	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Primary school	3-6 years	professional
6	Female	36-45	Non-tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
7	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	Saudi	Primary school	11+ years	Student
8	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	Saudi	Intermediate school	11+ years	Student
9	Female	36-45	Non-tribal	Middle	UK	Pre-school	11+ years	Student
10	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	Saudi	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
11	Female	18-25	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	Student
12	Female	36-45	Non-tribal	Eastern	Saudi	Secondary school	11+ years	Student
13	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	3-6 years	Student
14	Female	26-35	Tribal	Northern	Saudi	Intermediate school	11+ years	professional
15	Female	26-35	Tribal	Northern	Saudi	Intermediate school	11+ years	professional
16	Female	36-45	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	professional
17	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
18	Female	36-45	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student

19	Female	26-35	Tribal	Northern	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
20	Female	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	3-6 years	Student
21	Male	36-45	Tribal	Northern	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	professional
22	Male	18-25	Tribal	Middle	Saudi	Primary school	11+ years	Student
23	Male	18-25	Non-tribal	Middle	Saudi	Primary school	11+ years	professional
24	Male	18-25	Non-tribal	Western	Saudi	Intermediate school	3-6 years	Student
25	Male	18-25	Tribal	Southern	Saudi	Pre-school	11+ years	Student
26	Male	26-35	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	Student
27	Male	36-45	Tribal	Western	Saudi	Primary school	11+ years	professional
28	Male	36-45	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	professional
29	Male	18-25	Tribal	Middle	Saudi	Primary school	11+ years	Student
30	Male	26-35	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	Student
31	Male	36-45	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	student
32	Male	36-45	Tribal	Western	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	professional
33	Male	36-45	Tribal	Northern	UK	Secondary school	3-6 years	Student
34	Male	26-35	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	7-10 years	professional

35	Male	18-25	Tribal	Middle	Saudi	Pre-school	7-10 years	Student
36	Male	36-45	Non-tribal	Eastern	Saudi	Intermediate school	7-10 years	professional
37	Male	18-25	Tribal	Middle	Saudi	Pre-school	11+ years	Student
38	Male	36-45	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	3-6 years	professional
39	Male	36-45	Tribal	Middle	UK	Intermediate school	11+ years	Student
40	Male	26-35	Non-tribal	Western	UK	Primary school	11+ years	Student
41	Male	36-45	Tribal	Southern	UK	Secondary school	7-10 years	Student

One of the aims of this study is to examine the possible correlation between language variation and social class following the approach of early sociolinguistic studies (Labov, 1972 and 1966; Trudgill, 1974). For this reason, *social class* was considered in participant selection. As discussed in section 2.2.2.1, *tribalism* constitutes a major social status category in Saudi Arabia, so *tribalism* was included in dividing the participants where 39% of the participants are non-tribal, and the majority 61% are tribal affiliating to different Arab tribes, including Šammar, Otibah, Qahtan, Bani Ġamid, Ajman, Šahran, Bani Tamim, and Mutair. In addition, the participants were divided according to their region of origin in Saudi Arabia to include Saudis from all five areas of Saudi Arabia (the northern region, midland, the southern region, the eastern region, and the western region) representing different tribes along with non-tribal Saudis. These criteria were used in selecting participants in Saudi Arabia and Saudis living in the UK. The factor *residence* was included in the participants' selection and in the analysis to investigate whether more or less exposure to English input could predict language variation in their speech. Another factor that was included was *occupation.* The participants were divided into two broad categories: students

(undergraduates and graduates) and professionals (such as, lecturers, teachers, health carers, and managers).

Sociolinguistic researchers employ different ways to reach participants from the communities they study. For example, Labov (1981) listed two strategies to gain entry to the community under study, either by approaching people in public places or through individuals who can facilitate introducing the researcher to the community. However, now the internet has made it easier for researchers to approach people they wish to include in their studies. I used different methods to approach participants. First, I invited people to take part in my study through social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter). Then, I used the 'friend-of-a-friend' or 'snowball' technique (Milroy and Gordon, 2003), and I asked the participants I met through social media to invite their friends or relatives. Schilling-Estes (2001, p. 179) explains "because the friend of a friend is a readily recognized social role, it easily supersedes that of a 'linguistic researcher' and enables researchers to record more naturalistic speech than if they are viewed chiefly as a researcher". Therefore, instead of being introduced to participants as a PhD student or a researcher who is a stranger, I was introduced as a friend of their friend or relative.

Using the 'friend-of-a-friend' technique can facilitate access into a very conservative society (such as the Saudi society) and can also lessen the outsider status of the researcher (Tagliamonte, 2012). Mustafa (2017) explains the social restrictions he faced as a male researcher when interviewing Saudi women in Saudi. In order to conduct his study, Mustafa had to follow "Saudi traditions and customs [that] dictate that I get in touch with their husbands to introduce myself and establish rapport with them; and to get officially invited". In other situations, Mustafa explains "in keeping with the traditions, I opted to visit the three participants with my wife" (p. 78). Being a female researcher made it easier to meet women, and, as I will explain later, the presence of my husband helped with interviewing Saudi men.

Although the 'friend-of-a-friend' technique is widely used to find participants in sociolinguistic research, this technique has a few drawbacks. As Schilling-Estes (2001) points out, this technique can lead researchers to focus on one social network of friends and their friends, hence, the sample will not be statistically representative of a community. She also argues that considering the researcher as an insider and a friend of a friend, some participants may forget they are being recorded and deviate from the topic. Regarding the first issue, using social media gave me access to different sub-groups of the Saudi society in that I met participants through *Instagram* and *Snapchat* who were from different social circles. The second issue was avoided by taking control over the conversation and bringing them back to the main topic if needed, although the goal of the interview was to let them talk. Despite employing several techniques to diversify the sample, it would have been ideal to have included speakers from older age groups of 45+. However, due to time limits to collect data, it was not possible to meet participants in those age groups. It is hoped that future research will include older Saudis as well as Saudis from different ethnic and racial groups, such as African Saudis. This study included two male and one female African Saudis.

The participants I met through social media introduced me to their social circles in Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Liverpool. My husband also introduced me to two of his friends in Manchester. Similarly, I contacted participants on *Snapchat* who introduced me to their friends in Saudi Arabia, in Ha'il, Riyadh, and Jeddah. In Manchester, I met a Saudi woman through *Instagram* who introduced me to her friend. Then, the friend invited her cousin to take part in my study. They also spread the word that I needed participants which led to meeting three participants. In addition, my husband helped me meet two of his friends. In Newcastle, a friend on *Snapchat* sent a message asking for participants on a *WhatsApp* group for Saudis in Newcastle which led me to interview a Saudi man and seven Saudi women. In Liverpool, I reached out to the manager of the Saudi student club on *Twitter* who invited me to the Saudi school there where I met a Saudi woman and nine Saudi men. In Manchester and Newcastle, the interviews took place in coffee shops of their choice. I chose to meet them in cafes to make the setting feel more

friendly where two friends are having coffee and chatting. However, in Liverpool I met and interviewed the participants in the Saudi school where they worked as Arabic teachers for Saudi children. Before starting the interviews, my husband and I sat with the participants in the tearoom, introduced ourselves, and talked about general topics to lessen the sense of formality. Meeting and chatting with participants before starting interviews is a commonly used technique in sociolinguistic studies to increase the sense of familiarity (e.g., L. Milroy, 1980).

In Ha'il, a colleague helped me find two female participants. In Riyadh, a friend I met on *Snapchat* asked a group of volunteers to participate (one woman and seven men) in my study. In Jeddah, one of the participants that I met in Riyadh asked his cousin to invite his group of friends which included three women and two men. In Saudi Arabia, meeting participants was more complicated, especially men, as until recently it was illegal to sit with a nonrelative man in public. The interviews in Ha'il took place in my colleague's house. However, in Riyadh and Jeddah, I rented a venue that had a shared area where the participants, my husband, and I met and had coffee. The interviews took place in quiet offices in the venues.

Before taking part in the questionnaire or the interview, the participants were informed of their rights. They were informed of their rights to stop the interview and to withdraw at any time. As required for ethical research, procedures to protect the participants' rights and identities were followed.

4.2 The influence of the interviewer

One of the issues I had to consider before conducting the study was the 'observer's paradox': "To obtain the data that is most important for linguistic theory, we have to observe how people speak when they are not being observed" (Labov, 1972, p. 113). Tagliamonte (2006) suggests that when interviewers have common associations like race, ethnicity and religion with the speakers, this could increase the familiarity of the interviewers which could mitigate the observer's paradox.

Cukor-Avila and Bailey (2001) also argue that in informal contexts general familiarity between interviewers and speakers can increase the probability that non-standard features will be elicited. Being an insider and knowing the Saudi society facilitated conducting more relaxed interviews in which I managed to record conversational forms of speech. Therefore, it is important to address my background as a researcher and my level of familiarity with the speakers.

I was born and grew up in the northern region of Saudi Arabia, in Ha'il city. While I attended a private school for my entire education before college, I studied the same curricula available in public schools. The only differences were that, in a private school, I had extra English classes, the teachers were not Saudis and my classmates were Saudis (tribal and non-tribal) and from other Arab nationalities. My parents are both tribal Arabs, so I grew up with a strong affiliation to my tribe, Šammar. My husband, who is from a different tribe, is originally from the same city, Ha'il, but he was born and grew up in Riyadh which is the capital city of Saudi Arabia and more diverse when it comes to other nationalities living there and other Arab tribes. This allowed me to have contacts with different people from different backgrounds and better understand the wider Saudi society. While I have studied in Canada, Australia and here in the UK, according to some of the Saudis I interviewed, I sound Saudi when I speak English, whether referring to my accent or my English in general, which might have helped increase the familiarity with the interviewees. In addition, my work as an English teacher for an intermediate school and for the University of Ha'il allowed me to observe the common features of Saudi English which I aim to explore in this study.

My gender, especially in a conservative society, is another factor which could influence the quality of the interviews. Schilling-Estes (2001) argues that in some communities, women do not have access to activities that are only available for men, which may result in female researchers having a limited access to the community. She also argues that in some communities women may be perceived as less threating, hence, they are more welcome than men in a wider range of interactional settings. The Saudi society has always been based on gender segregation; therefore,

not being able to find male participants and have successful interviews was an issue I had to consider before starting my study. However, being a member of that society, I knew how to manipulate the settings and how to present myself to my advantage. I chose to conduct the interviews in public places like cafés in the UK and in private venues in Saudi Arabia, but where my husband and other people were in close proximity. In addition, out of respect for the Saudi culture, the conservative dress code was taken into consideration to facilitate interviewing men or any conservative women in Saudi Arabia. I wore a black and very loose *Abaya* which is an over garment Saudi and some Muslim women wear to cover up their everyday clothes and a black hijab covering all my hair. In addition, I avoided wearing makeup or perfume.

4.3 Data collection

4.3.1 Conversations

The first method of collecting data used in this study was recorded face-to-face conversations. This technique, which has been used in many sociolinguistic studies (e.g., Sharma, 2005), was based on the traditional concept of sociolinguistic interviews proposed by Labov (1972). The format of the interviews used in this study was semi-structured where certain topics were prepared beforehand but were not used in any certain order. These face-to-face conversations share one of the goals of traditional sociolinguistic interviews: gathering naturalistic extended Saudi English oral data through using questions to distract speakers from their language use. A word list was included in the interviews to investigate variation in the fricative /v/ in informal and formal speech. The second goal of the conversations was eliciting useful data on areas such as awareness of Saudi English and other varieties of English such as Indian English, future expectations and plans concerning learning and using English, globalisation and their views on religion and westernisation in Saudi, and English education policies in Saudi. Thus, the questions of the interviews were divided in four groups: demographical, sociocultural, language, ideological and religious.

Although interviews are the most widely-used method of data collection in variationist studies, they have several shortcomings. Interviews have been criticized for being unnaturalistic which prevent researchers from collecting natural speech. For example, Milroy (1987) points out that turn-taking rights are not equal between interviewer and participants in sociolinguistic interviews, as they are in conversations between friends. As I explained earlier, in my study, this issue is mitigated to some extent by being familiar with the participants' social norms, by being part of their society and by being introduced as a friend of a friend.

Schilling-Estes (2001) and Milroy (1987) identified another disadvantage of interviews which is the use of direct questions, which can resemble police interrogation or tests to some participants. Also, some participants may consider direct questions rude or inappropriate. Schilling-Estes (2001) points out that even if direct questions are not perceived as inappropriate, participants usually answer them with short responses (yes or no) which is typically not what a sociolinguistic researcher wants. In my study, I avoided direct questions, instead, I aimed at keeping the participants talking by asking questions that required explanations rather than short answers. However, in the course of the study I did meet participants who chose not to talk in detail but to answer all the questions succinctly. Another weakness of interviews, as mentioned above, is the observer's paradox. Labov suggests that it is important to minimise the speakers' attention to their speech and the fact that they are being observed, by keeping them engaged in the conversation. This can be achieved through encouraging participants to talk about topics of interest to them or their communities.

The interviews were recorded using a *Zoom H2N Handy Recorder*. I placed the recorder on a table on the participant's side before they arrived. Before we started the interviews, we had chats about our student lives, missing Arabian food, the weather, and other shared interests if the participant was also a student in the UK. In Saudi, we talked about English education, their educational and social backgrounds, and in some cases about travelling to English-speaking

countries. Although I had the interview questions prepared, as Tagliamonte suggests, speakers were allowed to lead the discussion, hence, the questions were not always asked in any order as some speakers chose to talk about certain topics and they were allowed to lead the conversation without interruption as the main goal was to collect natural speech.

4.3.2 Questionnaires

The data collected from the interviews was supplemented with a questionnaire. The questionnaire was written in English then it was translated into Arabic by me to be sure that all participants understand the questions. Then, another Arabic-and-English-speaking linguist checked the wording of the questions in English and the accuracy of the Arabic translation. Also, two Saudis answered the questionnaire to test its clarity. The participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires online using Google Forms prior to the interview to give them a general idea about the study. A Link to the online questionnaire was sent to each participant prior to the interviews via email or text. I chose to use an online questionnaire rather than paper copies for three reasons: it is more convenient for the participants to fill them in at any time, it is easier for me to collect, keep track of and save the questionnaires, and Google Forms immediately creates a spreadsheet with the results.

The basic design of the questionnaire was based on Drummond's (2010) questionnaire. The specific items that were tested in the questionnaire were based on issues raised in previous Saudi studies as discussed in chapter 2. The questionnaire consists of three parts:

The first part was designed to elicit data on the social variables of particular interest to the present study and general background information which are discussed in section 2.2.2:

- Age,
- Gender,

- Schooling: public or private school (how many years they received English education)
- Current status: student (degree and major), employed (where and for how many years) or unemployed.
- Region of origin: Northern, southern, midland, eastern or western.
- Tribalism: Tribal (which tribe?) or non-tribal.

The second part consists of five questions pertaining to English learning and usage:

1. First school level of English education (pre-school until high school) reflecting the different stages at which English was introduced to Saudi public Education as discussed in section 1.1.
2. Years of English learning (3-6, 7-10 or 11+ years).
3. Self-assessed English proficiency (beginner, intermediate, upper intermediate or advanced).
4. Preferred English variety (American, Australian, Canadian, Indian, or New Zealand).
5. Domains of language use, to specify the domains where they use English or Arabic (at home, school or university, work, with friends, and with non-Saudis) and to give a self-reported percentage of their language use (English, Arabic or both) in these domains or situations, for example:

How often do you use English at home?

a) 100% Arabic, 0% English
b) 75% Arabic, 25% English
c) 50% Arabic, 50% English
d) 25% Arabic, 75% English
e) 0% Arabic, 100% English

Self-assessment questionnaires that addressed language dominance, language preference, and behavioural tasks, have been used to predict different aspects of linguistic ability (Marian et al., 2007). For example, Marian et al. found that learning L2 from family and speaking L2 with friends predicted self-assessed L2 proficiency. Similarly, Flege et al., (1999) discovered that factors like more media input in L2, having strong integrative motivation, and instrumental motivation were predictors of L2 proficiency. Jia et al., (2002) used a self-report questionnaire to test variables,

like L2 use at home, workplace, and motivation. They found that self-rated L2 proficiency correlated with L2 performance. Therefore, self-assessment questions were added to the questionnaire for two reasons: to have an overview of the participants' linguistic behaviour in different domains (home, school, and workplace), and different situations (with friends, and with non-Arabs), and to test whether their self-reported linguistic behaviour predicts language variation.

The final part consisted of 18 questions and was based on Gardener's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (1985). The AMTB was adapted to a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1967), with 1 'strongly disagree' and 5 'strongly agree'. The use of a Likert scale allows us to quantify participants' responses with one end of the continuum assigned the value 1 and the other end 5. A five-point scale instead of six or seven-point scales was used for two reasons: having more than two options, positive (agree or strongly agree) and negative (disagree or strongly disagree) eliminates any confusion that could result from having more options. Also, as my goal is to determine whether they have either positive or negative dispositions regarding the items in question, it is easier to calculate the results by combining the positive options (agree or strongly agree) together and the negative options (disagree or strongly disagree) together. A neutral mid-point was added, as Garrett et al (2003) argued, to ensure that participants are not forced to agree or disagree when they are uncertain how they feel or how to answer any question or when they have neutral attitude regarding certain statements.

This section was designed to elicit data on issues discussed in section 2.3: attitude (perception, and linguistic investment), motivation (for leisure and for career advancement), westernisation and accent awareness. The statements that test the participants' attitude and motivation were based on issues discussed in previous attitudinal and motivational studies carried out in Saudi to add to or challenge their findings (such as, Al-Abed Al-Hag & Samdi, 1996; Alsamani, 2014; Hagler, 2014). For example, statements regarding westernisation were based on Al-Abed Al-Hag's and

Samdi's (1996, p 310) study:

- Learning English is an indication of Westernization.
- Learning English is a threat to Arabic.

Attitude, which is as an underlying belief, could be best understood through several statements rather than one straightforward or loaded statement. According to Fishbein (1967) an attitudinal questionnaire with many statements allows to assessment of participants' judgments towards each statement which collectively reflect the underlying attitude. Dörnyei (2002) also explains that using single items to measure respondents' opinions about an issue could result in different responses depending on how narrowly or broadly respondents interpret the item in question. He proposes that respondents' attitude be measured using a multi-item scale in which several differently worded items are used to test each attitudinal aspect. Similarly, the questionnaire used in this study had three statements related to each attitudinal or motivational aspect being measured (Appendix 1), for example,

- Attitude: Perceptions of English, for example:

- I sound sophisticated when I speak English.
- Speaking English makes me sound Educated.
- Speaking English makes me socially prestigious.

- Motivation: English for career advancement, for example:

- Speaking English is important to me because many employers require English proficiency.
- I do not need to speak English in order to get a job.
- Speaking English will improve my career prospects.

4.4 Data analysis

This study employs a variationist sociolinguistic quantitative methodology for data analysis, with additional qualitative analysis to examine five variants of Saudi English. It incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data analysis to not only uncover features of Saudi English and understand their behaviour in relation to social and linguistic constraints, but also to explain the current language attitudes and ideologies that resulted in innovative use of the language in Saudi Arabia.

4.4.1 Quantitative analysis

The first step in the analysis was transcription, which was done using *Elan*, a piece of software that allows the transcription to be time-aligned to the sound recordings. The longest interview was almost two hours while the shortest was 15 minutes depending on how willing the participants were to speak. In the case of long interviews, one or two hours, only 10 minutes from the beginning, 10 minutes from the middle and the final 10 minutes were transcribed; therefore, all transcribed interviews were between 15 to 30 minutes. The second step in the analysis was "the principle of accountability" (Tagliamonte, 2012, p. 9) which is a foundational step in variationist sociolinguistics. According to the principle of accountability all variants of each variable must be counted.

One common issue that face sociolinguists is "that the data are almost always more sparse than is desirable and which is typically unevenly distributed across individuals, social groups and linguistic contexts" (Tagliamonte & Baayen, p. 7) which is particularly relevant when studying morpho-syntactic features. The data of this study included limited tokens for each feature which could be attributed to two reasons: first, as this is a study of variation in English as a second language, that speakers might tend to use any linguistic or grammatical structures that are easier for them to express their opinions. As a result, they are perhaps less likely to follow standard rules in similar ways that L1 speakers would, thus, targeted features might not be used as

frequently as hoped. Second, the aim of the interviews was to get the speakers talking without focusing on the language they were using. As a result, it was particularly difficult to focus on eliciting certain features. Perhaps using a data gathering approach that focuses on eliciting specific features would result in better data. However, even such approach would have its limitation that speakers' attention could be drawn to their language use.

Another issue in this study was that while some speakers were variable in their speech, others were non-variable. Typically, in a variationist approach it is recommended that only variable speakers are included in the analysis. However, Tagliamonte and Baayen (2012, p. 28) suggest that non-variable speakers "are not just random noise". They add that non-variable speakers could be included in the analysis and that variability could be, at least in part, predicted by other factors. In this study, not all non-variable speakers showed no variation in all features. That is, while they did not vary in the use of some features, they showed variation in other features. Additionally, while some used ICE /standard variants categorically, in other features they used non-ICE / non-standard variants categorically. These two patterns of *variability* could also be seen as variation too, especially when bearing in mind that this is a study of variation in English as a second language in that L2 speakers behave differently from L1 speakers. Therefore, based on these points, I decided to conduct two analyses, one that includes only variable speakers (A) and another one that includes all speakers (B). Additionally, the factor *variability* (whether speakers are variable or non-variable) was included in analysis B as it could predict variation and could be explained by other factors. Table 2 shows the total number of each variable in the speech of variable speakers (A) and in that of all speakers (B).

Table 2: Total number of variables

Variables	Variants	Number of tokens

1. Verb *be*	• [*be* realisation]	368 (A)
	• [zero *be*]	449 (B)
2. Indefinite articles	• [*a/an* realisation]	380 (A)
	• [zero *a/an*]	442 (B)
3. Definite article	• [zero ICE *the*] (contexts which do not require *the* in standard English)	466 (A)
	• [Saudi *the*] (*the* added in contexts where it is not required in standard English)	547 (B)
4. Third person singular marker -*s*	• [-*s* realisation]	192 (A)
	• [zero -*s*]	311 (B)
5. /v/ voicing or devoicing	• [v]	254 (A)
	• [f]	754 (B)

The third step in the analysis was circumscribing the variable context to determine the environments in which two or more variants are interchangeable by identifying all the utterances in which a feature varies (Tagliamonte, 2012). As discussed in section 3.2, the five variables were chosen based on previous studies. In addition, based on the data, the possible linguistic constraints of each variables were determined as below:

Verb be:

Type of *be*	Grammatical position	Type of complement	Type of subject	preceding phonological environment
Is	Auxiliary + Pres. + Sing.	Noun phrase	Noun phrase	(a)
Are	Auxiliary + Pres.+ Plural	Adjective	Personal pronouns	Vowels Nasal consonants
	Auxiliary + Past + Sing.	Locative	Dummy *it*	Stop consonants

	Auxiliary + Past + Plural	V-ing	Other pronouns	Sibilant consonants Other consonants
	Copula + Pres. + Sing.			
	Copula + Pres. + Plural			(b)
	Copula + Pres. + Sing.			Vowels Voiced
	Copula + Pres. + Plural			Voiceless Sibilants

Indefinite article:

Type of following NPs	Type of indefinite article
Before non-adjacent noun	*a*
Before an adjacent noun	*an*
Before a quantifier	

Definite article:

Following NP context:
- Generic reference
- Plural noun with Generic reference
- Names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions, and festive days or seasons,
- Names of languages

Third person singular marker -*s*:

Type of subject	Verb aspect	-*s* pronunciation
Heavy NP	Dynamic verbs	/iz/
Pronoun	Stative verbs	/z/
NP		/s/

/v/:

Position:	Style:

Initial	*voice*	Informal (interviews)
Medial	*go**v**ernment*	Formal (wordlist)
Final	*glo**v**e*	

After identifying the variants and their linguistic environments, all tokens of each variable were transferred to excel sheets and aligned with the social factors for each speaker, as well as the self-reported language use, and the attitudinal test results. The next step was to conduct a multiple regression analysis using *Rbrul* which is a program developed by Johnson (2009) to replicate the functionalities of *GoldVarb*. *Rbrul* is advantageous over *GoldVarb* in that it uses mixed-effects modelling, which allows the inclusion of random effects (e.g., speakers) and fixed effects (e.g., social and linguistic factors). Johnson argues that social factors (e.g., age, sex, and social class) are properties of speakers; therefore, the effect of these factors is dependent on speakers not linguistic variables.

Before starting the multiple regression analysis, I counted the distribution of each variant of each variable across social factors through cross-tabulation. Besides counting the frequency, cross-tabulation allowed me to identify unbalanced distribution in my data which will be explained in the next chapter. It also allowed me to observe interactions between factor groups, which was not included in the regression analysis results, and which might help interpreting variation.

To run multiple regression analysis, the data for each variable was organized in excel sheets in the following order: Speaker, age, gender, region, tribe, years of English education, occupation, residency, self-reported language use results, attitudinal test results, variants, grammatical positions, the factor *variability* (in analysis B only), and contexts. Then, I conducted regression analysis by running step-up/step-down analysis. Before the analysis started, I selected the factor 'speaker' as random and [zero *be*], [zero *a/an*], [Saudi *the*], [zero *-s*], and [f] as application values for each variable.

4.4.2 Qualitative analysis

The quantitative analysis of the interviews that aimed mainly at identifying features of Saudi English was complemented by qualitative analysis of the content of the interviews and the questionnaires. Therefore, the qualitative analysis had two goals: first, to explore and explain Saudis' attitudes toward English, linguistic ideologies and their opinions concerning their identities as English speakers; second, to compare the results found in the content of the interviews with those found in the questionnaires.

The first step was using thematic analysis to code the content of the interviews, which resulted in four broad themes, *attitude*, *motivation*, *perception*, *investment*, *identity*, and *ideologies*. These themes were data-driven; however, they were further broken down into sub-themes based on topics discussed in previous studies, see chapter two, and based on the goals of my study. The final analysis resulted in 14 themes, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Interview themes

Attitude	Attitude towards standard English
	Attitude towards varieties of English
	Attitude towards their own English
Motivation	English for career advancement
	English for leisure
Investment	Language at home
	Kids' education
	Imagined future language
Ideology	Language and religion
	Westernisation
	Standard English ideology
Perception and identity	Identity
	Perception of English varieties
	Language in Saudi

This analysis was crucial in that it was used as an overview of Saudi society by shedding light on how Saudis perceive English, what their aspiration are when it comes to English, how they feel about being bilingual, and how they see their children's and their future in a globalised world where English is the international language.

The second step was analysing the results of the self-reported English use questions and the attitudinal questions. As I mentioned earlier, I used Google Forms to create the questionnaire and it was filled out by the participants online. Google Forms created an excel sheet with the results of each speaker which made it easier to trace back the results to each participant.

As I was interested in investigating Saudis' language use and preference rather than the actual percentage of their language use, the results of the self-report was combined into three categories (100% Arabic, 0% English, and 75% Arabic, 25% English = *Arabic*; 50% Arabic, 50% English = *Arabic and English*; and 25% Arabic, 75% English, and 0% Arabic, 100% English = *English*), then the number of each category was counted. Similarly, the aim of the attitudinal test was to test Saudis' positive or negative dispositions towards English; therefore, the five-point results were combined into three points (agree, neutral, disagree). Then, the percentages of each statement were counted.

The Self-report assessment was used to explain the results found in the attitudinal test. In addition, both the results from the self-report and the attitudinal test were used to support or explain trends that were revealed in the interview codes, to investigate whether their professed opinions and preferences regarding English in the interview align with their covert opinions in the tests. Further, the qualitative results, self-report, attitudinal test, and interview codes, were used to explain the predictors which constrain variation as revealed in the results of the

regression analysis. We will now turn to the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis (chapter 5 and 6).

5: Quantitative results and discussion

In this chapter, I report and discuss the quantitative analysis results which included results from distributional analysis and a multiple regression analysis of five linguistic features of Saudi English, [zero *be*], [zero *a/an*], [Saudi *the*], [zero -*s*] and [f]. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the findings and arguments which lead to answering the first research question: What specific features emerge in the English of Saudi speakers, and do these features vary in linguistic environments to an extent that they contribute to the creation of a separate variety of English in a similar way to features of African American English and Sri Lankan English?

A distribution analysis is "the first step in understanding variation" (Tagliamonte, 2012, p. 11), hence, I started my analysis of the features of Saudi English by counting the frequency of each feature in linguistic positions pertaining to each feature and across social factors (gender, age, years of English education, residency, tribe, occupation). Another reasoning to carry out distributional analysis is that there have not been any Saudi studies, even EFL *error* studies, that provided a count for English features or learners' *mistakes* across social factors.

Then, I turn to the results of multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression analysis was conducted using *Rbrul* which allows the analysis of the relationship between dependent variables (linguistic features) and multiple independent variables (both social and linguistic). *Rbrul* also allows us to include fixed effects, which can be replicable in future studies such as age, gender, tribe, or linguistic constraints, and random effects which cannot be replicable, such as speakers (Johnson, 2008).

The analysis included four sets of predictors, as shown in Table 4 below: social factors, linguistic factors, language use test result, and attitudinal test results which included responses to three statements (either agree, neutral, or disagree) for six items (perception, investment, English for jobs, English for leisure, westernization, and accent), For further details, see section 4.3.2.

Table 4: The independent factors included in the regression analysis

1) Social factors	2) Linguistic factors
a. Speaker (random) b. Age (18-25, 26-35, and 36-45) c. Gender (women, and men) d. Region (northern, middle, southern, eastern, and western) e. Tribe (non-tribal, and tribal) f. Years of English education (3-6 years, 7-10 years, and 11 years +) g. Occupation (professionals or students) h. Residency (Saudi Arabia or the UK)	a. Verb *be* (Type of *be*, grammatical position, type of complement, type of subject, and preceding phonological environment) b. *a/an* (type of following NPs, and type of indefinite article) c. *the* (following NP context) d. *-s* (type of subject, verb aspect, and *-s* pronunciation) e. /v/ (position, and style) f. Variability (in analysis B that included all speakers.
3) Language use test result factors:	4) Attitudinal test result factors:
a. Language at home (Arabic, English, or Arabic & English) b. Language in school or university (Arabic, English, or Arabic & English) c. Language at work (Arabic, English, or Arabic & English) d. Language with friends (Arabic, English, or Arabic & English) e. Language with non-Arabs (Arabic, English, or Arabic & English)	a. Perception questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree) b. Investment questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree) c. English for jobs questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree) d. English for leisure questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree) e. Westernisation questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree) f. Accent questions 1, 2, and 3 (agree, neutral, and disagree)

Before running the analysis, I re-organised some of the data so as to avoid excessively low token

counts which might over-influence the results. The verb *be* grammatical positions were initially

divided into eight groups. However, the positions Auxiliary + Past + Singular, Auxiliary + Past + Plural, and Copula + Past + Plural had very few tokens compared to the other positions; therefore, they were excluded from the analysis, Table 5.

Table 5: Verb *be* grammatical positions before exclusion

Auxiliary + Present + Singular	60
Auxiliary + Present + Plural	25
Auxiliary + Past + Singular	7
Auxiliary + Past + Plural	5
Copula + Present + Singular	272
Copula + Present + Plural	45
Copula + Past + Singular	47
Copula + Past + Plural	11

Similarly, before I began the analysis, the definite article had five grammatical positions. The position 'names of festive days and seasons' had only two tokens. Therefore, it was added to 'Names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions or names of festive days and seasons', 121 tokens. The language use test initially had five options:

- 0% English, 100% Arabic
- 25% English, 75% Arabic
- 50% English, 50% Arabic
- 75% English, 25% Arabic
- 100% English, 0% Arabic

As explained in section 4.4.2, before I started the analysis, the results of the language use test were combined into three options (Arabic, Arabic and English, and English), as I was interested to know if their language choice in those domains and situations would affect their linguistic behaviour regarding the variables under study. Similarly, the attitudinal test was a five-point

Likert scale (1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree). However, the five points were combined into three points (disagree, neutral, and agree) as the reason of having five points was an attempt to put them at ease when answering sensitive questions with disagree or agree rather than strongly disagree or strongly agree. In addition, the goal from using a five-point scale was to get a broad indication of Saudis' positive or negative attitude towards each question. As mentioned in section 4.4.1, two regression analyses were conducted: one that includes only variable speakers (A) and another one that includes all speakers (B).

As my study is the first variationist sociolinguistic study conducted in Saudi Arabia, there have not been any studies on which to build my analysis model. The reasoning behind selecting the predictors listed above was explained in 2.2, 2.3 and 3.2. Therefore, all of the predictors were entered in the first regression analysis which resulted in mismatched significant predictors in the step-up model and the step-down model. According to Field et al. (2012), when there is not any previous theoretical literature based on which I can decide which predictors to include or exclude, the first run should help decide which variables are important and better explain the variation under study. Field et al. also pointed out that "R may appear to be very clever … it can do lots of complex calculations in a matter of seconds, but what it can't do is control the quality of the model that is generated – to do this requires a human brain" (p. 276). The same argument can be said about any variable rule program, including *Rbrul*.

After the first run, to decide which model step-up or step-down better fits my data, I selected the one with the strongest log. likelihood. For example, in the case of verb *be*, the first run of the first regression analysis (A) resulted in two mismatched outcomes. The log. likelihood of the step-up model was -224.325 and the log. likelihood of the step-down model was -202.784, so I chose the step-down model. The predictors in the step- down model were retained to the second analysis excluding all other predictors, which resulted in matched and significant predictors in both models.

5.1 Verb be – Results

5.1.1 Distributional results

Table 6: Total count for [*be* realisation] and [zero *be*] for all speakers

Speakers	[*be* realisation]	[zero *be*]	Total
1	8 (80.00%)	2 (20.00%)	10
2	9 (90.00%)	1 (10.00%)	10
3	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
4	10 (62.50%)	6 (37.50%)	16
5	5 (45.45%)	6 (54.55%)	11
6	17 (58.62%)	12 (41.38%)	29
7	20 (66.67%)	10 (33.33%)	30
8	14 (53.85%)	12 (46.15%)	26
9	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
10	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
11	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
12	4 (44.44%)	5 (55.56%)	9
13	4 (57.14%)	3 (42.86%)	7
14	3 (75.00%)	1 (25.00%)	4
15	4 (66.67%)	2 (33.33%)	6

16	11 (91.67%)	1 (8.33%)	12
17	5 (83.33%)	1 (16.67%)	6
18	5 (62.50%)	3 (37.50%)	8
19	14 (46.67%)	16 (53.33%)	30
20	16 (59.26%)	11 (40.74%)	27
21	10 (71.43%)	4 (28.57%)	14
22	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
23	9 (81.82%)	2 (18.18%)	11
24	12 (80.00%)	3 (20.00%)	15
25	0 (0.00%)	7 (100.00%)	7
26	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
27	0 (0.00%)	7 (100.00%)	7
28	14 (82.35%)	3 (17.65%)	17
29	6 (85.71%)	1 (14.29%)	7
30	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6
31	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
32	6 (50.00%)	6 (50.00%)	12
33	8 (72.73%)	3 (27.27%)	11
34	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
35	8 (80.00%)	2 (20.00%)	10

36	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
37	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6
38	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
39	10 (66.67%)	5 (33.33%)	15
40	13 (86.67%)	2 (13.33%)	15
41	8 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	8
Total	284 (63.25%)	165 (36.75%)	449

Table 6 shows the distributional results of verb *be* across all 41 speakers which include two variants [*be* realisation] (284 tokens) and [zero *be*] (165 tokens). The number of *be* tokens among all speakers is relatively low because, as mentioned earlier, grammatical features are more difficult to elicit through interview when the main aim to allow speakers to produce natural speech uninterrupted. The analysis included 449 tokens verb *be*. The results reveal that Saudis used [*be* realisation] 63.25% and [zero *be*] 36.75%. Figure 3 shows the distribution of [*be* realisation] and [zero *be*] among all 41 speakers.

Figure 3: Proportion of [zero *be*] and [*be* realisation] for each speaker
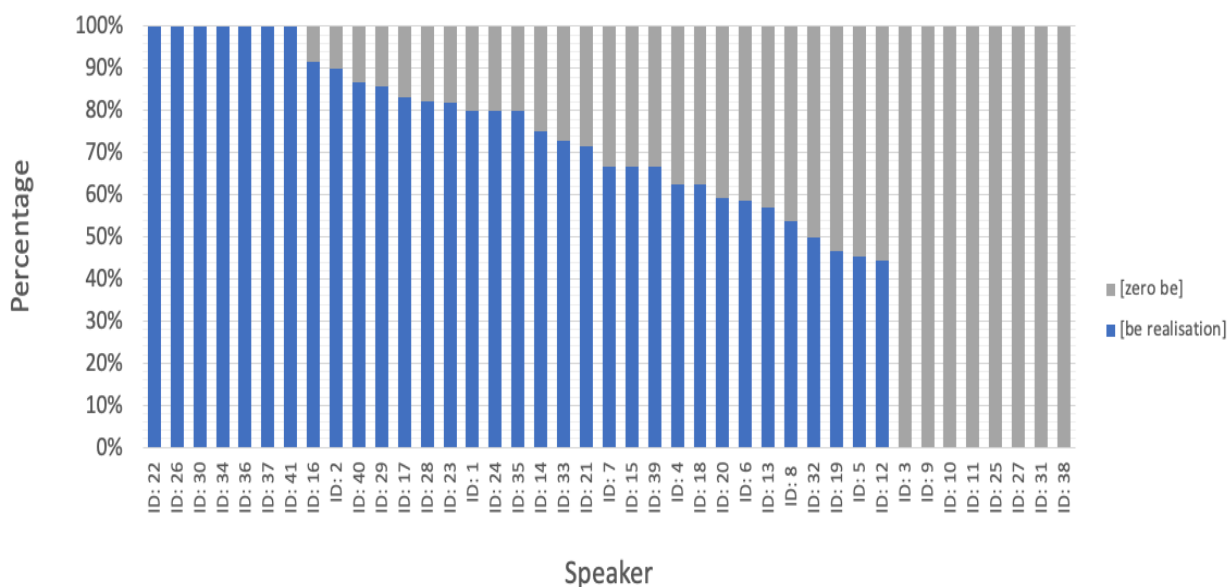
The analysis of verb *be* in this study included five linguistic environments:

1. Auxiliary vs. copula:

    a. Auxiliary + Present + Plural (e.g. they Ø studying at private school)
    b. Auxiliary + Present + Singular (e.g. my husband Ø studying bachelor's in finance and accounting)
    c. Copula + Past + Singular (e.g. she is like she Ø born here)
    d. Copula + Present + Plural (e.g., we Ø already busy)
    e. Copula + Present + Singular (e.g., it Ø kinda racist)

2. *Is* vs. *are*:

    a. Is (e.g, their accent Ø different)
    b. Are (e.g, all subjects Ø in English)

3. Type of complement:

    a. V-ing (e.g., you will find some Ø struggling)
    b. NP (e.g., yes, and which Ø Wednesday normally)
    c. Locatives (e.g., two of my children Ø here)

    d. Adjectives (e.g., because their Arabic Ø still good)

4. Type of subject:

    a. NP (e.g., but the main point Ø in the school)
    b. Personal pronouns (e.g., yeah, he Ø speaking with her in English)
    c. Dummy *it* (e.g., but sometimes it Ø difficult to understand)
    d. Other pronouns (e.g., that Ø rich in agriculture)

5. Preceding phonological environment:

    a. Vowels (e.g., we Ø supposed to speak so many languages)
    b. Nasal consonants (e.g., the second one Ø still struggling with some writing)
    c. Sibilant consonants (e.g., exams Ø in English)
    d. Stop consonants (e.g., okay it Ø logically logic you have to translate)
    e. Other consonants (e.g., I don't think this channel Ø for educational purpose)

6. Preceding phonological environment based on Labov's categories, see section 3.2.1:

    a. Vowels (e.g., if you Ø just sitting in the computer and reading and writing)
    b. Voiced consonants (e.g., my daughter Ø nearly nine years)
    c. Voiceless consonants (e.g., if you yourself Ø not respecting your language)
    d. Sibilant consonants (e.g., lectures Ø in English)

The distributional results of verb *be* in relation to the linguistic factors mentioned above and social factors are presented in Tables 7 and 8, below. The factors included in the analysis are, linguistic constraints, gender, years of English education, residency, tribalism, and occupation.

Table 7: Frequency of verb *be* in relation to the linguistic environments

	[*Be* realisation] N	[*Be* realisation] %	[Zero *be*] N	[Zero *be*] %	Total N
Auxiliary vs. Copula					

Auxiliary + Present + Plural	13	52.00%	12	48.00%	25
Auxiliary + Present + Singular	27	45.00%	33	55.00%	60
Copula + Past + Singular	35	74.47%	12	25.53%	47
Copula + Present + Plural	19	42.22%	26	57.78%	45
Copula + Present + Singular	190	69.85%	82	30.15%	272
is vs *are*					
is	217	65.36%	115	34.64%	332
are	32	45.71%	38	54.29%	70
Type of complement					
V-ing	23	36.51%	40	63.49%	63
Noun phrases	52	75.36%	17	24.64%	69
Locatives	12	52.17%	11	47.83%	23
Adjectives	108	63.91%	61	36.09%	169
Type of subject					
Noun phrases	52	44.44%	65	55.56%	117
Personal pronouns	135	64.59%	74	35.41%	209
Dummy *it*	67	76.14%	21	23.86%	88
Other pronouns	36	70.59%	15	29.41%	51
Preceding phonological environments (A)					
Vowels	85	55.56%	68	44.44%	153
Nasal consonants	24	47.06%	27	52.94%	51
Sibilant consonants	27	64.29%	15	35.71%	42
Stop consonants	84	71.19%	34	28.81%	118
Other consonants	19	47.50%	21	52.50%	40
Preceding phonological environments (B)					
Vowels	84	56.00%	66	44.00%	150
Voiced consonants	46	58.23%	33	41.77%	79
Voiceless consonants	80	68.38%	37	31.62%	117
Sibilant consonants	28	57.14%	21	42.86%	49

As shown in Table 7, the results of this study reveal a difference between auxiliary *be*, that is be + V-ing (e.g., Khalid [is] reading) and copula *be,* be + adjective/locatives/noun (e.g., Khalid [is]

smart). The results also show that both variants [zero *be*] and [*be* realisation] are used almost equally in the auxiliary positions: Auxiliary + Present + Plural, 52.00% [*be* realisation], and 48.00% [zero *be*]; and Auxiliary + Present + Singular, 45.00% [*be* realisation], and 55.00% [zero *be*]. Regarding the copula forms, Saudis seem to favour [zero *be*] in Copula + Present + Plural (57.78%) more than in Copula + Past + Singular, and Copula + Present + Singular (25.53% and 30.15%, respectively). The second linguistic environment that was included in the distributional analysis of verb *be* was the use of *is* compared to the use of *are*. The results show that there are more instances of [zero *are*] 54.29% compared to [zero *is*] 34.64%. When it comes to the third linguistic environment, *type of complement*, the findings show that following verbs in progressive forms favour [zero *be*] the most 63.49%, followed by locatives 47.83%, then adjectives 36.09%. The findings, also, show that NPs favour [zero *be*] the least 24.64%. On the other hand, subject NPs favoured [zero *be*] the most 55.56%.

Regarding the preceding phonological environments, results of the first categories show that a preceding nasal consonant is associated with the highest number of [zero be] (52.94%), followed by other consonants (52.50%), (such as /r/, /l/ and non-sibilant fricatives) and vowels (44.44%). The second set of data was based on Labov's (1969) phonological categories in his AAVE study (see section 3.2.1). The results of the second categories show that a preceding vowel is associated with the highest number of [zero *be*] (44.00%), followed by sibilant consonants (42.86%) and voiced consonants (41.77%).

Table 8: Frequency of verb *be* in relation to social factors

	[*Be* realisation] N	[*Be* realisation] %	[Zero *be*] N	[Zero *be*] %	Total N
Gender					
Female	149	57.53%	110	42.47%	259
Male	135	71.05%	55	28.95%	190

Age					
18-25	56	67.47%	27	32.53%	83
26-35	131	63.59%	75	36.41%	206
36-45	97	60.63%	63	39.38%	160
Years of English education					
3-6 years	55	60.44%	36	39.56%	91
7-10 years	91	65.94%	47	34.06%	138
11 years +	138	62.73%	82	37.27%	220
Residency					
Saudi Arabia	95	62.91%	56	37.09%	151
UK	189	63.42%	109	36.58%	298
Tribalism					
Non-tribal	131	61.79%	81	38.21%	212
Tribal	153	64.56%	84	35.44%	237
Occupation					
Professionals	90	67.67%	43	32.33%	133
Students	194	61.39%	122	38.61%	316

In addition to the linguistic environments, the distribution of verb *be* was explored in relation to the social factors of gender, age, tribe, years of English education, occupation, and residency, which are used in the regression analysis among other factors concerning language attitudes and ideologies. However, only social factors were used in the distributional analysis to show a general idea of the occurrence of the grammatical features across different social categories. Table 8 shows that Saudi women tend to use [zero *be*] more than Saudi men (42.47% and 28.95%, respectively). However, both women and men used [*be* realisation] (57.53% and 71.05%, respectively) more than [zero *be*].

Table 8 has the results of the distribution analysis of verb *be* across three age groups (18-25, 26-35, and 36-45). The three age groups show preference to use *be* (67.47%, 63.59%, and 60.63%) more than [zero *be*] (32.53%, 36.41%, and 39.38%). However, the older groups 26-35 and 36-45 used [zero *be*] (36.41% and 39.38%, respectively) more than the youngest group 18-25 (32.53%).

Years of English education was included in the distribution analysis of verb *be*. The findings revealed that the group that had 3-6 years of English education used [zero *be*] more than the groups that received more years of English education, 7-10 years and 11 years or more, (39.56%, 34.06%, and 37.27%, respectively). However, all three groups favoured using [*be* realisation] over the zero form. In addition, the results show that verb *be* frequency differed according to the participants *residency*, in Saudi Arabia or the UK. Both groups favoured [*be* realisation] almost equally (62.91% and 63.42%, respectively).

As discussed in section 2.2.2.1, *tribe* constitutes social class in Saudi Arabia, therefore, the distribution of verb *be* across tribal and non-tribal Saudis was counted. As shown in Table 8, non-tribal and tribal Saudis prefer [*be* realisation] (61.79% and 64.56%, respectively) over [zero *be*] (38.21% and 35.44%). However, non-tribal Saudis seem to use [zero *be*] more than tribal Saudis.

The last social factor included in the distributional analysis was *occupation*. I divided the participants into two more broad groups (professionals which included those who have jobs, and students which included undergraduates and graduates). Table 8 shows the distribution of [*be* realisation] and [zero *be*] in these two groups. Students tend to use [zero *be*] more than professionals. My results show that students used [zero *be*] 38.61% of the time, while professionals used it 32.33%. However, similar to the previous social factors [*be* realisation] was used more than [zero *be*]. In this case, students and professionals favoured [*be* realisation] over [zero *be*], 61.39%, and 67.67%.

5.1.2 Multiple logistic regression

Table 9 shows the results of the regression analysis of verb be, including variable speakers only (A) and variable and non- variable speakers (B). The application value was [zero *be*], as it is the new variant of verb *be* in Saudi English. In the first run of analysis (A) that included only variable speakers, the independent variables for this analysis were the social factors, linguistic factor (grammatical position), language use test, and attitudinal test, see Table 4. It also included 368

tokens of *be*. As I explained earlier, the first run of the first regression analysis (A) resulted in two mismatched outcomes. The log. likelihood of the step-up model was -224.325 and the log. likelihood of the step-down model was -202.784, so I chose the step-down model.

The second run only included the significant predictors in the strongest model, the step-down model. The analysis uncovered two factor groups as significant in [zero *be*] presented in Table 9 which shows that the linguistic factor *linguistic constraint* outranks the social factor *gender*, although both are significant at the *P.* < .01 level. Similarly, the first run of analysis, that included all speakers (B), included social factors, linguistic factor (grammatical position), and the results of the language use test, and the attitudinal test. It also included 449 tokens of *be*. However, neither the first nor the second run resulted in matched significant results. Therefore, only the social factors (age, gender, region, tribe, years of English education, variety of English, occupation, and residency) were included in third run which resulted in similar findings to that of the analysis of only variable speakers. As shown in the right side of Table 9, the factors *linguistic constraint* and *gender* proved to significant predictors of *be* variation.

Table 9: Significant factors influencing [zero be], *Auxiliary* vs. *copula*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.394			0.54		
Total N.	368			449		
Log. likelihood	-206.761			-254.354		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Linguistic constraint	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .01		
Auxiliary + Present + Plural	1.017	57	21	0.916	48	25
Copula + Present + Plural	0.583	54	39	0.555	58	45
Auxiliary + Present + Singular	0.481	55	49	0.549	55	60

Copula + Present + Singular	-0.841	25	219	-0.811	30	272
Copula +Past + Singular	-1.240	23	40	-1.208	25	47
Gender	P. < .01			P. < .01		
Women	0.649	38	241	0.821	42	259
Men	0.351	24	127	-0.821	29	190
Variability				P. < .01		
Non-variable	Not included			0.91	52	81
Variable				-0.91	33	368
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.					

Table 9 shows the significant factor groups in detail. Within the grammatical position factor, plural auxiliary in the present proved to be the most significant variable which favours [zero *be*] (Log odds 1.017, in A; and 0.916, in B). In both analyses, the first three significant positions were in present forms (Auxiliary + Present + Plural, Copula + Present + Plural, and Auxiliary + Present + Singular). In addition, this finding shows that the first and the second forms of *be* in the present that vary are auxiliary and copula *are*. Additionally, it appears that singular *be* as a copula in the present (Log odds -0.841, in A; and -0.811, in B) and in the past favour [*be* realisation] (Log odds -1.240, in A; and -1.208, in B). The results also reveal that the social factor *gender* constrains the variant [zero *be*], with women more likely to use it than men (Log odds 0.649, in A; and 0.821, in B). Additionally, the factor *Variability,* that is whether variable or non-variable speakers favour [zero *be*], was included in the second analysis (B). The results show that non-variable speakers are more likely to use [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.91).

Table 10: Significant factors influencing [zero *be*], *is* or *are*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.454			0.447		
Total N.	328			402		
Log. likelihood	-177.939			-244.393		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Gender	*P. < .01*			Not significant		
Women	0.587	36	241			
Men	-0.587	33	87			
Linguistic constraint	*P. < .01*			*P. < .01*		
are	0.483	55	60	0.552	54	70
is	-0.483	30	268	-0.552	35	332
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.		

The second regression analysis of [zero *be*] included social factors, and the linguistic environment (*is* or *are*) as independent variables. The decision to include this linguistic environment was based on Labov's (1969) claim for AAE that *is* is more variant than *are*. In the first analysis (A) which included only variable speakers, the linguistic constraint proved not to be significant, with mismatched results in the first and the second runs with all the variables. Therefore, only social factors (age, gender, region, tribe, years of English education, variety of English, occupation, and

residency), and linguistic constraint were added in the third run, excluding the attitudinal and language use results. Similar to the previous results of verb *be* regression analysis, the factors *linguistic constraint* and *gender* have significant effect on [zero *be*] (*P.* < .01). However, *gender* proved to be more significant than *linguistic constraint*. Within the *gender* factor, women seem to favour [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.587), Table 10. The findings reveal the plural form of *be* (*are*) favours omission (Log odds 0.483). The first and second runs of analysis (B) which included all speakers did not result in matched significant factors. Therefore, the third run included only the social factors. The results, as presented in Table 10, show that only *linguistic constraint* proved to significantly influence the use of [zero *be*]. Similar to the findings of analysis (A), in the second analysis are favours to be deleted (Log odds 0.552).

Table 11: Significant factors influencing [zero *be*], *type of complement*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.362			0.333		
Total N.	258			324		
Log. likelihood	-143.053			-179.816		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Linguistic constraint	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .01		
V-ing	1.383	69	49	1.613	63	63
Locatives	0.403	50	20	0.263	48	23
Adjectives	-0.385	32	139	-0.415	36	169
Noun phrase	-1.401	12	50	-1.462	25	69
Gender	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .05		
Women	0.523	36	188	0.682	41	205
Men	-0.523	38	70	-0.682	38	119
Variability				*P.* < .01		
Non-variable	Not included			0.917	53	66
Variable				-0.917	36	258

Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

The next analysis of verb *be* included the linguistic constraint *type of complement* as an independent variable. The decision to conduct this analysis was based on the findings of previous (Labov, 1969; Wolfram, 1969; Mesthrie, 1992; and Herat, 2005). In the first analysis (A), this linguistic environment, too, was not significant when the analysis included all independent variables. Repeating the analysis including only social factors and linguistic constraints, yielded more meaningful results. Similar to the previous results, the factors *linguistic constraint* and *gender* are significant predictors of [zero *be*] ($P. < .01$). The factor V-ing appears to affect the use [zero *be*] (Log odds 1.383, in A; and 1.613, in B). On the other hand, following adjectives (Log odds -0.385, in A; and -0.415, in B) and NPs seem to favour [*be* realisation] (Log odds -1.401, in A; and -1.462, in B). Within the factor *gender*, the results show that women (Log odds 0.523, in A; and 0.682, in B) favour [zero *be*]. In addition, in the factor *Variability*, similar to previous findings, non-variable speakers are more likely to use [zero *be*] (log odds 0.91, in B), see Table 11.

Table 12: Significant factors influencing [zero *be*], *type of subject*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.279			0.285		
Total N.	384			465		
Log. likelihood	-223.84			-264.107		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Linguistic constraint	*P. < .01*			*P. < .01*		
Noun Phrases	1.164	56	97	1.223	56	117

Personal pronouns	0.084	33	178	-0.086	35	209
Dummy *it*	-0.593	18	68	-0.458	24	88
Other pronouns	-0.655	19	41	-0.680	29	51
Gender	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .05 flip them		
Women	0.467	36	289	0.778	39	307
Men	-0.467	31	95	-0.778	34	158
Variability				*P.* < .01		
Non-variable	Not included			0.889	52	81
Variable				-0.889	35	384
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.					

The linguistic environment *type of subject* was included to the regression analysis of verb *be*, see Table 12. Analyses (A) and (B) included social factors and linguistic constraint as independent variables. In this run, also, *linguistic constraint* (*P.* < .01, in A and B) and *gender* (*P.* < .01, in A; and *P.* < .05 in B) proved to significantly influence [zero *be*]. NP subjects are the most significant predictors of [zero *be*] (Log odds 1.164, in A; and 1.223, in B). On other hand, the constraints *dummy it* (Log odds -0.593, in A; and -0.458, in B) and *other pronouns* (Log odds -0.655, in A; and -0.680, in B) appear to favour the variant [*be* realisation]. In these analyses, too, the results reveal that women favour [zero *be*]. The factor *Variability* appear to influence variation in verb *be*, that non-variable speakers are more likely to use [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.889, in B).

Table 13: Significant factors influencing [zero *be*], *preceding phonological environment A*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)	All speakers (B)

	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Input prob.		0.375			0.342	
Total N.		323			404	
Log. likelihood		-203.636			-241.662	
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Gender		P. < .01			P. < .05	
Women	0.384	39	243	0.664	43	261
Men	-0.384	36	80	-0.664	37	143
Linguistic constraint		P. < .05			P. < .05	
Nasal consonants	0.479	47	34	0.583	53	51
Other consonants	0.315	48	33	0.416	53	40
Vowels	0.125	44	127	-0.007	44	153
Sibilant consonants	-0.274	33	36	-0.338	36	42
Stop consonants	-0.646	25	93	-0.653	29	118
Variability					P. < .05	
Non-variable		Not Included		0.72	52	81
Variable				-0.72	38	323
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.					

The final two linguistic environments that were included in the regression analysis of verb *be* were phonological. The independent variables in these runs were social factors and preceding phonological environments. The first phonological environment has five categories: vowels, nasal consonants, sibilant consonants, stop consonants, and other consonants. The second phonological environment, which was based on Labov's (1969) AAVE study as discussed previously in section 3.2.1, includes four categories: vowels, voiced consonants, voiceless consonants, and sibilants.

The results of analyses (A) and (B) show that a social factor outranks the linguistic factor (Tables 13 and 14). Within the factor *gender*, women proved to significantly favour the use of [zero *be*], in (A) and (B). In the first preceding phonological environment, nasal consonants significantly influenced the use of [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.479, in A; and 0.583, in B). On the other hand, in the first phonological environment, the results show that stop consonants (Log odds -0.646, in A; and -0.653, in B) favour [*be* realisation]. Analysis (A) of the second preceding phonological environment show that women favour [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.359) while men prefer [*be* realisation] (Log odds -0.359). Additionally, [zero *be*] is more likely to be used after voiced consonants (Log odds 0.356) and [*be* realisation] after voiceless consonants (Log odds -0.547), see Table 14. The first, second and third runs of analysis (B) which included variable and non-variable speakers did not result in any significant results.

Table 14: Significant factors influencing [zero *be*], *preceding phonological environment B*

[Zero *be*]	Variable speakers (A)		
Input prob.	0.339		
Total N.	314		
Log. likelihood	-196.447		
	Log odds	%	N.
Gender	*P.* < .01		
Women	0.359	44	182
Men	-0.359	26	132
Linguistic constraint	*P.* < .05		
Voiced	0.356	43	61
Vowels	0.296	44	127
Sibilants	-0.106	33	36
Voiceless	-0.547	23	90
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs.		

	Attitude questionnaire: Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

5.2 Verb be – Discussion

In the regression analysis of verb *be*, the five linguistic environments and one social factor, *gender*, were shown to be statistically significant constraints of [zero *be*] use in Saudis' speech. The five linguistic environments are:

- *Is* vs. *are*
- Auxiliary vs. copula
- Type of complement
- Type of subject
- Preceding phonological environment

5.2.1 is vs. are

To understand *be* variation in my study, the analysis of the findings in my data was based on studies that investigated *be* variation, including Al-Rawi's study and other English varieties such as African American Vernacular English, South African Indian English, and Sri Lankan English. Comparing the results of my study with the findings in other varieties that are influenced by different L1 contact might help in interpreting the results of *be* variation in my study. For example, when a variant is used in the same context in other varieties, then it might be possible to assume that L1 is not the main factor that influenced the variation.

Following the steps of previous studies on *be* variation in other varieties, I first examined whether *is* or *are* favours deletion. In his study of AAVE, Labov (1969) focused only on *is* arguing that a copula deletion rule does not reduce *are*. On the other hand, Herat (2005) did not include *is* in her analysis of the grammatical environments that favoured [zero *be*] in Sri Lankan English, but she counted the frequency of both [zero *is*] and [zero *are*] in her data. Although she found

instances of [zero *is*] (2.4%), she only included *are* (17.2%) in the final analysis. Both Wolfram (1969) and Mesthrie (1992) included *is* and *are* in their analysis. In Saudi English, Al-Rawi (2012), too, did not differentiate between *is* and *are* in her analysis, but she did not disclose how many of each variable she found. In the current study, counting the frequency of the singular and the plural forms of *be* excluded the past forms. The data included 402 examples of *is* and *are* of which there were 38 (54.29%) [zero *are*] and 115 (34.64%) [zero *is*], which means they are both variant in Saudi English. As shown in Table 10, the regression analysis (A) and (B) of *is* and *are* revealed that only *are* favours deletion (log odds 0.483, in A; and 0.552, in B).

Explaining this feature in AAVE, Labov (1969) maintains that [zero *be*] follows the same rule of *be* contraction in existing American English dialects, arguing that where *be* contraction is possible, [zero *be*] is used. In Saudi English, Al-Rawi (2012) points out verb *be* variation could be a result of Arabic not having *be* in the present tense as a part of its linguistic system, which is illustrated in the syntax trees below:

Figure 4: Copula in Arabic in the present tense
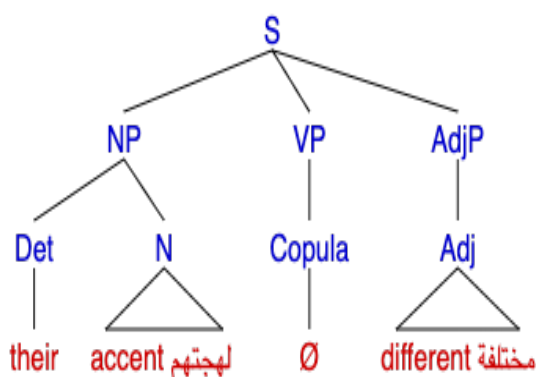
Figure 5: Copula in Arabic in the past tense
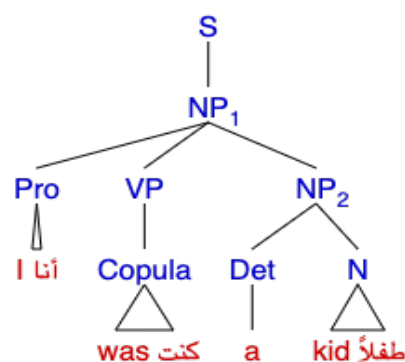
As can be seen in Figure 4, the Arabic language does not require verb *be* in the present tense. However, Arabic requires verb *be* in the past (was كنت), Figure 5. According to Al-Rawi, this L1

rule explains her informants' use of [zero *be*] in the present tense and [*be* realisation] in the past. Although, I agree with Al-Rawi that L1 might influence language variation, it is not the only factor. Verb *be* variation is controlled by grammatical constraints within English itself and other factors pertaining to the speakers. As will be discussed in the following sections, the regression analysis showed that *be* variation is controlled by syntactic and phonological constraints.

5.2.2 Auxiliary vs. copula

The data showed that verb *be* varies in different syntactic positions which was reported in other varieties of English. Therefore, the second analysis of verb *be* included five grammatical constraints:

- Auxiliary + Present + Plural (e.g., they Ø studying in an international school).
- Copula + Present + Plural (e.g., they know but they Ø afraid).
- Auxiliary + Present + Singular (e.g., I think it Ø benefiting the business).
- Copula + Present + Singular (e.g., my daughter Ø nearly nine years old).
- Copula +Past + Singular (e.g., but he Ø born in a western area).

The results, presented in Table 9, show that *be* is more likely to be omitted in the linguistic position Auxiliary + Present + Plural (Log odds 1.017, in A; and 0.916, in B), examples from my data:

7. When parents Ø studying outside.
8. You will find some Ø struggling.
9. Speaking English yeah, it's better than before but not too many people Ø speaking English.

The results also show that *be* in the past tense does not favour deletion in the position *Copula +Past + Singular* (Log odds -1.240, in A; and -1.208, in B) or favours [*be* realisation], which supports Al-Rawi's (2012) finding that past *be* forms were invariant. The linguistic constraint Auxiliary + Present was present in studies of English varieties, although in the singular *is* or the

plural *are*, separately. Labov (1969) in his analysis of AAVE, although focused on *is*, found that present auxiliary (V-ing) favoured [zero *be*]. Herat (2005), in a study of Sri Lankan English, found that the future marker (going to) had the highest rates of [zero *are*] compared to other complements, which will be discussed later. She also found instances of V-ing with [zero *are*], albeit limited in number. Even though these studies focused only on *is* or only on *are*, Rickford et al. (1991, p.105) argue that, "is and are behave similarly enough to be treated together, making the data pool larger and more robust". Wolfram (1969) found occurrences of [zero *be*] (*is* and *are*) in AAVE in the grammatical position Auxiliary + Present. Although in my analysis I did not combine *is* and *are*, my findings show that Auxiliary + Present + Plural favours [zero *be*] the most which aligns with the previous finding that *are* favours omission. However, the results show that Auxiliary + Present + Singular also favours deletion (Log odds 0.481, in A; and 0.549, in B). Figure 6 shows a comparison of Labov's findings of *is* + V-ing, Herat's findings of *are* + V-ing, Wolfram's combined results of (*is* and *are*) + V-ing, and my separate results of (*is* and *are*) + V-ing. In my data there are instances of [zero *are*] + V-ing (54.29%) and [zero *is*] + V-ing (34.64%), which supports Rickford et al. (1991) argument that *is* and *are* behave in a similar fashion.

Figure 6: [zero be] + V-ing in AAVE, Sri Lankan English, and Saudi English
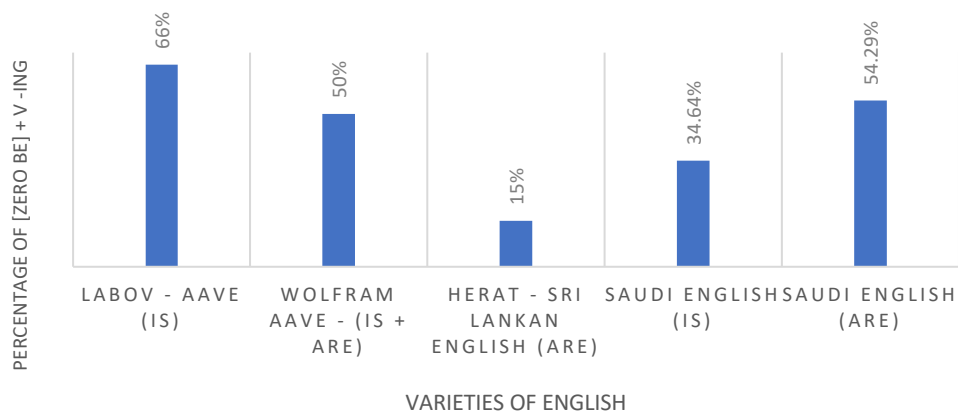
There are two possible interpretations that might explain the finding that Auxiliary + Present favours [zero *be*]. First, given the fact that *be* in the past tense does not tend to vary, and that only the present forms (singular and plural) vary, it could be argued that be variation is influenced by Arabic. As explained earlier, Arabic lacks an equivalent to verb *be* in the present tense. The other explanation could be due to the fact that in the *auxiliary* position *be* is followed by a verb rather than an adjective or a noun phrase; therefore, when there are two verbs, *be* + V-ing, *be* seems to be deleted as the following verb is the main verb. This interpretation might be supported by the following analysis of the type of complement.

5.2.3 Type of complement

Further analysis was carried out to include *type of complement* as a linguistic constraint on [zero *be*]. The initial analysis showed that Saudis mostly used [zero *be*] in the V-ing environment (e.g., nobody from Saudi Arabia Ø watching that channel), followed by [zero *be*] before predicate locatives (e.g., yeah, he Ø now in Saudi), then predicate adjectives (e.g., so I don't think she Ø aware about this stuff). They appeared to use the least number of [zero *be*] before noun phrases (e.g., like this Ø my personality, I don't know), Table 15. Therefore, the pattern of Saudis' use of [zero *be*] regarding the following complement is: V-ing > Locative > Adjective > Noun phrase.

Table 15: [zero *be*] by *type of complement*

Type of complement	% of [zero *be*]
V-ing	63.49%
Loc	47.83%
Adj	36.09%
NP	24.64%

Be variation in relation to different types of complement has been documented in other varieties of English which revealed similar patterns to those in my findings. In AAVE, Labov (1969) found

that the least deletion of verb *be* occurs before a following noun phrase. He also found more instances of [zero *be*] before adjectives and locatives. The most instances of [zero *be*] occurred before the future form *going to*, then progressive verbs. Wolfram (1969) in his study of AAVE in Detroit found a similar pattern. The most occurrences of [zero *be*] were before *going to*, then before V-ing, followed by before adjectives and locatives. The least number of [zero *be*] instances were before a noun phrase. Thus, the pattern of [zero *be*] + complement in AAVE is (Going to > V-ing > Adjective/Locative > NP). In other varieties of English, the pattern was different. For example, In SAIE [zero *be*] is highest (33%) before noun phrases, followed by adjectives (15%) (Mesthrie, 1992). In Sri Lankan English, Herat (2005) found that the highest instances of [zero *be*] were before the future verb *going to* (45%), then adjectives (17%), followed by progressive verbs (15%). In my data, there were only three instances of *going to* with the first-person pronoun 'I'; thus, my analysis did not include the verb *going to*. Apart from the verb *going to*, the pattern I found in Saudi English is similar to that in AAVE in Labov's and Wolfram's studies. Table 16 shows a comparison of my results of [zero *be*] based on the following complement to those in AAVE, SAIE, and Sri Lankan English.

Table 16: [zero *be*] by *type of complement* in AAVE, SAIE, Sri Lankan English, and Saudi English

	Labov - AAVE (is)	Rickford et al. AAVE - (is + are)	South African Indian English (basilect)	Sri Lankan English	Saudi English
V-ing	66%	50%	-	15%	63.49%
NP	23%	37%	33%	1%	24.64%
Adj	48%	47%	15%	17%	36.09%
Loc	36%	44%	-	-	47.83%

As can be seen in Table 16, [zero *be*] is most favoured before V-ing, followed by locatives, then adjectives. This was also confirmed in the regression analysis, in which progressive verbs proved to constrain the use of [zero *be*] in Saudi English (Log odds 1.383, in A; and 1.613, in B), Table 11.

This finding is also in line with my previous analysis in which Auxiliary + Present (*is/are* + Ving) was found to favour [zero *be*] the most.

Considering that the form *going to* is a progressive verb, my results are similar to Labov's and Wolfram's. This is interesting as variation in AAVE, according to Labov, was a result of variation in other dialects of American English, and according to Wolfram, variation in AAVE stemmed from other creole-based system. On the other hand, Saudi English, like Sri Lankan English, is the result of Education. Considering that *be* variation in this context (V-ing) is common in other L1 and ESL varieties influenced by different languages, L1 influence might not be the primary factor. That is, while it can be argued that [zero *be*] before V-ing might be a result of Arabic influence, as this variation in this linguistic constraint is common in other varieties influenced by different L1s, variation in this context might be due to the complexity of the syntactic property of the context itself. As I mentioned earlier, *be* might be deleted simply because in a context where there are two verbs, verb *be* might seem redundant and therefore deleted.

5.2.4 Type of subject

To understand the use of [zero *be*] in Saudi English more, *subject type* was added to the analysis. The subject environments in which [zero *be*] can occur in Saudi English include noun phrases; personal pronouns; and other pronouns including demonstrative, relative pronouns, and interrogative pronouns. As can be seen in Table 17, [zero *be*] occurred after personal pronouns more than other pronouns or dummy *it*. In addition, [zero *be*] was possible after NPs more than after personal pronouns.

Table 17: [zero *be*] by *type of subject*

Type of subject	% of [zero *be*]
Noun Phrases	55.56%
Personal pronouns	35.41%

Dummy *it*	23.86%
Other pronouns	29.41%

The findings regarding the relationship between *type of subject* and [zero *be*] in other varieties of English were inconsistent. On one hand, the use of [zero *be*] in Saudi English is comparable to Sri Lankan English. Herat (2005, p. 202) found that when it comes to subject pronouns, personal pronouns favoured [zero *be*] more than other pronouns "such as *what*, *it*, and *that*, which showed no BE absence at all". She also found that subject NPs favoured [zero *be*] the most. On the other hand, in SAIE is different in that [zero *be*] was possible after the personal pronouns *we*, *you*, and *they* and other pronouns *this*, *there*, and *here* (Mesthrie, 1992). In AAVE, comparing subject NPs and subject pronouns, Labov (1969) found that the highest numbers of [zero *be*] were after pronouns. Figure 7 shows a comparison between Saudi English and AAVE regarding [zero *be*] after subject NPs and subject pronouns.

Figure 7: [zero be] by type of subject in AAVE and Saudi English
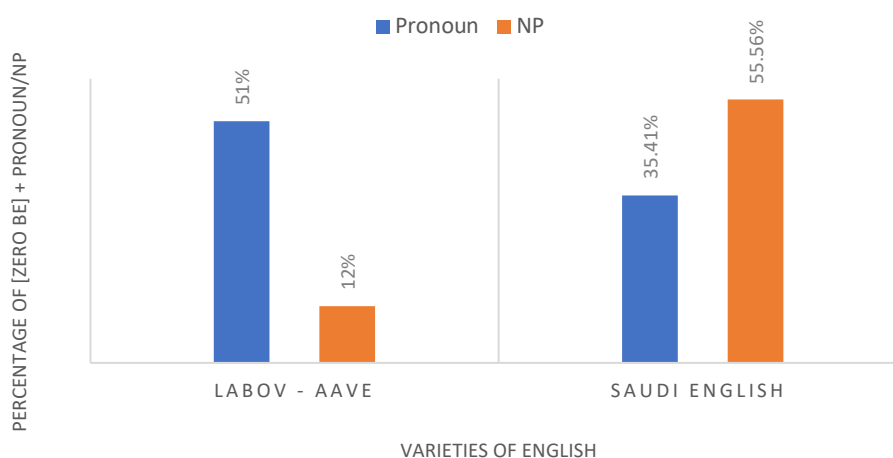
L1 influence might be a factor on *be* variation in this context as whereas Saudi English and AAVE are comparable in the auxiliary/copula and type of complement environments, they are different

in the subject categories. In Saudi English, [zero *be*] is used more after NPs, rather than pronouns. This finding was also confirmed in the regression analysis which showed that NPs constrain [zero *be*], Table 12. Unlike in the previous contexts, auxiliary/copula and type of complement environments, NPs favouring [zero *be*] might be a specific feature to Saudi English. This variation could be viewed as a result of Arabic influence. It could also be interpreted as a result of English education. That is, pronouns + verb *be* with a limited number of pronouns is a clearer and more straightforward rule to follow compared to NPs + verb *be*.

5.2.5 Preceding phonological environment

To understand the effect of the preceding phonological environment on [zero *be*], two sets of data were analysed. The regression analysis of first set showed that nasal consonants /m/, and /n/ had significant constrain on the distribution of [zero *be*], followed by other consonants which are /l/, /r/, and /f/, Table 13. Similarly, the tabulation results of this data set showed that the highest numbers of [zero *be*] were after nasal consonants (52.94%) as in *two of my children Ø here,* followed by other consonants (52.50%) as in *my daughter Ø nearly nine years old*. However, it should be noted that Arabic is a rhotic language which might have influenced the speakers' pronunciation of the /r/ in *daughter* in this sentence, and which could be another feature of Saudi English to be investigated in future research. The tabulation results show that vowels also favour [zero *be*] (44.44%) *I mean if we if we Ø qualified*.

The lowest numbers of [zero *be*] instances were after plosive/stop consonants 28.81%, as in *because their Arabic Ø still good*, and sibilants 35.71%, as in *native speakers of English Ø Americans*. Although, the tabulation analysis showed that other consonants /l/, /r/, and /f/ and vowels favoured [zero *be*] favour; however, examining the phonological environment as a part of other societal factors, it appears that, in fact, nasal consonants have the most significant influence on [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.479, in A; and 0.583, in B), Table 13.

Regarding preceding phonological environments, Saudi English has different patterns than other varieties of English. For example, in Sri Lankan English, words ending with vowels favoured [zero *are*] more than consonants (Herat, 2005). Similarly, in SAIE, Mesthrie (1992, p. 49) found that [zero *are*] was used more between a word-final vowel and a word-initial consonant, such as *you Ø very clever*. On the other hand, similar to Saudi English, in AAVE [zero *is*] was more favourable after preceding consonants, such as *Boot Ø always comin' over my house to eat, to ax for food* (Labov, 1969, p. 4).

The second set of data was divided in different categories to understand the influence of preceding phonological environments on [zero *be*] in Saudi English. These categories were voiced consonants *there Ø some Arabic people try to help him*; voiceless consonants *their accent Ø different than us*; sibilants *this Ø a glass*; and vowels *she Ø now four*. These categories were based on Labov's study of AAVE, in which he had four categories:

1. After noun phrases ending in sibilants.
2. After noun phrases ending in non-sibilant voiceless consonants.
3. After noun phrases ending in non-sibilant voiced consonants.
4. After noun phrases ending in vowels.

The distribution analysis of this data set revealed that words ending in vowels had the highest numbers of [zero *be*] 44%, see Figure 8.

According to Rickford et al. (1991) *be* variation could be phonological based on the fact that all personal pronouns end in vowels. While in my data the personal pronouns were 35.41% which is less than NPs 55.56%; however, not all of the NPs in my data end with consonants. For example, *Africa Ø consider one of the countries that is rich in agriculture*, *no body from Saudi Arabia Ø watching that channel*, and *Alia Ø almost eight and Ola Ø three and a half*. In addition, in Saudi English, voiced consonants favoured [zero *be*] 42% more than voiceless consonants 32%. The

results also show that vowels and sibilants favoured [zero *be*] the most, 44% and 43%, respectively. This result is similar to what Labov found in AAVE that the most instances of *be* deletion came after sibilants, then vowels. Figure 8 shows a comparison between Saudi English and AAVE regarding preceding phonological environments + [zero *be*].

Figure 8: Preceding phonological environments + [zero be] in AAVE and Saudi English
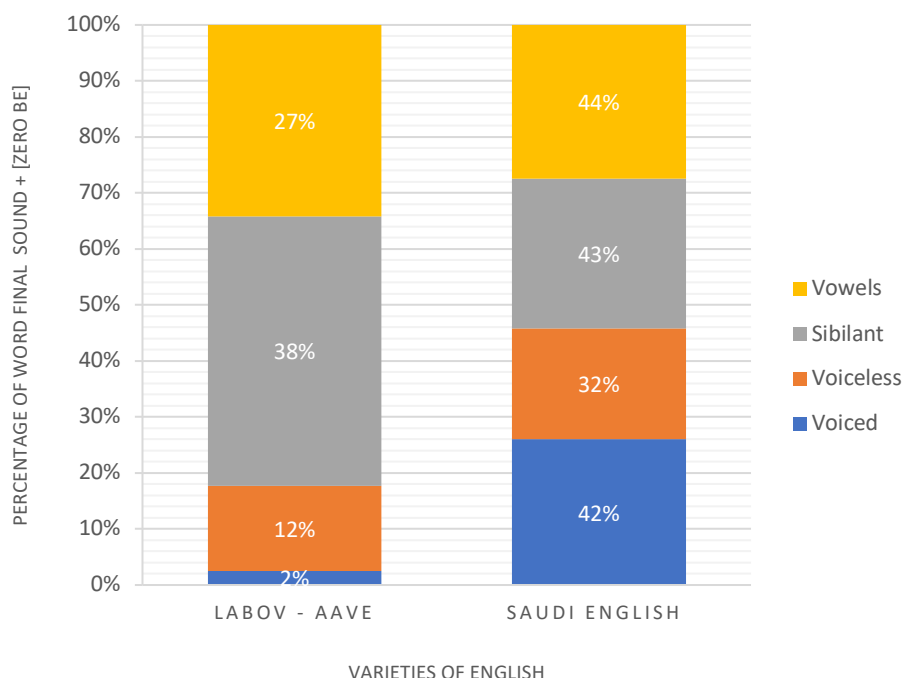
The results of the regression analysis of this data set showed different results to the distribution results. Considering the interaction between societal factors and preceding phonological environment, in Saudi English voiced consonants are the most influential on [zero *be*] (Log odds 0.356), Table 14. In addition, bearing in mind that nasal consonants are voiced, the results of both sets of data align. This pattern could be partly explained by Labov's *be* deletion rule that contraction in standard English results in deletion in AAVE, and by the fact that Arabic has fewer consonant clusters in final position compared to English. Alzinaid and Abdel Latif (2019) and Hago

and Khan (2015) found that Saudis mispronounced English words that included word-final consonant clusters which they attributed to L1 influence. Contracting *is* and *are* after words that end with consonants will result in a cluster of consonants, as in *you will find so**me'r st**ruggling, their accen**t's d**ifferent than us*; hence *be* could be deleted for easier pronunciation. However, this phonological constraint needs more research. The results so far show that *be* deletion in Saudi English seems to be a syntactic variation.

As discussed earlier, it can be argued that *be* variation in Saudi English stems from the fact that Arabic does not have *be* in its linguistic system. While language contact plays an important role in language variation, the process of variation is not always so simple, thus, other linguistic and societal factors were considered. The analysis of [zero *be*] showed that it is influenced by gender and grammatical factors within English itself.

Through the analysis of [zero *be*] in Saudi English, five trends have been identified in the data. The first trend is that only *are* favours deletion in general. This finding supports Al-Rawi's (2012) argument that only *be* in the present tense favours deletion as a result of L1 influence, as in Arabic only *be* in the past tense exists. Second, the grammatical positions of *be* (auxiliary or copula) has an influence on the rate of [zero *be*] in Saudi English. In particular, the grammatical position Auxiliary + Present + Plural favours the use of [zero *be*]. That is, the form *are* + V-ing has an effect on *be* variation in Saudi English. Third, the type of complement has a significant influence on [zero *be*], with V-ing appearing to be the most significant complement that affect [zero *be*] use in Saudi English. This trend is in line with the previous one in which Auxiliary + Present affects [zero *be*] use. This trend was interpreted as a result of the complexity of the context itself rather than L1 influence: first, due to the fact that it is common in other varieties that have different L1s, so Arabic influence might not the primary factor; and second, due to the structure of the context where a main verb (V-ing) is required which could make verb *be* redundant. Fourth, the type of subject also has an effect on *be* variation in Saudi English. In Saudi

English, noun phrases seem to favour [zero *be*] over pronouns or dummy *it*. Similar to the [zero *be*] + V-ing constraint, I argued that as it is common in other varieties, Arabic influence might not be the reason, rather it could be due the complexity of unlimited number of NPs + verb *be* compared to a few numbers of pronouns + verb *be*. The final linguistic category that seems to influence *be* variation was the preceding phonological environment. Similar to other varieties of English, *be* variation in Saudi English might be phonological in that nasal consonants and voiced consonants in general favour [zero *be*] in Saudi English. I argued that this pattern could result from contracting *be* after consonants which results in consonant clusters that are hard to be pronounced by Arabic speakers due to L1 influence.

5.2.6 Gender

The regression analysis shows that gender is the only social factor that proved to have significant influence on *be* variation in this sample. As can be seen in Tables 9-14, Saudi women are more likely to use the variant [zero *be*] than Saudi men. Gender, with women in the lead, reached statistical significance in all five sets of analysis that examined *is* vs *are*, auxiliary vs. copula, type of complement, type of subject, and preceding phonological environment.

Gender has been a primary social factor in previous sociolinguistic studies where women tend to lead in language change. For example, Labov's (1966) study in New York City, Trudgill's (1972) study in Norwich, Milroy's (1980) study in Belfast. More recent studies, Bubios' and Horvath's (2000) study in Cajun English in Louisiana, and Drummond's (2012b) in Manchester. What all these different studies have in common is that gender-differentiated usage of linguistic variables is usually influenced by other social factors. For example, Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1972) found that women preferred to use variants that are more socially prestigious, Milroy (1980), Bubios and Horvath (2000), and Drummond (2012b) found language use in different social networks to be a primary factor. Therefore, simply counting numbers of variables used by women and men

only reveals superficial understanding and oversimplifies the complexity of the relationship between gender and those variables (Romaine, 2003).

Gender is a social construct that is defined differently in different societies; consequently, each gender is assigned different societal roles. Therefore, to understand gender in Saudi and its effect on language use, the social roles and expectations of Saudi women and men should be examined. One important social factor that should be considered to understand the gender effect in Saudi is social roles assigned to each gender that might impact their education and career opportunities. According to Alsuwaida (2016), until recently women and men have had unequal access to education in Saudi Arabia, and irrespective of their qualifications, women have always been labelled as homemakers. In addition, while the school curriculum designed for women and men has been similar, course contents for women have been less extensive (Mills, 2009). Therefore, women's professional positions have been limited to teaching and social work (Alsuwaida, 2016). The professional or social positions of the female participants in this study reflect Alsuwaida's claim, that is the female participants in this study are either university students, educators or health carers.

According to Cameron (2008) language variation among women or among men can be greater than variation between women and men. However, after examining women's preference for [*be* realisation] and [zero *be*] in relation to other factors such as English education and tribalism, the results did not show noticeable difference. For example, women who had more than 11 years of English education and women who had less than 11 years used the two variants almost equally, Figure 9.

Figure 9: Number of years of English education among women
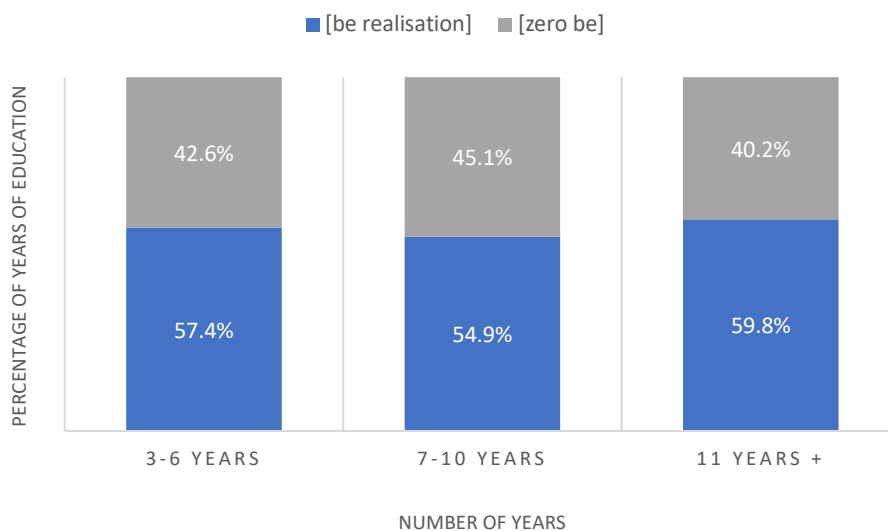
The effect of social networks on language to explain gendered language variation was studied in Milroy (1980), Bubios and Horvath (2000), and Drummond (2012b). These studies found that men and women having different social networks (wider or tighter, and more or less diverse) results in language variation that is different in each gender. Milroy introduced two types of social networks which influence peoples' language use. In a *high-density* network, an individual is connected to other people who know each other and use the same language enforcing local language or language aspects use that affects an individual's language and competence. In a *low-density* network, an individual is connected to several people who do not have connection with each other; therefore, the individual is exposed to different language features.

The effect of social networks is apparent in the different language use of women and men after examining their English use in various social networks. The social pressure on women could result in women having fewer opportunities to use English compared to men. Figures 10 and 11 show women's and men's rates of English use at work, at home, in education, with friends, and with non-Arabs.

Figure 10: Rates of women's self-reported language use
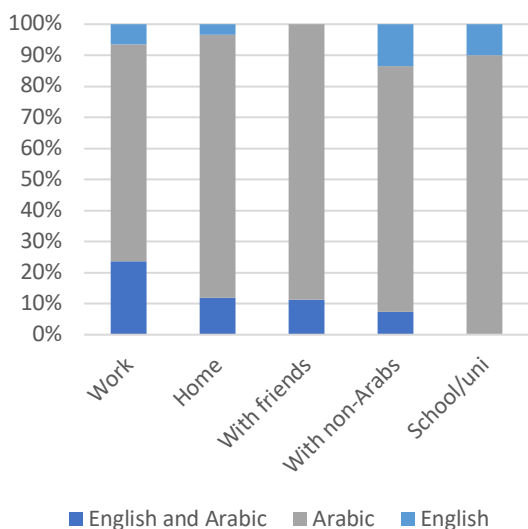
Figure 11: Rates of men's self-reported language use
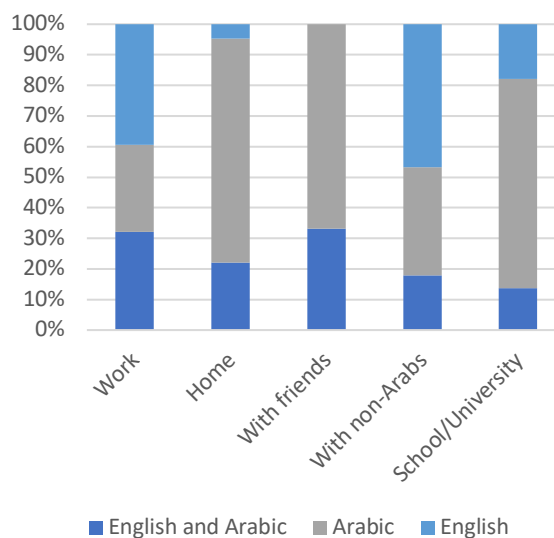
The results of the current study show that women use English in various situations less than men. Having low-density or less diverse networks may have resulted from social norms that limit Saudi women's mobility and life choices. On the other hand, men being the dominant gender in Saudi have more freedom and are more able to have more diverse and high-dense networks which can be seen in their English use in different contexts. Men reported they speak English more at home, at work, in education, and with friends and non-Arabs which might mean having the opportunity to use *standard* English, master and apply its rules more. Having limited opportunities to use *standard* English, women are more likely to use rules derived from their L1 linguistic system. Additionally, the factor *variability* reached statistical significance in the analysis of *be* in which non-variable speakers are more likely to use [zero *be*], see Tables 9, 11, 12, and 13. As regression analysis shows interactions between factors that affect variation, there could be an interaction between the factors *gender* and *variability*. Figure 12 shows that non-variable women used [zero *be*] more than non-variable men who seem to prefer [*be* realisation] more.

Figure 12: Rates of *be* among non-variable women and men
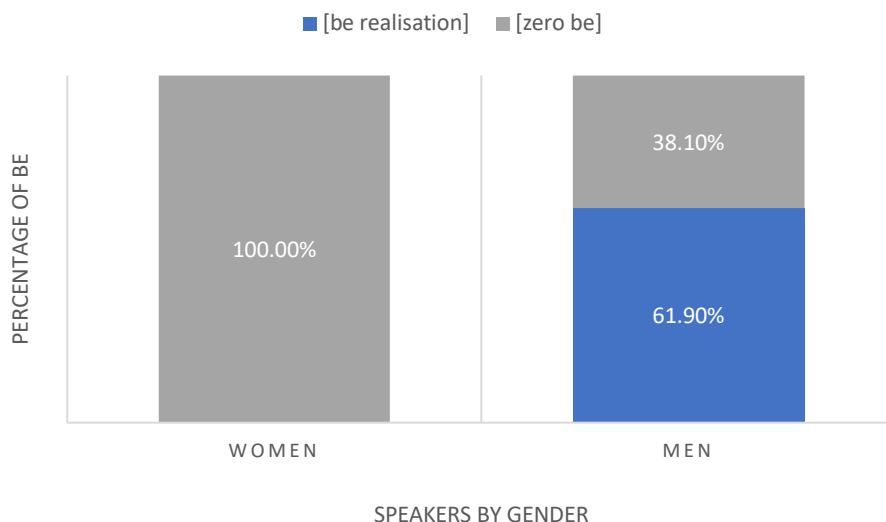
Looking into the language use reported by non-variable speakers, the results show that non-variable women reported that they speak Arabic more in their social networks, at home, at work, in education, and with friends and non-Arabs. Non-variable men reported that they use English more in all contexts, Figures 13 and 14. These results are in line with the general finding that women have more limited opportunities to use English which could have resulted in women relying more on their Arabic linguistic system when speaking in English. This result indicates that variable and non-variable speakers behave similarly in relation to L2 variation and that variability could be explained by or explain other factors.

Figure 13: Rates of (non-variable) women's self-reported language use
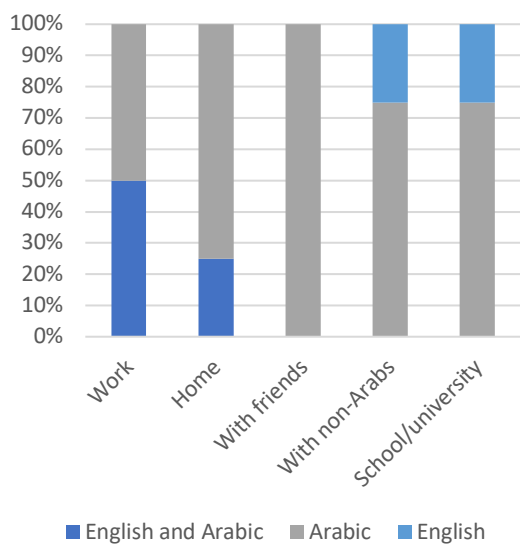
Figure 14: Rates of (non-variable) men's self-reported language use
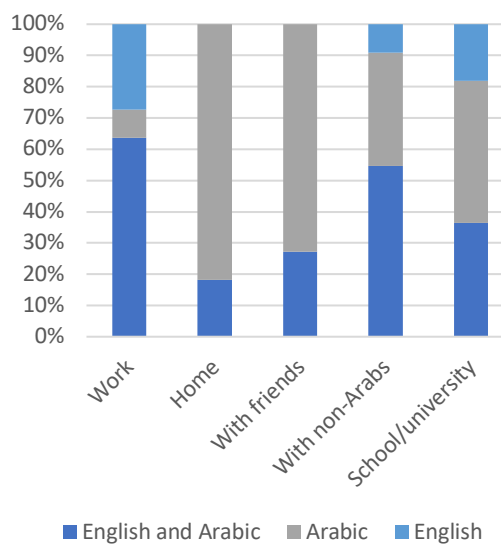
5.3 Indefinite article – Results

5.3.1 Distributional results

Table 18: Total count for [*a/an* realisation] and [zero *a/an*] for all speakers

Speaker	[*a/an* realisation]	[zero *a/an*]	Total
1	10 (58.82%)	7 (41.18%)	17
2	7 (50.00%)	7 (50.00%)	14
3	4 (17.39%)	19 (82.61%)	23
4	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
5	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3

6	15 (40.54%)	22 (59.46%)	37
7	2 (16.67%)	10 (83.33%)	12
8	12 (40.00%)	18 (60.00%)	30
9	3 (60.00%)	2 (40.00%)	5
10	5 (38.46%)	8 (61.54%)	13
11	4 (40.00%)	6 (60.00%)	10
12	2 (28.57%)	5 (71.43%)	7
13	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
14	2 (33.33%)	4 (66.67%)	6
15	7 (58.33%)	5 (41.67%)	12
16	1 (11.11%)	8 (88.89%)	9
17	2 (66.67%)	1 (33.33%)	3
18	2 (33.33%)	4 (66.67%)	6
19	7 (58.33%)	5 (41.67%)	12
20	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6
21	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
22	7 (50.00%)	7 (50.00%)	14
23	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
24	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
25	7 (58.33%)	5 (41.67%)	12

26	7 (50.00%)	7 (50.00%)	14
27	8 (42.11%)	11 (57.89%)	19
28	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
29	6 (66.67%)	3 (33.33%)	9
30	6 (33.33%)	12 (66.67%)	18
31	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
32	15 (44.12%)	19 (55.88%)	34
33	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
34	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
35	7 (77.78%)	2 (22.22%)	9
36	5 (33.33%)	10 (66.67%)	15
37	7 (63.64%)	4 (36.36%)	11
38	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
39	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
40	4 (44.44%)	5 (55.56%)	9
41	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
Total	190 (42.99%)	252 (57.01%)	442

Table 18 shows the total count of all [*a/an* realisation] and [zero *a/an*] in the speech of all speakers which included 442 tokens of the indefinite articles. Figure 15 shows the frequencies of [*a/an* realisation] and [zero *a/an*] among speakers. The findings show that there are 190 tokens

of [*a/an* realisation] and 252 tokens of [zero *a/an*], it also shows that Saudis preferred to use [zero *a/an*] more than [*a/an* realisation] (57.01% and 42.99%).

Figure 15: Proportion of [zero a/an] and [a/an realisation] for each speaker
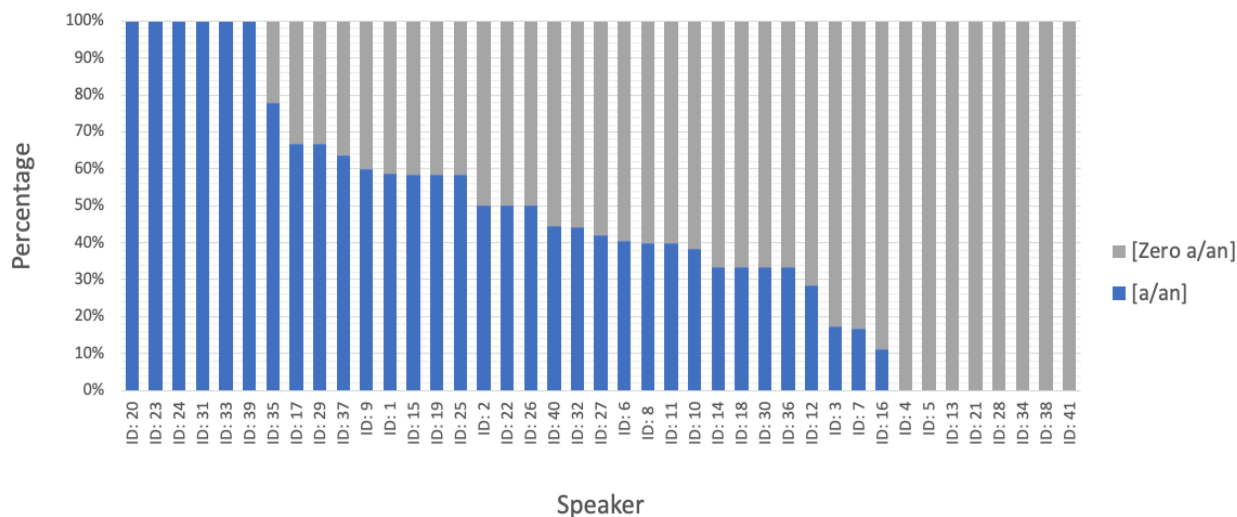
Table 19 shows the distribution of *a/an* in two linguistic environments. The first one included three grammatical positions, *before a quantifier* (e.g., Khalid has [a] lot of friends), *before an adjacent noun* (e.g., Khalid is [an] investor), and *before a non-adjacent noun* (e.g., Khalid [is] a nice person). As Table 19 shows, Saudis tend to use [zero *a/an*] before a non-adjacent noun (71.74%), and before an adjacent noun (49.66%) more than before a quantifier (22.39%). In the distributional analysis I counted the frequency of *a* and *an*, in which the highest numbers of zero indefinite article occurred as [zero *an*], 74.23%.

Table 19: Frequency of the indefinite article in relation to linguistic environments

	[*a/an* realisation] N	[*a/an* realisation] %	[Zero *a/an*] N	[Zero *a/an*] %	Total N
Indefinite article + quantifier or non/adjacent NP					

Before a quantifier	52	77.61%	15	22.39%	67
Before an adjacent noun	73	50.34%	72	49.66%	145
Before non-adjacent noun	65	28.26%	165	71.74%	230
a vs. *an*					
a	165	47.83%	180	52.17%	345
an	25	25.77%	72	74.23%	97

The frequency of the indefinite article was also counted among women and men. Table 20 presents the results which show that similar to [zero *be*] women tend to use zero indefinite article (61.11%) more than men (52.40%). In addition, both women and men used [*a/an* realisation] less (38.89% and 47.60%) favouring the zero form of the variable *a/an*.

Similar to the earlier findings in which the older groups favoured the zero form of the variable *be*, Table 20 shows the older groups (26-35 and 36-45) used [zero *a/an*], 59.70% and 61.35% more than the youngest group, 41.03%. When it comes to *Years of English education*, the group that had between 7 to 10 years of English education used [zero *a/an*] the most, 63.86%. In addition, the group that received 11 years or more of English education used [zero *a/an*] more than [*a/an* realisation], 53.25% and 46.75%, respectively. The group who with 3-6 years of English education used the two variants equally. Table 20 also shows that Saudis who were living in Saudi and the UK favoured [zero *a/an*] more than [*a/an* realisation], 51.98% and 60.38%, respectively.

Table 20 presents the occurrences of the indefinite article among non-tribal and tribal Saudis. It shows that the use of [*a/an* realisation] occurred less in the speech of non-tribal and tribal Saudis, 40.40% and 45.08%, respectively. Both groups favoured the zero variant, 59.60% and 54.92%, respectively.

Occupation was the last factor included in the distributional analysis of indefinite article. In contrast to earlier finding in verb *be* in which students favoured [zero *be*] more, the results show that professionals favoured [zero *a/an*] more, 65.00%. However, students and professionals used [zero *a/an*] (53.31% and 65.00%, respectively) more than [*a/an* realisation] (46.69% and 35.00%, respectively).

Table 20: Frequency of the indefinite article in relation to social factors

	[*a/an* realisation] N	[*a/an* realisation] %	[Zero *a/an*] N	[Zero *a/an*] %	Total N
Gender					
Female	91	38.89%	143	61.11%	234
Male	99	47.60%	109	52.40%	208
Age					
18-25	46	58.97%	32	41.03%	78
26-35	81	40.30%	120	59.70%	201
36-45	63	38.65%	100	61.35%	163
Years of English education					
3-6 years	15	50.00%	15	50.00%	30
7-10 years	60	36.14%	106	63.86%	166
11 years +	115	46.75%	131	53.25%	246
Residency					
Saudi Arabia	85	48.02%	92	51.98%	177
UK	105	39.62%	160	60.38%	265
Tribalism					
Non-tribal	80	40.40%	118	59.60%	198
Tribal	110	45.08%	134	54.92%	244
Occupation					
Professionals	49	35.00%	91	65.00%	140
Students	141	46.69%	161	53.31%	302

5.3.2 Multiple logistic regression

To carry out a regression analysis of the indefinite article, the data was loaded into *Rbrul* with [zero *a/an*] as the application value. The first analysis (A) included only variable speakers. It also included 164 tokens of [*a/an* realisation] and 216 tokens of [zero *a/an*]. In the first run of analysis (A), all predictors, presented in Table 4, were included, the social factors, language use test, attitudinal test, and the first linguistic factors *type of following NP*. The first run resulted in two different models with different significant outcomes. The log. likelihood of the step-up model was -207.22 and the log. likelihood of the step-down model was -213.543, so I chose the step-up model. The second run of the analysis included only the predictors in the step-up model in the first run. Table 21 presents the findings of the regression analysis of [zero *a/an*].

Table 21: Significant factors influencing [zero *a/an*]

[Zero *a/an*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.248			0.439		
Total N.	380			442		
Log. likelihood	-207.22			-258.178		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Linguistic constraint	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .01		
Before non-adjacent noun	1.565	76	196	1.427	71	230
Before an adjacent noun	0.044	47	124	0.089	50	145
Before a quantifier	-1.609	17	60	-1.516	22	67
Residence	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .01		
UK	0.826	59	211	Not significant		
Saudi	-0.826	54	169			

English for career advancement.2: (I do not need to speak English in order to get a job)	*P. < .01*			Not significant
Disagree	0.433	57	183	
Agree	0.185	61	111	
Neutral	-0.617	50	86	
English for leisure.2: (I watch English TV shows or movies)	*P. < .01*			Not significant
Agree	0.442	56	245	
Disagree	0.154	59	71	
Neutral	-0.597	59	64	
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu. Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,3, English for leisure 1,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

The findings of analysis (A) revealed four predictors that constrained the use of zero indefinite article. Given the number of predictors, it is clear that [zero *a/an*] is a complex feature of Saudi English. Similar to [zero *be*], the most significant variable is *linguistic constraint* (*P. < .01*). Within the factor group, [zero *a/an*] is constrained by a following non-adjacent nouns (Log odds 1.565), examples from my data:

10. They are speaking English in Ø Egyptian way
11. I'm just thinking to put them in Ø international school
12. Do not use it in like Ø real life situation

13. I can say that they are Ø special case

The results also show that following quantifiers favour [*a/an* realisation] (Log odds -1.609). The second significant factor group in analysis (A) that seems to constrain the use of [zero *a/an*] is *residence* (*P.* < .01). This result shows that living in an English-speaking country seems to affect the use of [zero *a/an*] (Log odds 0.826) which is opposite of what I expected that they would have *standard* English input more than in Saudi Arabia.

The third factor in analysis (A) that has influence on the use of the indefinite article is *English for career advancement.2* which refers to statement 3.8 in the attitudinal test (Appendix 1), *I do not need to speak English in order to get a job,* (*P.* < .01). It is clear from the results that disapproving of this statement favours the use of [zero *a/an*] (Log odds 0.433). In addition, speakers who felt neutral regarding the statement 3.8 were more likely to use the variant [*a/an* realisation], (Log odds -0.617). The findings indicate that Saudis who learned English to find jobs prefer to use zero indefinite article.

The fourth significant factor in analysis (A) is *English for leisure.2* which is statement 3.10 in the questionnaire (Appendix 1), *I watch English TV shows or movies,* (*P.* < .01). Approving of this statement is the most significant constraint that influences the use of zero indefinite article within the factor group (Log odds 0.442). On the other hand, speakers who preferred to be neutral when it comes to the statement 3.10 were more likely to use [*a/an* realisation] (Log odds -0.597). Therefore, Saudis' different goals in learning English influence their linguistic behaviour similarly.

The second analysis (B) of the indefinite article included all speakers, the social factors, language use test, attitudinal test, and the first linguistic factors *type of following NP*. Analysis (B) included 442 tokens of the indefinite articles (190 tokens of [*a/an* realisation] and 252 tokens of [zero

a/an]). The first and second run did not show any match significant factors. Therefore, only the social factors and the first linguistic factors were included in the third run which yielded in better results. In analysis (B), only *linguistic constraint* appeared to significantly impact variation in the indefinite article. Within this factor, following non-adjacent nouns proved to favour [zero *a/an*] (Log odds 1.427). Quantifiers, on the other hand, favour [*a/an* realisation] (Log odds -1.516). These findings are in line with the findings of analysis (A) that included only variable speakers.

Table 22: Significant factors influencing [zero *a/an*]

[Zero *a/an*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.661			0.66		
Total N.	380			442		
Log. likelihood	-240.951			-286.275		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Linguistic constraint	*P*. < .01			*P*. < .01		
an	0.696	79	82	0.611	74	97
a	-0.696	51	298	-0.611	52	345
Age	*P*. < .01			Not significant		
36-45	0.462	61	132			
26-35	0.168	59	183			
18-25	-0.631	41	65			
Not significant	**Social factors:** Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.		

A second regression analysis of the indefinite article was carried out including different linguistic constraints *type of indefinite article*, to examine whether *a* or *an* favour omission. In analysis (A), similar to the previous findings, the linguistic factor outranks the social factor. The results show that while there are instances of [zero *a*] and [zero *an*], only *an* significantly favours to be omitted (Log odds 0.696). The social factor group *age* proved to be significant as well, specifically the older group of Saudis (aged between 36 and 45) (Log odds 0.489), see Table 22. In analysis (B), only the linguistic factor proved to influence variation in the indefinite article. The results show that only *an* significantly favours to deletion (Log odds 0.611) In analysis (A) and (B), the findings reveal that *a* is more likely to be realised.

5.4 Indefinite article – Discussion

As discussed previously in section 3.2.2, the variant use of the indefinite article has been studied in ESL research in Saudi Arabia (e.g. Al-Mohanna, 2014; Alhaysony, 2012). In these studies, researchers attributed Saudis' variant use of the indefinite article to a lack of understanding of the article system in English. Al-Rawi (2012, p. 110) also found instances of [zero *a/an*] in her data which she explains "functions the same way as the zero article in Arabic". Similarly, the use of [zero *a/an*] has been found in other varieties of English, such as Chinese English and Singaporean English, where L1 does not have article systems equivalent to that found in English which results in speakers of those languages not realising the indefinite article in English (Platt, 1977; Robertson, 2000). Variation in articles that is attributed to L1 transfer is labelled as errors in SLA studies, however, L1 transfer is a crucial factor in language contact that leads to language variation, which should be considered while interpreting variables. Thus, the first possible interpretation of Saudis' use of [zero *a/an*] is that the Arabic language does not have an equivalent of the English indefinite article. Figure 16 and Figure 17 show the syntactic structure of English and Arabic sentences, in which the introduction of a new NP, *school* مدرسة, in Arabic does not need to be marked for indefiniteness.

Figure 16: Indefinite article in English   Figure 17: Indefinite article in Arabic
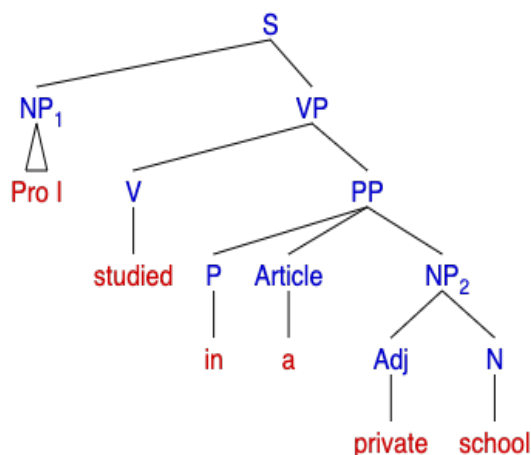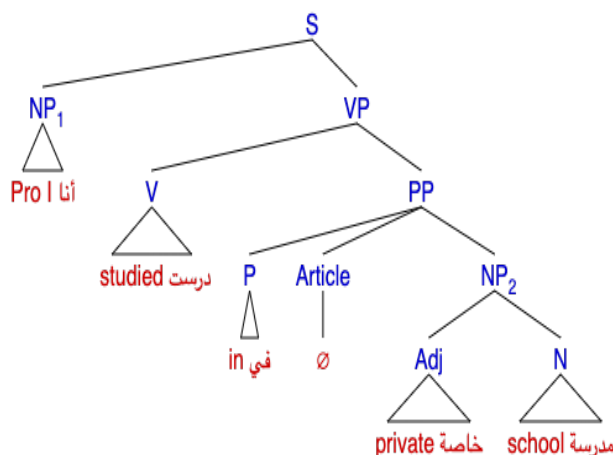
However, the data of this study shows contexts where Saudis used [*a/an*] (14a,b) and other contexts where they used [zero *a/an*] (15a.b), sometimes in the same statement (16a,b). In example (16a), the speaker introduces new information unknown to the interviewer, which is his cousin's job, *a teacher*, using the indefinite article *a*, then he introduces another new piece of information, his cousin's place of work, *government school*, but without using *an*. Examples such as (14a,b) and (16a,b) show that the speakers in this study understand the indefinite article rule and can apply it accurately according to ICE grammar; therefore, there must be other factors in play that control Saudis' variant use of the indefinite article.

14)
     a. So, I think she started facing [a] problem with reading.
     b. I don't have [an] accent.

15)
     a. I went to international schools. Then, I switched to Ø Arabic school.
     b. She was taking Ø English course.

16) 82

    a. Because my cousin, she is [a] teacher at Ø government school.

    b. I think they don't know [a] lot, they don't know that they speak Ø English accent.

5.4.1 Indefinite article + NPs/quantifiers

The regression analysis of the data reveals patterns of *a/an* use in Saudis' speech, that it is influenced by linguistic and social factors. Within the linguistic factors, the context *before non-adjacent noun* is the most significant predictor of [zero *a/an*] (Log odds 1.565, in A; and 1.427; in B), Table 21. In Chinese English, Robertson (2000) explains that unmarking NPs for indefiniteness is a result of variability in the mapping between meaning and forms. That is, introducing new information does not require an article if the information is recoverable from the context. In the same vein, Takam (2011) argues that variability in the indefinite article in Cameroon English reflects a speaker's perceived semantic property of an NP. He explains that the omission of the indefinite article in "*What kind of teacher is that?*" the speaker is doubting the qualities of the teacher (not what they teach or what type of teacher they are) which listeners who speak Cameroon English would understand from the semantic content of the utterance in "*He doesn't even speak correct English!*" (P. 267). According to Croft (2001) articles, like any other function words in English, are not discrete categories, hence, they should be interpreted in terms of the constructions and usage events in which they are used. Based on his argument, what an article signals should be inferred from a shared discourse. Adding to the argument of shared discourse, Hawkins (1978) argues that articles are pragmatically motivated, in that they provide information about an entity that is located in the speaker's and the hearer's shared discourse or universe. Kachru (2003) also argues that as a result of language contact, multilingual speakers tend to utilize devices, like articles, from English to express their own conceptual situations.

Based on these arguments, the use of [zero *a/an*] in my data could be attributed to the fact that new information might not be considered new in the speaker's and hearer's shared discourse.

For example, in (15a) above, the speaker might have expected the interviewer to already know that *Arabic school* meant a public school, or public schools, in general as opposed to international schools mentioned at the beginning of the utterance. Similarly, the reference to *government school*, in (16a), can be seen as a reference to any government school without specification as the focus of the utterance was the difficulties his cousin faced as an English teacher who was not working in an English-medium school which can be further understood from the following utterance, *she speaks English very well but the students, her students, they give her a hard time*. In (16b) stating that her children had *English accent* the speaker might have been expressing the idea that her children sound English rather than Arabs or Saudis which was the focus of the discussion. In example (15b) when the speaker talked about his wife taking *English course* as a part of her studies abroad, he might have expected the interviewer who is also an international student to understand that he was referring to the English classes most Saudis must take before starting university as a part of their scholarship.

In addition, to understand the use of [zero *a/an*] before non-adjacent nouns in the speech of Saudis, it is important to examine the syntactic structure of the linguistic constraint that favours [zero *a/an*]. In a *before non-adjacent noun* position, NPs are modified by adjectives, for example,

17. Actually that's Ø big issue for me.
18. I studied in Ø private school they used the British curriculum.
19. We can find Ø better job opportunity.

In this linguistic position, adjectives, such as *big*, *private*, *better*, precede NPs, and zero indefinite article is used before adjectives. Therefore, a possible explanation of the use of [zero *a/an*] is that adjectives cannot be modified with articles. That is, when speakers use NPs modified by adjectives, they omit the indefinite article as the initial word is an adjective.

5.4.2 a vs. an

Regarding the use of the articles *a* and *an*, the results show that only *an* favours omission in the data (Log odds 0.696, in A; and 0.611; in B), see Table 22. The distribution analysis of *a* and *an* also show that there are fewer instances of [*an* realisation] (25.77%) compared to instances with [*a* realisation] (47.83%), see Figure 18.

Figure 18: Frequency of a and an

The distribution analysis of [zero *a*] and [zero *an*] in the positions *before non-adjacent nouns* and *before adjacent nouns* show that the [zero *an*] occurs in the context before non-adjacent nouns more than the [zero *a*] (95.83% and 58.18%, respectively), Figure 19. The context *before quantifier* was not included in this analysis as all quantifiers start with consonants, such as *a little*, *a few*, *a lot*. Therefore, the article *an* favouring omission might be interpreted in relation to the context *before non-adjacent nouns* in which [zero *an*] is more likely to occur and which favours zero indefinite article the most.

Figure 19: Frequency of [zero a] and [zero an] before adjacent nouns and non-adjacent nouns
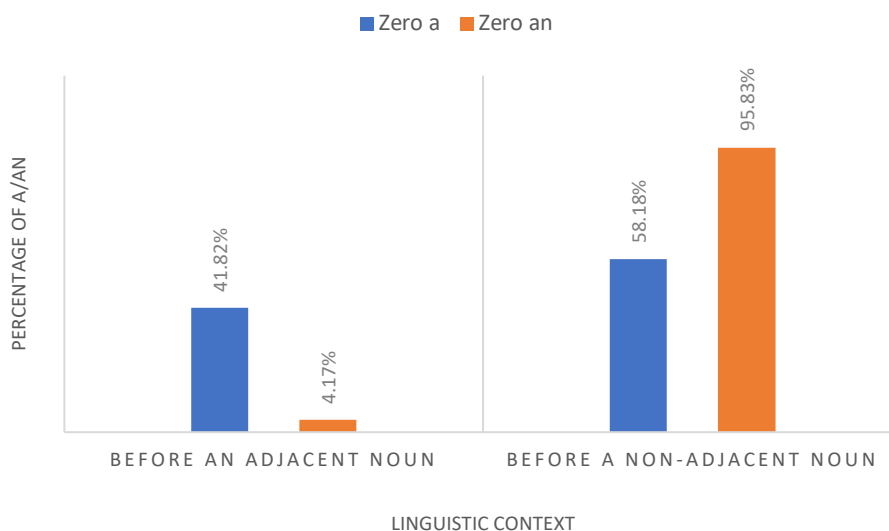
5.4.3 Residence

The factor *residency* is the second predictor of zero indefinite article in Saudi English. It might be expected that more exposure to L2 in an L2 context can increase the use of ICE-like forms. However, the results of the regression analysis reveal that living in a country where ICE is used favours the use of [zero *a/an*], Table 21. To understand how the locations of the speakers results in different language use, it is important to look into how the speakers in Saudi and the speakers in the UK might differ. Examining the data closely revealed that the participants who were living in Saudi started learning English earlier than the participants in the UK. As shown in Figure 20, the majority (53.85%) of the speakers in Saudi started learning English in pre-school or elementary school and 38.46% in intermediate school, whereas most of the speakers in the UK started taking English classes in intermediate school 73.33%. Therefore, the results that the group who were living in the UK were more likely to use [zero *a/an*] might be explained by the fact that they learned English at an older age that they did not acquire the article rule compared to the speakers in Saudi who learned it at an earlier age.

Figure 20: Type of education of Saudis in the UK and in Saudi
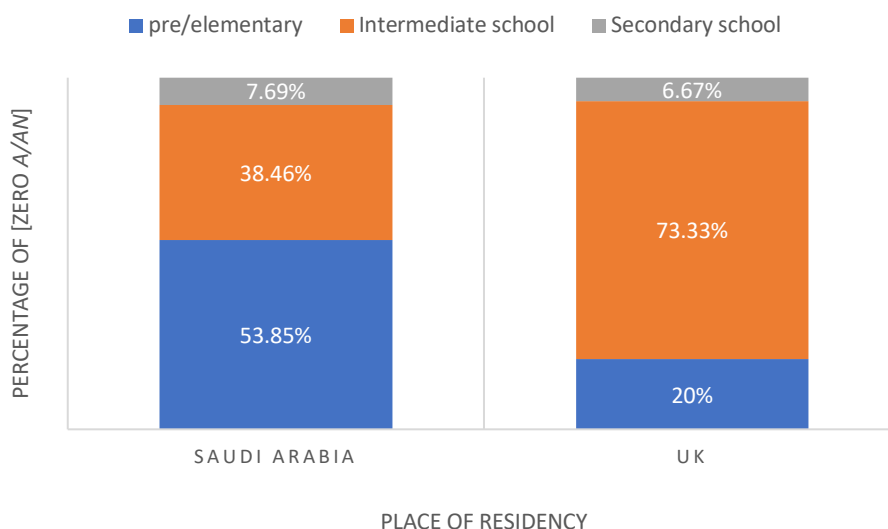
The factor *residency* correlates with *motivation*, discussed in the following section, which might indicate that the environment in which they live, and their English use experience in that environment have shaped their motivation and attitude to learn/use English which in turn influenced their language use. The speakers' opinions regarding English which they expressed in the conversations and responses in the questionnaire might shed light on how the two groups differ when it comes to their motivation and attitudes towards English. Responses to the questionnaire statement 3.18, *learning English is an indication of westernisation*, (appendix 1) show that the two groups of Saudis have different views of English in relation to culture. Figure 21 shows 100% of the Saudi participants in Saudi Arabia disagreed with the idea that learning the English language is a form of westernization. On the other hand, the Saudi participants living in the UK were not as unified. While 64.70% disagreed with the idea that learning English is an indication of westernization, 26.50% were unsure, and 8.80% agreed. These results indicate that to some Saudis in the UK, English is associated with the western world that has different values

and norms. On the other hand, to Saudis living in Saudi Arabia English does not pose a threat of westernization. Percentage

Figure 21: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.18, *learning English is an indication of westernization*
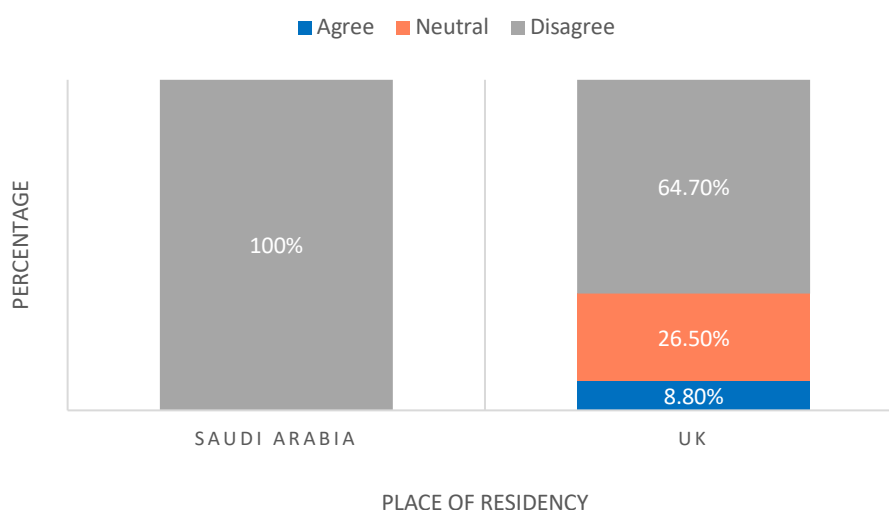
In addition, discussing the notion of future *imagined communities* and whether English would have an important role in Saudi in the future, the speakers had different opinions, Figure 22. The majority 83.3% of the speakers living in Saudi agreed with the idea that English will gain an important status in Saudi in the future. On the other hand, only 45% of the Saudis in the UK agreed, 35% disagreed and 20% were not sure. Being able to envision English as having a crucial role in their future could have been influenced by their different English use experiences in different environments which might have affected their language use regarding adhering to some English ICE rules including that of the indefinite article.

Figure 22: Responses of Saudis in the UK and Saudi regarding future imagined communities
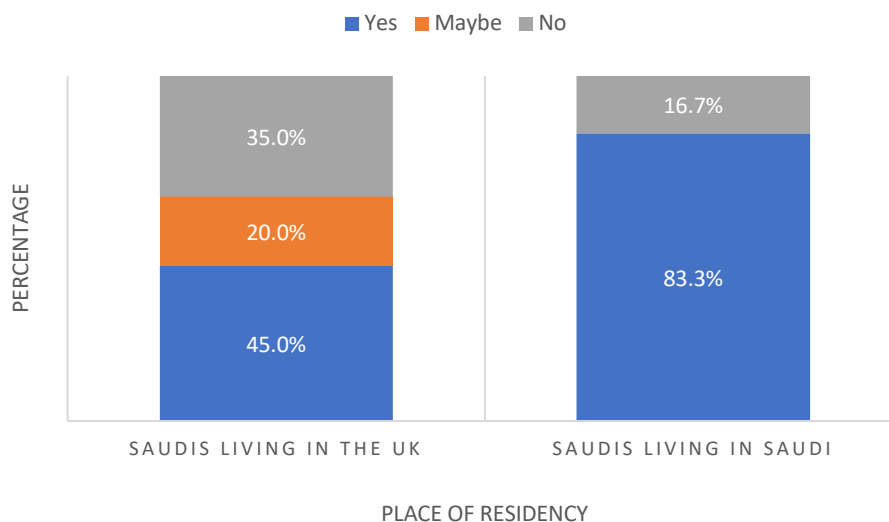
Having a negative attitude towards English might have been a result of living in a western country and being away from their culture, hence, distancing themselves from English and its cultural associations. The speakers' attachment to their culture which is always associated with Arabic was apparent in their views in the conversation:

(20) Hallah:

Our culture is different, you know? Yes, maybe there are some who have the opportunity to go abroad and study there. But until now they are, how many, how many, when you compare them with the whole citizens there? So, I think because our culture is religious culture, we have to stick with the Quran, with Hadith, and this is tough. Yes, you can speak English, but you can't, you can't just forget Arabic at all.

(21) Abu-Yaseen:

Arabic is our traditional language. This is our religion language, so we have to keep it, we have to save our language.

(22) Tahani:

No, Saudi Arabia would be always proud of her language.

Hallah (20), Abu-Yaseen (21) and Tahani (22), who were living in the UK, had high rates of the variant [zero *a/an*]. Discussing the status of English in Saudi, their views reflect their attachment to their culture which English does not represent. This grammatical variation in the speech of Saudis living in the UK could be interpreted as a representation of their social identity as Saudi English speakers distancing them from the ICE community they live in. According to Thomas et al. (2004) just like accent or phonological variations, grammatical variations can also indicate information about someone's identity. They also argue that through adhering to linguistic norms associated with a particular group, one can establish their membership of the ingroup as opposed to the outgroup. That is, any linguistic variation can be seen as a signal of affiliation with the community that uses that variation or disaffiliation with communities that do not share that linguistic variation. Identity representation through language has been investigated in various studies. For example, Labov's (1972) study in Martha's Vineyard, and Trudgill's (1974) study in Norwich. More recently, Drummond (2012b) found that future plans of residency and language variation represent aspects of identity. Polish participants living in Manchester, who had plans to return to Poland, showed variation in (ING) pronunciation that was influenced by their L1, [ɪŋk] and [ɪŋg], while those who intended to stay in Manchester used the local variant [ɪn] more. Drummond interpreted these results "as a measure of identity towards the L2 or the L1 culture" in that the speakers who intended to return to their country "arguably feel a stronger sense of identity and allegiance towards their native country and culture, and this is reflected in their use of a variant which signals that connection" (P. 129).

The tendency of Saudis living in the UK to use [zero *a/an*] could be interpreted as a result of starting to learn English at an older age that they did not acquire the standard rule of the indefinite article. However, showing variation means they have produced utterances in which they used *a/an* according to ICE grammar. Additionally, given the fact that *residency* correlates with the factor *motivation*, the factor *residency* might be better understood through their views on English which might motivate them to use the language differently. Bearing in mind the

speakers' attitudes towards English and their sense of fear of westernization, they might be seen as the reasons that lead Saudis living in a western community to manifest their social identity through language variation, [zero *a/an*], to show ingroup loyalty and to distance themselves from the other group and the western values they hold. This conclusion might imply that the speakers were aware of their linguistic choices where they have chosen the variant that is associated with their social group. However, that choice seems to be below the conscious level where the speakers seemed to simply not follow ICE grammatical rules and use a variant that is closer to their own linguistic system that is derived from their L1, Arabic. Through not adhering to ICE rules, they are distancing themselves from the cultural norms and values that *standard* English represents.

5.4.4 Motivation

As can be seen in Table 21, motivation proves to influence the use of zero indefinite article significantly. In particular, two types of motivation to use English, for job advancement, and for leisure. The results show that the speakers who disagreed with statement 3.8 in the attitudinal test, *I do not need to speak English in order to get a job* (Appendix 1), and the speakers who agreed with statement 3.10, *I watch English TV shows or movies* (Appendix 1) favoured [zero *a/an*]. That is, Saudis, in the current study, who said they would use English as a tool to advance their career and who would prefer to use English for leisure were more likely to use [zero *a/an*]. In the classic sense of motivation in previous SLA studies, discussed in section 2.3.3.2, these results would be interpreted as having instrumental and integrative motivation. The results of this study challenge arguments made in previous studies, for example Alsamani (2014), Hagler (2014), and Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi (1996) who argued one type of motivation (instrumental or integrative) improve or hinder language acquisition. According to Alsamani (2014) and Hagler (2014), Saudis' lack of awareness of the target culture could hinder their motivation which could lead to low performance in the language. On the other hand, Al-Abed Al-Hag and Samdi (1996) argued that Saudis are instrumentally motivated despite viewing English as a prestigious

language. The results of this study shows that it is possible to have different types of motivation and that the speakers who have these two types of motivation tend to use English similarly and favour [zero *a/an*].

To understand the influence of motivation on the use of [zero *a/an*], it is important to understand the concept of motivation and its influence on language use in general. Dörnyei (2005) built his framework of L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) on the concept that learners have different types of motivation to achieve future self that it may or may not have to do with L2 communities. The L2MSS entails that learners have ideal L2 self, which represents what learners would ideally like to be, and ought-to L2 self, which represents the attributes they need to gain to meet social or professional expectations. Consequently, any discrepancy between their current state and their future self (ideal or ought-to) motivates learners to bridge this gap. In this model, integrative and instrumental goals combined function as a motivator to achieve their future self. Ushioda (2011) explains that integrativeness is better conceived as an internal process of self-identification which might include internalized forms of instrumentality. Ushioda also argues that the relationship between motivation and identity is reciprocal, that is, given the nature of English communication in a globalised world, the motivation of English speakers to use the language to represent themselves as members of global communities better explains their identities rather than their motivation to identify with external ICE communities. On the other hand, these identities in a global group direct their motivational behaviour. The results of this study mirror that concept, in which the participants seem to be equally instrumentally and integratively motivated to use English. Their motivation seems to influence their creative use of English, the use of [zero *a/an*], which could reflect how they situate their future selves in a globalised world. The questionnaire responses of Hallah (23), Abu-Yaseen (24) and Tahani (25) who have high rates of [zero *a/an*], revealed that they use English for career advancement, for leisure or for both. In the conversations, they explained the importance of English as an international language:

(23) Hallah:

Keep Arabic because it is their (her children) original language, their identity, keep it for religious things. Keep English because this is the future, for their future, for studying in universities or abroad.

(24) Abu-Yaseen:

Now all big companies and all innovations [are] in English. So, if you want to be on track, you have to learn English otherwise you will be very late or behind what is going now around the world, you get my point?

This is the future. English is the future of the world. Now if you go to Dubai or countries like India, now most people in India now they do not speak Urdu, they speak English. So, if you go anywhere and you know English for sure you will find someone who can understand you but if you do not know English you will be in trouble. Yeah, so this is common now around the world.

I think after ten or twenty years, people should speak English, otherwise they will struggle because now everything is in English. If you want to search about anything you will find it in English but in Arabic it is limited. So, I think most people, they have to learn English, and this is the future language.

(25) Tahani:

We should be bilinguals I think because it is the most spoken, not the most spoken language, but it is the most popular language.

While Hallah, Abu-Yaseen and Tahani showed they have different reasons that motivate them to use English, for career advancement, for leisure or for both, they all had one common motivator that is English being an international language. In addition, these speakers expressed the importance of their culture which is associated with Arabic, Hallah in (20), Abu-Yaseen (21) in and Tahani in (22), section 5.4.3. Building on the discussion in the previous section that the use of [zero *a/an*] might be a representation of social identity and on the fact that the factors *residency* and *motivation* correlate, *motivation* might be interpreted as a crucial part of identity conceptualization in a globalised world represented in the use of [zero *a/an*].

5.4.5 Age

In addition to investigating the factors that favour the use of zero *a/an* in general, I investigated factors that might have an influence on [zero *a*] or [zero *an*], individually. As I discussed in 5.4.2,

the indefinite article *an* favours omission. In terms of social factors, *age* is the only social predictor that has a significant effect on the use of [zero *an*] rather than [zero *a*]. Table 22 shows that within the age groups, the oldest generation group, aged between 36 and 45 years old, seems to favour [zero *an*] the most (Log odds 0.489). The younger group, aged between 26 and 35 years, favours the use of [zero *an*] less than the oldest group and more than the youngest generation (Log odds 0.143). On the other hand, the youngest generation, Saudis aged between 18 and 25 years old, are the only group who do not favour the use of [zero *an*] (Log odds -0.633). I divided the speakers in this study into three age groups that represent periods through which have been changes regarding the development of English education and the spread of English use through education and the media, which I reviewed in section 2.2.2.2.

The relationship between age and language use has been examined mainly through two approaches. The first looks into age-specific language use over time. For example, Trudgill's first and second studies in Norwich. He found that the use of the local variant (e) backing before /l/ as in *help* increased and became more acceptable among younger speakers in 1968 and in 1983. The second is generation-specific analysing different language use of different generation groups living in the same community. For example, in a study of Maltese English Bonnici (2010) found that the eldest and the youngest generations disfavoured r-less, which the generation in between favoured. Studying age-related differences is not always straightforward, representing chronological age, as it is culturally specific. Cheshire (2005) points out that other social factors interact with age, such as gender, culture, and education, which makes comparing different age groups more complicated. Accordingly, variation in the speech of different generations could be the result of sociocultural changes rather than just ageing (Tagliamonte, 2012). Age, as Eckert (1997) puts it, marks a person's progress in life and in relation to social norms, which in this study could include having different education backgrounds and experiences. As I mentioned earlier, the participants in this study were grouped into three age groups that reflect stages of English spread in Saudi Arabia. Looking into each group's previous English education in the data, it

appears that there are differences among the three age groups when it comes to education. As Figure 23 shows, the majority of the older groups, 36-45 and 26-35, attended public schools. On the other hand, the majority of the youngest group, 18-25, were, entirely or partly, privately educated.

Figure 23: Type of education of each age group
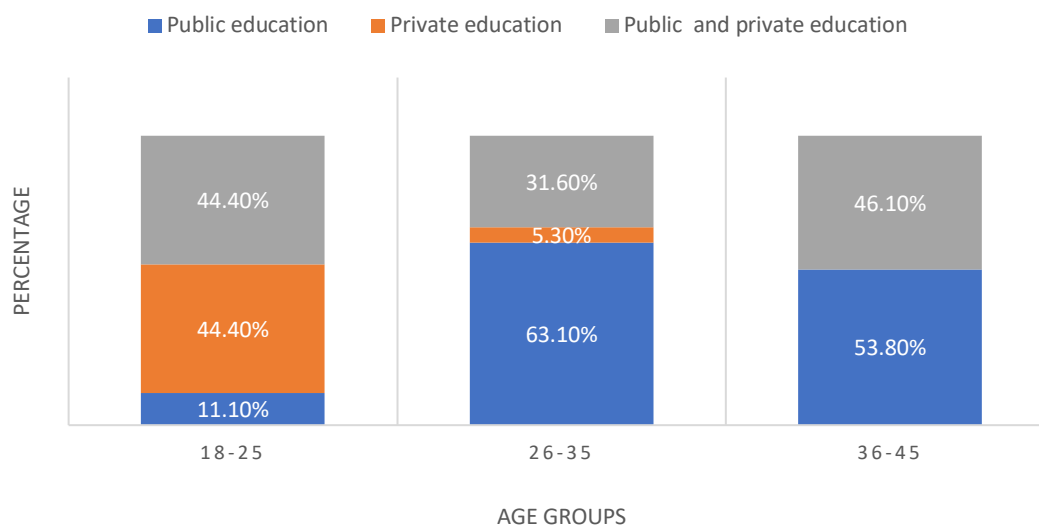
The difference between public and private schools in Saudi Arabia regarding English is that in the private school system, English is introduced at the earliest level, at the age five or six, resulting in twelve years of English education (Faruk, 2013). In the public school system, however, until recently, English was taught only in intermediate and secondary school, which is only six years of English education (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Another difference is that, until recently, private schools hire non-Saudis to teach English, whereas public schools only hired Saudis who most likely received the same English Education; therefore, would enforce ICE rules less. A third difference is that private schools use English books produced by American or British publishers, while the English books used in public schools are written by Saudi or Arab English teachers (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Mahboob & Elyas (2014), analysing the content and language of an English language textbook used in Saudi public schools, found that the content reflected local

and sociocultural views. They also found linguistic variation in articles, in subject-verb agreement, and in singular/plural forms, as reviewed in detail in section 2.2.1.2. Therefore, private and public schools offer different types of English contents and different English learning experiences.

As Saudi Arabia is part of the Expanding Circle in B. B. Kachru's (1985) three circles of World Englishes, ICE is still the target of instructions in classrooms which, as he argues, is inappropriate in a global setting where English should be more diverse. B. B. Kachru (1991) also argues that the use of ICE rejects any "recognition of pluricentricity and multi-identities of English" (P. 4) and any "underlying linguistic motivations for the range of variation" (P. 8) in the Outer and Expanding Circles. While ICE is the target language in private and public schools in Saudi Arabia, it could be argued that private schools enforce ICE whether American or British, more strongly through using ICE published books and hiring non-Saudi English teachers, leaving no room for creative use of the language.

Figure 24: Rates of self-reported language use at work
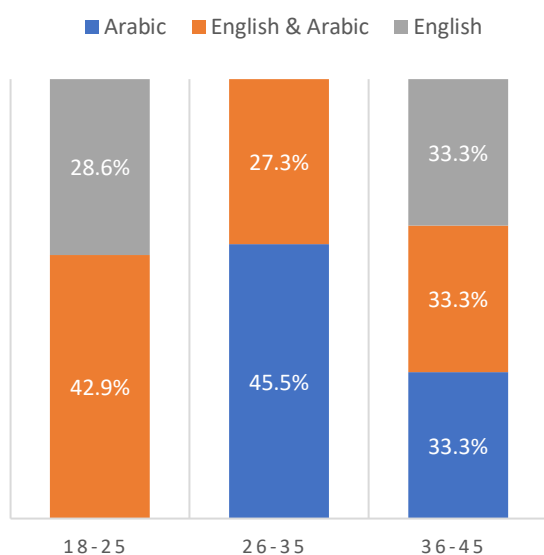
Figure 25: Rates of self-reported language use with friends
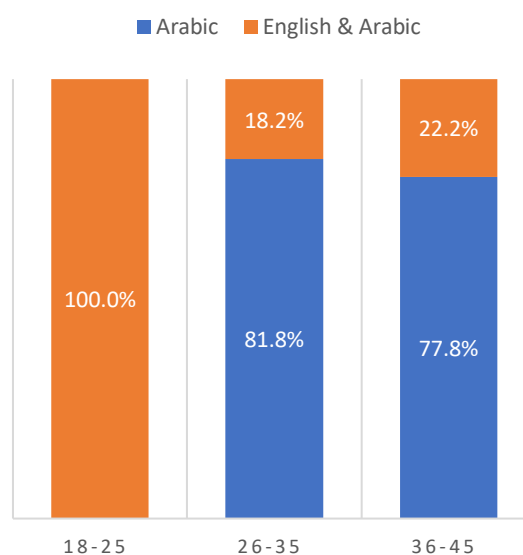
In addition, the spread of English use in Saudi can also be seen in the different rates of English use in the three age groups. Figures 24 and 25 show the rates of the speakers' self-reported language use at work and with friends, respectively. The younger group reported that they use English at work and with friends more than the two older groups. The oldest group (36-45) who are more likely to use [zero *an*] reported that at work they use both Arabic and English equally, and mostly Arabic with their friends. More analysis of the data shows that women used [zero *an*] more than men in the oldest and youngest age groups, Figure 26. This finding supports the argument that the effect of age on this variation might be better interpreted through the speakers' level of education, as the majority of the female speakers attended public schools and only two speakers had private education, whereas the majority of the male speakers had private education. This gender effect on variation is similar to the findings in the variation of *be*, section 5.2.6, where women's limited opportunities to use English seems to result in using [zero *be*]. Thus, the relationship between age and language use can be better understood through social or educational changes that occurred over time. The fact that age is a predictor of [zero *an*] could be interpreted in terms of age being seen as a representation of previous English education experiences, and the spread of English during the speakers' lifetime, which is reflected in the rates of English use.

Figure 26: Rates of [zero an] by age and gender
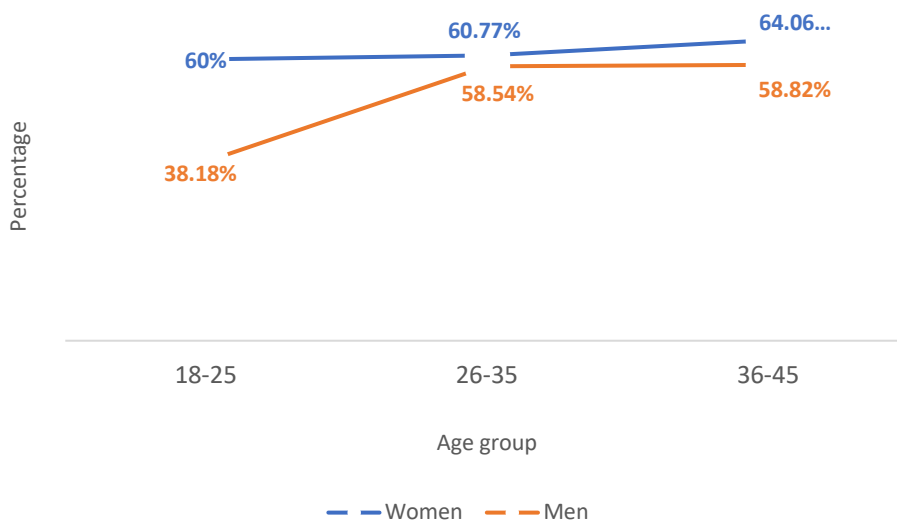
5.5 Definite article – Results

5.5.1 Distribution

Table 23: Total count for [zero ICE *the*] and [Saudi *the*] for all speakers

Speaker	[zero ICE *the*]	[Saudi *the*]	Total
1	34 (69.39%)	15 (30.61%)	49
2	5 (33.33%)	10 (66.67%)	15
3	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
4	0 (0.00%)	7 (100.00%)	7
5	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
6	6 (31.58%)	13 (68.42%)	19
7	13 (76.47%)	4 (23.53%)	17
8	8	8	16

	(50.00%)	(50.00%)	
9	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
10	4 (50.00%)	4 (50.00%)	8
11	4 (44.44%)	5 (55.56%)	9
12	5 (62.50%)	3 (37.50%)	8
13	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
14	5 (83.33%)	1 (16.67%)	6
15	2 (40.00%)	3 (60.00%)	5
16	5 (33.33%)	10 (66.67%)	15
17	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
18	5 (62.50%)	3 (37.50%)	8
19	7 (30.43%)	16 (69.57%)	23
20	10 (52.63%)	9 (47.37%)	19
21	0 (0.00%)	7 (100.00%)	7
22	7 (50.00%)	7 (50.00%)	14
23	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
24	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
25	5 (83.33%)	1 (16.67%)	6
26	3 (42.86%)	4 (57.14%)	7
27	20 (41.67%)	28 (58.33%)	48
28	0	6	6

	(0.00%)	(100.00%)	
29	5 (38.46%)	8 (61.54%)	13
30	10 (71.43%)	4 (28.57%)	14
31	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
32	6 (40.00%)	9 (60.00%)	15
33	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
34	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
35	30 (61.22%)	19 (38.78%)	49
36	7 (46.67%)	8 (53.33%)	15
37	9 (69.23%)	4 (30.77%)	13
38	0 (0.00%)	7 (100.00%)	7
39	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
40	35 (63.64%)	20 (36.36%)	55
41	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
Total	273 (49.91%)	274 (50.09%)	547

The third feature of Saudi English in this study is variation in the definite article (547 tokens). In the distributional analysis of the definite article the frequency of [Saudi *the*], that is the addition of *the* in contexts which do not require *the* in standard English, and zero inner circle English (ICE) *the* was counted. Table 23 shows the frequencies of the two variants of the definite article in the

speech of all variable and non-variable speakers. Figure 27 shows the rates of [Saudi *the*] and [zero ICE *the*] among all speakers.

Figure 27: Proportion of [Saudi the] and [zero ICE the] for each speaker
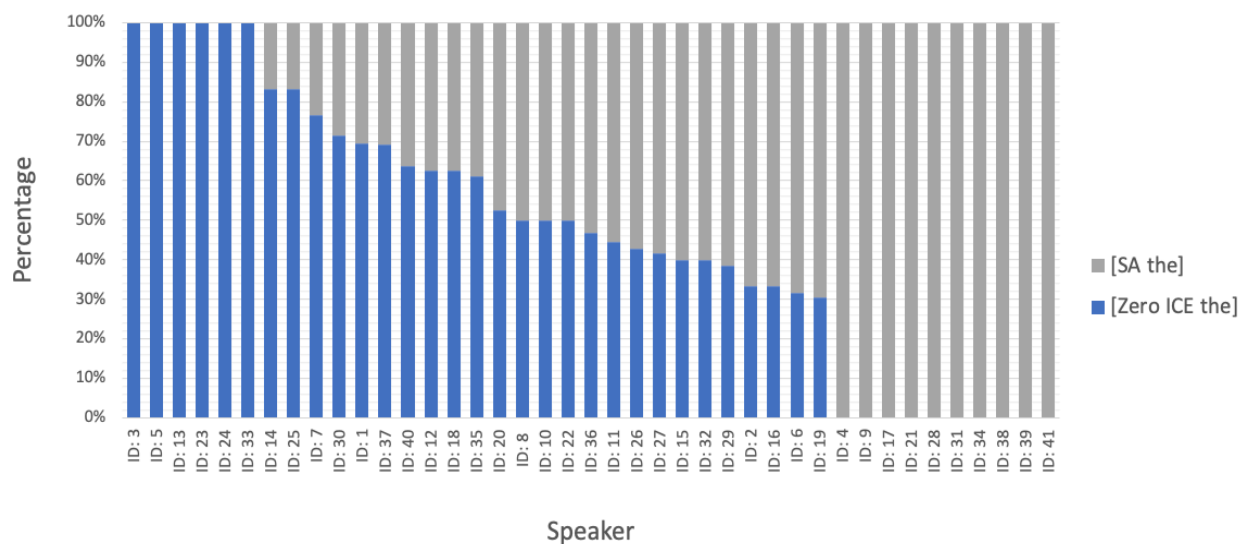
The distributional analysis revealed variability in the definite article where Saudis used [Saudi *the*], 274 tokens (50.09%) and [zero ICE *the*], 273 tokens (49.91%), Table 23. The results also show variation in the definite article in four contexts:

26. Generic reference (e.g., but in [the] social life I think Arabic is more important).
27. Names of languages (e.g., you have to learn [the] Arabic first and then you can learn [the] English).
28. Names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions or names of festive days and seasons (e.g., especially in [the] channel two if there is interview and want to ask about [the] Saudi Arabia).
29. Plural noun with generic reference (e.g., because we don't have as good movies as [the] English movies).

As presented in Table 24, variability in [Saudi *the*] appeared mostly in *generic reference* contexts (81.40%), followed by *plural noun with generic reference* (69.57%), *names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions or names of festive days and seasons* (48.76%), then *names of languages* (22.44%).

Table 24: Frequency of the definite article in relation to grammatical and social factors

	[zero ICE. *the*] N	[zero ICE. *the*] %	[Saudi *the*] N	[Saudi *the*] %	Total N
Grammatical Position					
Generic reference	24	18.60%	105	81.40%	129
Names of languages	159	77.56%	46	22.44%	205
Names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions or names of festive days and seasons	62	51.24%	59	48.76%	121
Plural count noun with generic reference	28	30.43%	64	69.57%	92
Gender					
Female	125	50.61%	122	49.39%	247
Male	148	49.33%	152	50.67%	300
Age					
18-25	68	57.14%	51	42.86%	119
26-35	148	58.04%	107	41.96%	255
36-45	57	32.95%	116	67.05%	173
Years of English education					
3-6 years	23	50.00%	23	50.00%	46
7-10 years	79	44.38%	99	55.62%	178
11 years +	171	52.94%	152	47.06%	323
Residency					
Saudi Arabia	128	56.64%	98	43.36%	226
UK	145	45.17%	176	54.83%	321

Tribalism					
Non-tribal	142	59.92%	95	40.08%	237
Tribal	131	42.26%	179	57.74%	310
Occupation					
Professionals	58	36.71%	100	63.29%	158
Students	215	55.27%	174	44.73%	389

Similar to the previous grammatical features, the social factor *gender* was included in the distributional analysis of the definite article. Contrary to previous findings in verb *be* and indefinite articles, Table 24 shows that in this study men used [Saudi *the*] more than women, 50.67%, and 49.39%. However, Saudi women and men in this study used the two variants almost equally. *Age* was included in the distributional analysis of the definite article. Table 8 presents the frequency of [Saudi *the*] and [zero ICE *the*] among three age groups, 18-25, 26-35, and 36-45. The two younger groups favoured [zero ICE *the*], 57.14%, and 58.04%, respectively. The oldest group (36-45) appeared to favour [Saudi *the*] the most, 67.05%.

Table 24 presents the frequency of the definite article in three groups regarding the *period of English education*. It shows that only Saudis who had more than 11 years of English education favoured [zero ICE *the*] the most, 52.94%. Similar to the earlier findings in the indefinite articles, the group who with 3-6 years of English education used the two variants equally.

Residency was factored in the distributional analysis of the definite article, as presented in Table 24. Contrary to my expectations that Saudis in the UK had a better chance of communicating with British English speakers, hence more exposure to ICE rules, Saudis in the UK used [Saudi *the*] slightly more than [zero ICE *the*], 54.83%, and 45.17%. On the other hand, Saudis who were living in Saudi Arabia used [Saudi *the*] less than [zero ICE *the*], 43.36%, and 56.64%.

Table 24 also shows the frequency of the definite article among non-tribal and tribal Saudis. It shows that tribal Saudis favoured [Saudi *the*] more than [zero ICE *the*], 57.74% and 42.26%. On

the other hand, non-tribal speakers used [zero ICE *the*] more than [Saudi *the*], 59.92% and 40.08%.

Table 24 also shows the frequency of the definite article among professional Saudis and Saudi university students. Professionals used [Saudi *the*] more than Students, 63.29%, and 44.73%. This result is in line with the previous result regarding indefinite articles in which professionals favoured the zero form more than students.

5.5.2 Multiple logistic regression

The regression analysis of the definite article included 466 tokens of the in analyses (A) that included only variable speakers and 547 tokens in analyses (B) that included all speakers. The variant [Saudi *the*] was the application value in both analyses.

The first run of analysis (A), [Saudi *the*] included all social factors, linguistic factor, language use test, and attitudinal test. This run also resulted in mismatched significant predictors in both models. The log. Likelihood of the step-up model was -230.5 and the log. Likelihood of the step-down model was -230.882. Therefore, I chose the step-up model as it was the strongest model. The second run included only the predictors of the step-up models in the first run excluding all other predictors. The results of the regression analysis (A) of [Saudi *the*] are presented in Table 25.

Table 25: Significant factors influencing [Saudi *the*]

[Saudi *the*]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.373			0.721		
Total N.	466			547		
Log. likelihood	-230.5			-275.713		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.

Linguistic constraint	*P.* < .01			*P.* < .01		
Generic reference	1.489	81	107	1.378	81	129
Plural noun with Generic reference	0.838	70	86	0.995	70	92
Names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions and Names of festive days or seasons	-0.195	46	108	-0.239	49	121
Names of languages	-2.132	12	165	-2.134	22	205
Language use with friends	*P.* < .01			Not significant		
Arabic	0.359	48	361			
Arabic and English	-0.359	41	105			
Perception.1 (I sound sophisticated when I speak English)	*P.* < .05			Not significant		
Neutral	0.473	47	298			
Agree	0.284	51	132			
Disagree	-0.758	25	36			
Variability	Not included			*P.* < .01		
Non-variable				1.111	72	81
Variable				-1.111	46	466
Tribalism	Not significant			*P.* < .05		
tribal				0.716	58	310
Non-tribal				-0.716	40	237
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English		

	for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.	for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

In this case, the linguistic predictor outranked the language use test and attitudinal test predictors. The findings revealed that the linguistic factor was the most significant constraint to predict the use of [Saudi *the*] (*P.* < .01). Within that factor group, the linguistic position *generic reference* proved to be the most significant variable (Log odds 1.489). Examples of [Saudi *the*] in my data:

30. Say the correct [the] pronunciation for each word in the correct way.
31. Because you know [the] accent it depends from subject to subject.
32. I think it's benefiting [the] business in the globalization and these matters.

Additionally, it seems that the predictor *names of languages* favours the variant [zero ICE *the*] the most (Log odds -2.132). The factor group *language use with friends* was also a significant predictor of [Saudi *the*] (*P.* < .01). Within the factor group, speaking mostly Arabic with friends favoured the use of [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 0.359). On the other hand, Saudis who prefer to use Arabic and English in their social networks are more likely to use [zero ICE *the*] (Log odds -0.359). In addition, *perception.1* which is statement 3.2 (Appendix 1), *I sound sophisticated when I speak English*, was also a significant predictor of [Saudi *the*] (*P.* < .05). Although the majority agreed with that statement (see section 6.2 for the results of the questionnaire), however, being undecisive whether speaking English makes them sound sophisticated proved to be the most significant predictor of Saudis' linguistic behaviour regarding [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 0.473). On the other hand, speakers who disagreed with statement 3.2 seemed to prefer [zero ICE *the*] the most (Log odds -0.758).

In the second analysis (B) of the definite article, which included all speakers, all factors were added. The first and second runs did not show any matched significant results. The third analysis

included the social and linguistic factors. The findings reveal that *Linguistic constraint* is significant (*P*. < .01). Similar to the results of analysis (A), in this analysis the linguistic position *generic reference* proved to be the most significant variable that favours [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 1.378). Additionally, the variant [zero ICE *the*] is more likely to be used before *names of languages* (Log odds -2.134). *Variability* and *Tribalism* also reached statistical significance at the *P*. < .01 and *P*. < .05 levels, respectively. The results show that tribal Saudis tend to use [Saudi *the*] more (Log odds 0.716) while non-tribal Saudis seem to prefer [zero ICE *the*] (Log odds -0.716). Additionally, non-variable speakers are more likely to add *the* in positions that do not require a definite article in ICE varieties (Log odds 1.111).

5.6 Definite article – Discussion

5.6.1 Linguistic constraint

The third feature of Saudi English that was included in the regression analysis is the definite article that has two variants, [Saudi *the*] and [zero ICE *the*]. Similar to verb *be* and the indefinite article, in the case of the definite article the linguistic factor outranks the social factors which will be discussed in the following sections. Within the linguistic factor, as Table 25 shows, the linguistic constraint *generic reference* (as in 33a,b) is the most significant predictor of [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 1.489, in A; and 1.378, in B). The linguistic constraint *plural noun with generic reference* (as in 33a,b) is second in favouring [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 0.838, in A; and 0.995, in B). The linguistic environments *names of things, places, cities, countries, social and domestic institutions and names of festive days or seasons*, and *names of languages* proved not to be statistically significant.

(33)
   a. I think the future, and [the] science are all about English.
   b. I think Arabic is more important in [the] social life.

(34)

a. Because [the] good quality TV shows and movies are from the US.
b. What helped me the most is [the] songs, movies.

The definite article has been studied in SLA research carried out in Saudi Arabia (for example, Al-Mohanna, 2014; Alhaysony, 2012). These studies reported variation of the definite article, that is the addition of *the* in contexts where ICE do not require one. Variation in the use of *the* in these and similar SLA studies was interpreted as learner errors, which is discussed in more details in section 3.2.2. On the other hand, the definite article was investigated in Al-Rawi's (2012) study from a World Englishes perspective. In her study, she found that the use of *the* varies in Saudis' speech in different contexts among which is the addition of *the* for generic reference, for example, "*the children are better when it comes to language learning*", (P. 34). She attributed the addition of *the* in her data to the influence of Arabic where, in that context for example, NPs require a definite marker equivalent to *the*. Therefore, the tendency of Saudis, in this study, to use [Saudi *the*] before NPs with generic reference and plural NPs with generic reference could be interpreted as L1 transfer. As I mentioned earlier these types of NPs require a definite marker in Arabic (al- الـ).

Figure 28: Morphological and syntactic structure of a definite NP in Arabic and English
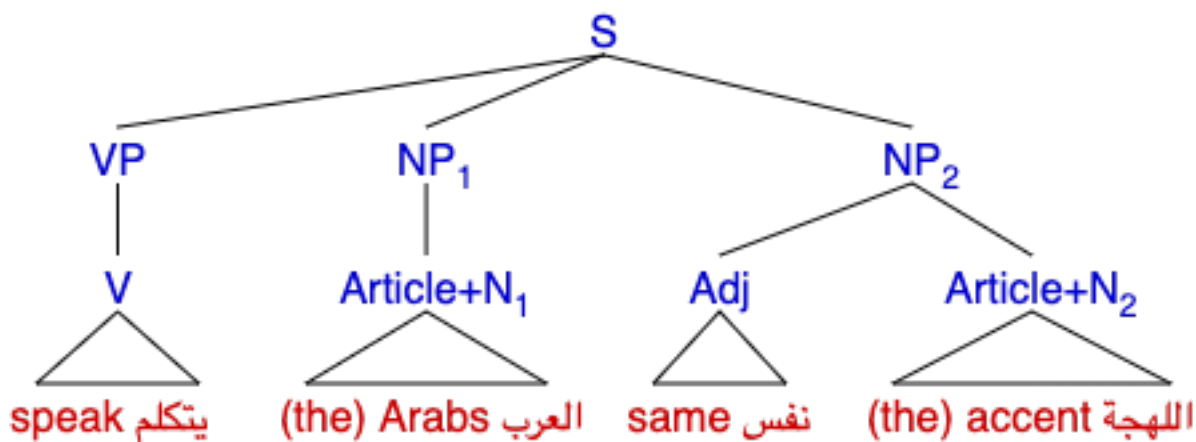
Figure 28 shows an example from my data to illustrate the morphological/syntactic structure of a plural NP, with a generic reference, marked with the definite article in Arabic and English (*the* Arabs العرب). In this example, [*the*] *Arabs speak the same accent*, the speaker added [Saudi *the*] before a plural noun to refer to *Arabs* in general having the same accent in English. However, this interpretation may be an oversimplification as variation in the definite article (*the* addition) has been reported in other varieties of English including ICE varieties. Kachru (2003), for example, argues that the use of the definite article in English is complex, that is even in *standard* English varieties its use varies. Takam (2011) also points out that the definite article varies in ICE varieties, for example, *He has* [*the*] *measles* or *He has Ø measles* (P. 276).

In her study, Kachru (2003) found that in some instances ICE speakers and OCE (Outer Circle Englishes) speakers used the definite article before NPs with generic reference, for example, *Analysis focuses on* [*the*] *strategies expected to lead to either pragma-linguistic or socio-pragmatic failure*…, (P. 501). According to Kachru one of the reasons may be that "in many cases, *the* is used for generic reference if a contrast between entities is being pointed out" as in two or more sets of strategies were being compared, hence, the set of strategies mentioned in the text was unique in comparison to others (p. 507). She also argues that the definite article not only has a grammatical function but a semantic function to refer to a familiar entity "that is part of the shared knowledge between speaker ± hearer or reader ± writer" (p. 508). The definite article also has a pragmatic function to refer to an entity that can be inferred from elements of the discourse in which the speaker and hearer are engaged. These functions of *the* reported in non-standard varieties are similar to the pragmatic and semantic functions of *the* in ICE varieties, however, contexts and types of shared discourse that require *the* seem to be different. That is, for example, the definite article in ICE varieties has a pragmatic function as in [*the*] *earth revolves around* [*the*] *sun* when the referent is part of the interlocutors' shared knowledge. However, the difference between standard and non-standard varieties when it comes to the pragmatic function of *the* is

that context, that might seem to be larger and unspecific in standard varieties, may be considered specific to speakers of non-standard varieties.

Wahid (2013) reported variation in the use of *the* among ICE and OCE speakers. He also found that the use of *the* to indicate genericity is more frequent in OCE varieties (Indian English, Singaporean English, Philippine English, and Kenyan English) than in ICE varieties (American English, British English, New Zealand English, and Australian English). However, he found some instances of *the* before NPs with generic reference in New Zealand English. Similar to Kachru's (2003) argument, Wahid (2013) points out that there could be an underlying semantic or pragmatic reason to explain this various use of *the* in different English varieties. Similarly, Takam (2011) found that the addition of the definite article in a context that is different from ICE is a feature of Cameroon English. He reported the use of *the* before NPs with generic reference in Cameroon English, for example, [*the*] *society is very critical*. In this example, he argues that while the context seems generic, however, it is specific to the speaker and hearer if we considered the whole context of the utterance, as in [*the*] *society in which we live is very critical.* That is, the cataphoric reference by ellipsis (*in which we live*) makes the context more specific which calls for the use of *the* (P. 277). Additionally, Epstein (2002) offers a different explanation. He argues that correct use of *the* in English is based on the speaker's presumption of the hearer's knowledge. He explains that *the* has another broad and speaker-oriented function in which a new entity that is prominent in the broader discourse context can be introduced and which requires the hearer "to accept the referents into the discourse under distinct guises (to further their own communicative purposes)" (p. 372).

Going back to the results of this study, considering Kachru's (2003), Wahid's (2013), and Takam's (2011) arguments that the definite article has semantic and pragmatic functions that vary across varieties of English, it could be argued that Saudis use *the* in a way that is peculiar to Saudi English. In the example of *the* for generic reference above, [*the*] *Arabs speak the same accent*, the noun

Arabs might not be considered as generic to the speaker and hearer. That is, bearing in mind that both the speaker and hearer are Saudis, and that the context of the discussion was specifically about Saudis and English, it seems that [*the*] *Arabs* semantically may refer to Saudis who speak English specifically, hence, the use of *the* to refer to a unique group of Arabs rather than Arabs in general. Another interpretation, as Kachru (2003) and Takam (2011) argue, is that definite NPs are used in non-anaphoric larger situations where the speaker relies on the hearer's knowledge of the definite NPs by being members of the same community. Takam (2011) provided another example of *the* in generic context, "*The new minister of* [*the*] *economy and finance is said to be a disciplinarian* (StE: The new minister of Ø economy and finance…)" (P.277), which bears a close resemblance to an example in Saudi English, *I think English is benefiting* [*the*] *business*. It seems that in these examples *the* is pragmatically used to identify NPs, [*the*] *economy and finance* (of Cameroon) and [*the*] *business* (in Saudi Arabia), that the hearers could be familiar with being members of their communities. As Wahid (2013, p. 25-26) points out, "the size of the situation can vary but all will have the context of utterance" and the speakers' and the hearers' shared knowledge as their defining point. In addition, it could be argued that the definite NPs in the examples above, which are in generic contexts are considered as relatable to the cataphoric reference (of Cameroon, and in Saudi Arabia) by ellipsis. Epstein's (2002) proposed new *the* function could help understand *the* variation in this study, even though Epstein discussed *the* in ICE varieties. Epstein shifts the focus from the hearer to the speaker. That is, speakers in this study may have introduced new entities that were the prominent topics of the discourse context expecting hearers to construct their meanings from the discourse.

These interpretations account for singular and plural NPs with generic reference. For example, discussing poverty in Africa with her daughter, a speaker in my study said, *but God if he wanted, he would give them food, give* [*the*] *children food*. In another example, a speaker in my study explaining the difference between public and private schools, *they* [private schools] *just teach them all subjects in English and beside they give them* [*the*] *religion*. In these examples, [*the*]

children is a plural NP and [*the*] *religio*n is a singular NP both in generic contexts. Isolated, both NPs seem to be generic which would require zero article Ø *children* and Ø *religion* in ICE varieties. However, when put in context, in the first example the speaker is referring to children in Africa specifically, and in the second example the speaker is referring to Islam, which makes the NPs more specific that require the use of *the*. Thus, it seems that the variation in the definite article in Saudi English is more complex than just L1 transfer. To understand the use of [Saudi *the*] that is predicted by two linguistic constraints *generic reference* and *plural noun with generic reference*, it is important to consider the pragmatic and semantic functions of the definite article.

5.6.2 Language use with friends

The first social constraint of the use of [Saudi *the*] is *language use with friend*s, that is, Saudis who prefer to speak Arabic with their friends tend to use [Saudi *the*] (Log odds 0.359), Table 25. Information about Saudis' language use in different situations was collected through a self-assessment test. In section 4.4.2, I discussed the limitations of self-assessment tests in gathering information about language use. I also reviewed examples of some studies in which language use in different situations and domains predicted different aspects of linguistic ability. Bayley (1996) and Sharma (2005) investigated the influence of language use on variation. Their studies were carried out in ESL contexts (in the US) in which the speakers had different social networks, one that included interaction with speakers from the same L1 background only and another which included L2 speakers, to study the effect of the amount of exposure to English native speakers on acquisition of L2 variants. Bayley (1996) studied the effect of social network on acquiring the target variable deletion of *t/d* in consonant clusters, for example, *west side* pronounced as *wes' side* (P. 98). He found that Chinese English speakers who had mixed social networks (Chinese and Americans), in which they had opportunities to use English in informal situations, were less likely to pronounce *t/d* in consonant clusters. On the other hand, those who had limited use of English in informal contexts as they affiliated only with other Chinese were more likely to pronounce *t/d*. Sharma (2005) included language use in her study of non-standard variables in the speech of

Indian English speakers. She found that English use with friends, which included native speakers, favours the use of standard variants. On the other hand, her results revealed that speakers who used English at work had a tendency to use non-standard variants, which is expected as most of the speakers in her study worked in an Indian community with limited interaction with native speakers. Bayley's (1996) and Sharma's (2005) studies revealed the importance of language use in predicting language variation.

The current study was conducted in a different setting, an EFL setting in which interaction with *native* speakers is not the focus. Rather, the comparison is being made between Saudi speakers' choice of language (Arabic, English, or both) in interacting with other Saudis. The results of this study show that using Arabic with friends disfavours [zero ICE *the*] and favours the use of [Saudi *the*]. That is, the speakers in my study who prefer to speak Arabic more in their social networks are more likely to use the variant [Saudi *the*]. To explain this pattern, it is important to consider the reasons that lead some speakers to choose to speak Arabic instead of English, and some to use both as the language of interaction in their social networks. Beside considering the quantitative results above, qualitative factors must also be considered, that is Saudis' personal stances regarding using English with friends. Below are examples of Saudis' responses to the questions *if you saw two Saudis chatting in English what would you think?*, and *do you think a lot of Saudis speak English?* Some of the speakers invoked the notion of identity. In example (35), Hallah thinks the Arabic language is part of her identity, thus, it is important to keep using Arabic instead of English to keep her Arab identity. To some speakers, speaking English with friends in Saudi Arabia is perceived as bragging, which could reflect their own perception of English as a language of prestige or high status. In examples (36) and (37), Safa' and Raja' consider speaking English with other Saudis as being pretentious and a *show-off*.

(35) Hallah:

I don't like it. As I told you from the beginning, I think you have to keep your identity, and language as one part of your identity. If you just ignore it, that means you're ignoring your identity.

I'm proud of my Arabic, and I don't want to change it at all. Okay, I can learn another language, and use it, but I don't want to leave mine. I don't know, it is something inside. I feel it, as, if I change my language, I change my identity. So, I don't want that.

(36) Safa':

They're showing off. It depends on the background, or from the way that they speak, I can tell if it's a show-off, or it's because of other influences. I don't like people who would speak in English all the time.

A lot of Saudis speak English, but not everyone in Saudi speaks English. I will not say that it will be an English-speaking country and if it would be like this, I think I would not be happy because Arabic is our language and it's our heritage. I think English is a prestigious thing, so if they're going to use it, they're going to use it because of prestige.

(37) Raja':

Pretending or showing off, maybe because they're Saudis, they don't have to speak in English, unless there is someone who doesn't understand Arabic. I saw many Saudis speak English. They are obsessed with the language. Some parents are even obsessed with the language. But I think they focus on the accent more than the language itself.

On the other hand, in examples (38) and (39), the respondents view the idea of speaking English among friends positively. Osama perceived using English as being educated, and Fatin thinks some Saudis may find it easier to speak in English. In example (40) Rami, who is the highest user of [zero ICE *the*], expressed similar opinion to Fatin's opinion (39) that English is a language of communication, adding that schools in Saudi Arabia should focus on teaching the history of Arabs and our culture in Arabic.

(38) Osama:
Sometimes if you see people talking in English in Saudi Arabia the first impression you think they are educated, they are open minded.

(39) Fatin:
Maybe because it's easier to communicate in English. It's good.

(40) Rami:

> We have to learn English so we can communicate. But for me, for example, if I want to write a letter to another company or to another department in English, I can do that very well. Okay? But if you ask me to write it in Arabic, I think it's going to be very difficult. I think the Arabic language has so much in it which we didn't know. History, for example, of the Arabic land. We don't know. I'm talking about myself, for example. I'm very poor in it, okay? We should not weaken our Arabic. I think the educational system should have very good focus, I think, on the Arabic culture and the history in the Arabic language.

From the examples above, it is clear that some Saudis link speaking English in social networks with the loss of identity and perceive it as pretending to be someone else. So, the relationship between language use in social networks and [Saudi *the*] could be usefully viewed in relation to social identity theory (SIT), which is discussed in section 2.3.1.1. Social identity theory entails that the way people act, behave or talk are symbols that they accentuate to show uniformity within social groups and differentiate their groups from other groups. When group identities, as opposed to personal identities, are the basis of interaction, people behave or talk in manners that are considered the norms of a typical member in their groups (Meyerhoff, 2011). Social identity theory may explain the pattern that emerged in the statistical results, Saudis who prefer to speak Arabic with their friends tend to use [Saudi *the*]. That is, if some of the Saudis in the study perceive English as a foreign language that they do not identify with, then they could be rejecting ICE rules and variants [zero ICE *the*] they were taught in schools and instead they prefer to use their own variant [Saudi *the*]. This finding is similar to the finding regarding the use of [zero *a/an*], in sections 5.4.3 and 5.4.4, in which the concept of social identity seems to be a principal factor in explaining that variation. It can be argued that variation in articles (definite and indefinite articles) in Saudi English may represent aspects of the speakers' Arab identity.

5.6.3 Perception

Building on the discussion of social identity, the factor *perception* which reached statistical significance (Log odds 0.473) seems to be another factor that reflects the importance of considering social identity in interpreting variation in the definite article. The results show that Saudis who are unsure or undecided whether English makes them sound sophisticated are more

likely to use [Saudi *the*], Table 25. This result is different from the findings of studies that found a positive correlation between having positive attitudes towards English and mastering *standard* English (ICE) (e.g., Al-Samadani & Ibnian, 2015), see section 2.3.3.1. In fact, the results of the current study show that disagreeing with the statement 3.2 (Appendix 1), *I sound sophisticated when I speak English,* that could be seen as having negative attitude towards English, favours the use of [zero ICE *the*] (Log odds -0.758). As being neutral, undecided, or indifferent in the questionnaire might seem ambiguous, I investigated the participants' responses in the conversations regarding speaking English. Below are two examples of responses to the question *do you think English is a threat to Arabic?* Abdul Hadi (41) and Maliha (42) are neutral to the statement, *I sound sophisticated when I speak English*, in the attitudinal test and are high users of [Saudi *the*]. Although they showed indifferent attitudes towards using English, it can be observed that their high use of the Saudi variant and their responses below show a different side of their feelings about English:

(41) Abdul Hadi:

> In general? No, and yes, actually. No, if we tried to... As we increase English courses and increase the English awareness to people, we should increase Arabic as well. So, you have to make a balance between these two languages here in schools, and also universities, and also in families. They should be aware. Nowadays they usually focus more on English. Also, my family, they don't focus more on Arabic. So, this is a problem. This is a problem. Absolutely, if we continue in this pattern English will win. Absolutely.

(42) Maliha:

> I do not know. Because some Saudis wanted to learn English to be like western. Not because they wanted to be educated. Some of them, not all of them, because I know three girls learned English and they changed their system, their life to be western. But I think this is stupid.

Abdul Hadi (41) and Maliha (42) have conflicted views about English. On the one hand, they scored indifferent towards English in the attitudinal test, that is, they are ambivalent as to whether English makes them sound sophisticated. On the other hand, Abdul Hadi thinks Arabic and English should be given the same awareness otherwise *English will win*. This statement that

English will win if Saudis fail to increase awareness of the importance of Arabic can be seen to reflect his inner sense of comparison between English as an ICE variety and Arabic as his language with which he identifies. Maliha, too, scored indifferent towards English in the attitudinal test but she thinks learning and using English can have a negative impact on Saudis' lives. Abdul Hadi's and Maliha's actual language use may reflect their perception regarding English which they expressed in the interviews and which differs from their responses to the attitudinal test. It is not uncommon that people have attitudes about language in general which contradict their actual language use. Milroy and Milroy (1985) argue that linguists who have studied linguistic attitudes found that people 's overt feelings about languages often contradict their actual usage. In addition, Thomas et al. (2004) argue that languages and language varieties are related to power, prestige, solidarity and social or cultural identity. Speakers base their judgments of languages or parts of languages, like grammar or pronunciation, on stereotypes or beliefs about their speakers, usually in contrast to their own beliefs about themselves and their languages. Perception of a language shapes speakers' language use to reflect their identity that in turn can both affect and be affected by their perception. Hence, Saudis' perception of English can influence their preference of language features to reflect their social identity. On the other hand, their social identity, as Arabs, can influence their perception of English as an ICE variety. Therefore, the speakers' contradicting attitudes towards English which is different from their actual language use could be a result of the education system in Saudi Arabia that promotes the notion of ICE *standardness*. What English teachers in Saudi Arabia teach is different from Saudis' actual usage of English. It seems that their use of [Saudi *the*] might reflect their true feelings, that is, Saudis are unconsciously diverging from English as an ICE variety through using forms which they are more comfortable to use and with which they identify.

5.6.4 Tribalism

The factor tribalism is the only social factor that appears in the findings to influence variation in the definite article, see Table 25. *Tribalism*, along with *variability*, reached statistical significance

at the *P.* < .05 and *P.* < .01 levels, respectively, after including all variable and non-variable speakers in the analysis. Non-variable and tribal speakers are more likely to use the variant [Saudi *the*]. The findings, presented in Figure 29, show that tribal Saudis who are non-variable seem to prefer [Saudi *the*] more than non-variable, non-tribal Saudis who used [zero ICE *the*] more.

Figure 29: Rates of [zero ICE the] and [Saudi the] in the speech of non-variable tribal and non-tribal Saudis
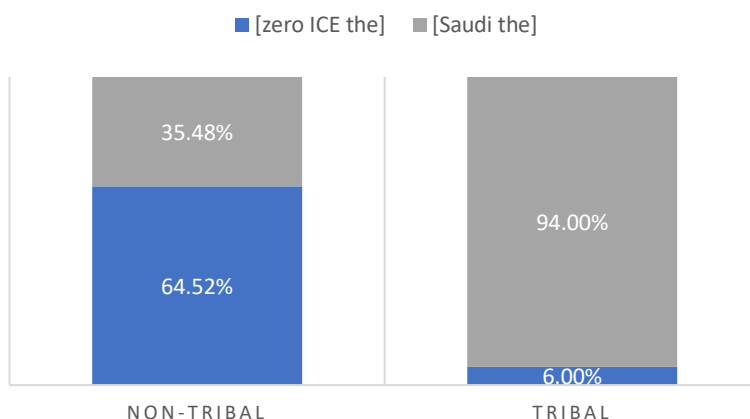
Similar to the findings in *be,* adding *variability* as a factor could be explained through other factors with which it may interact. The reasons that led women to use [zero *be*] more could be the same reasons that caused women to show less variation, which was having limited social networks, see section 5.2.6. Similarly, here the reasons that may influence tribal Saudis' preference for [Saudi *the*] could be the reasons that led them to be less variable. As discussed in section 2.2.2.1, tribalism constitutes a major component of the Saudi society. To understand why tribal Saudis appear to use [Saudi *the*] more and be less variable, it is important to understand the concept of tribal identity in Saudi. Being tribal in Saudi Arabia is an identity that is different from the Saudi, or Muslim identities, as Maisel (2014) puts it:

The social system of tribal organisation in Saudi Arabia, based on kinship, marital relations, and customary law, is an integral part of the Saudi culture and identity. Such a system has a strong historical precedent, is deeply rooted in the Saudi mind and influences the behaviour of both tribal and non-tribal members. Tribal members use this asset to maintain themselves and their society and to ensure their place in the Saudi social hierarchy. Tribalism effectively sidelines non-tribal as well as alternative social and political affiliations, such as secularism, liberalism, socialism and even Islamism. (P. 119)

For years, tribalism has been shaping Saudis' behaviour and opinions, especially, in contrast to *others*, which include other tribes, other non-tribal Saudis, other Arabs, and non-Arabs or non-Saudis. In addition, having a tribal identity might mean rejecting any norms that might represent or are considered attributes of the *other*. Therefore, English as an ICE variety could be perceived by tribal Saudis as a western foreign language. As a result, they could be more inclined to not follow its rules, instead they would use linguistic rules derived from Arabic with which they identify. Maisel (2015, p. 1) explains that tribal identity in Saudi is built based on traditional Arabian concepts, "such as kinship, genealogy, networking, and group solidarity." Social networks are a major component in defining tribal identity and in showing loyalty to ingroup and tribal membership. Looking into tribal and non-tribal Saudis' language use show that while both groups prefer to use Arabic, tribal Saudis reported that use Arabic more with friends and at home, Figures 30 and 31.

Figure 30: Rates of tribal Saudis' self-reported language use
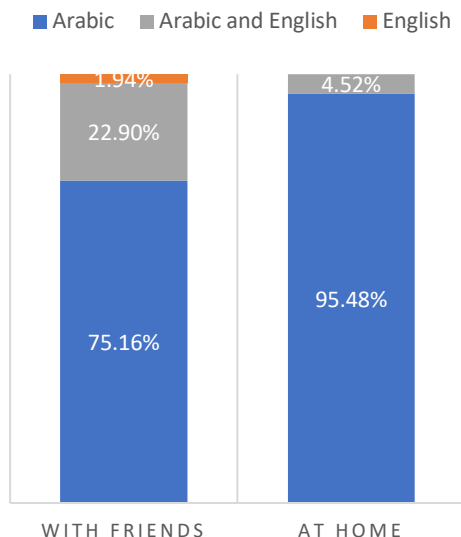
Figure 31: Rates of non-tribal Saudis' self-reported language use
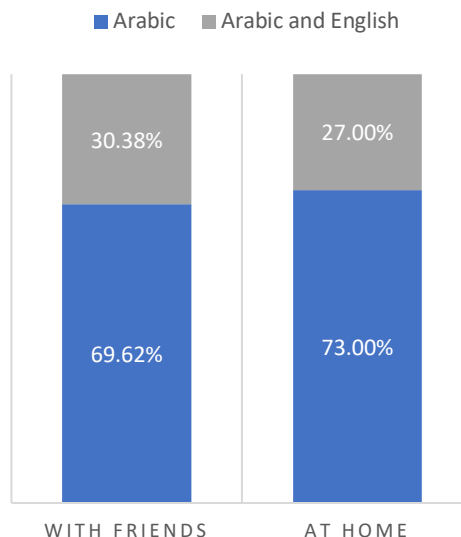
This finding is reflected in the opinions of Taqreed (43) and Reedha (44) who are tribal and who appeared to prefer [Saudi *the*]. They both stated that Arabic has an important status as the language of Islam.

(43) Taqreed:

Nowadays, people just focus more maybe on English because it's like the spoken language all over the world but for me the most important thing is to teach my kids Qur'an and just to be to have the ability to read Arabic, that's all.

(44) Reedha:

I mean as Arab people as Muslims, you have to understand Arabic for you to understand the Qur'an.

Interviewer: There are Muslims who can't speak or read Arabic.

Reedha: But then I think also other Muslims should understand some Arabic language, at least the basic, to understand their religion.

This finding that tribal Saudis in this study prefer the Saudi English variant is in line with the previous observation that variation in the definite article could reflect aspects of the speakers' identity. Tribal Saudis' preference for Arabic could be seen in their reported language use in their social networks which is, as Maisel (2015) points out, a major component of tribalism in Saudi. This preference for Arabic is reflected in Taqreed's and Reedha's opinions. Tribal Saudis' identity is based on being Arabs which could explain their rejection of following ICE rules when it comes to the definite article; therefore, they are more likely to use a variant that is derived from Arabic and more likely to use it categorically. Figures 32 and 33 show rates of the definite article in the speech of variable and non-variable tribal Saudis and non-tribal Saudis. Variable and non-variable tribal Saudis used [Saudi *the*] more while variable and non-variable non-tribal speakers used [zero ICE *the*] more. This finding is similar to that in *be* variation where variable and non-variable women favoured [zero *be*]. This finding shows that variable and non-variable speakers could have similar behaviour regarding favouring a variant over another which should be considered in studying L2 variation. It also shows that *variability* in speakers' speech could be interpreted in relation to other factors.

Figure 32:Rates of *the* among variable and non-variable tribal Saudis
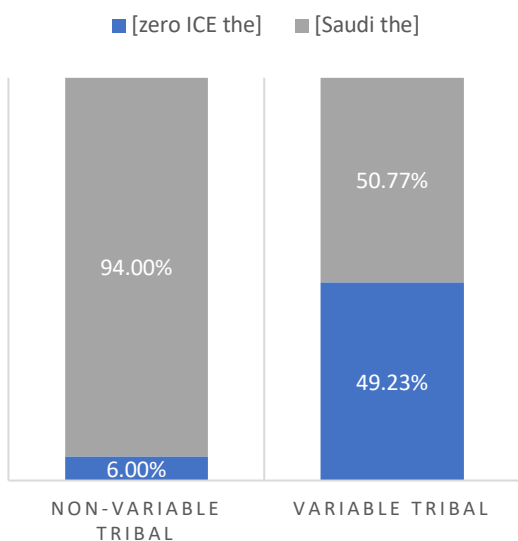
Figure 33: Rates of *the* among variable and non-variable non-tribal Saudis
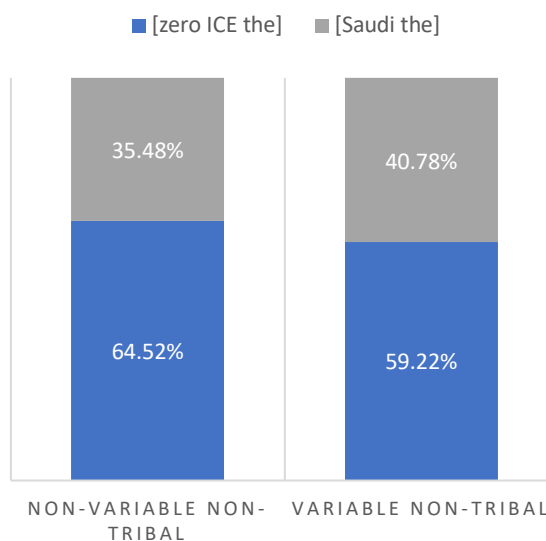
5.7 Third person singular marker -s – Results

5.7.1 Distribution

Table 26: Total count for [-*s* realisation] and [zero -*s*] for all speakers

Speakers	[-*s* realisation]	[zero -*s*]	Total
1	2 (66.67%)	1 (33.33%)	3
2	3 (50.00%)	3 (50.00%)	6
3	2 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
4	9 (39.13%)	14 (60.87%)	23
5	6 (23.08%)	20 (76.92%)	26

6	8 (38.10%)	13 (61.90%)	21
7	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
8	2 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
9	0 (0.00%)	2 (100.00%)	2
10	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
11	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
12	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
13	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
14	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
15	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
16	2 (40.00%)	3 (60.00%)	5
17	4 (33.33%)	8 (66.67%)	12
18	8 (57.14%)	6 (42.86%)	14
19	4 (20.00%)	16 (80.00%)	20
20	10 (31.25%)	22 (68.75%)	32
21	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
22	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
23	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
24	4 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
25	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5

26	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
27	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
28	3 (33.33%)	6 (66.67%)	9
29	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
30	0 (0.00%)	4 (100.00%)	4
31	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
32	13 (72.22%)	5 (27.78%)	18
33	7 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	7
34	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6
35	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
36	0 (0.00%)	5 (100.00%)	5
37	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
38	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	6
39	2 (66.67%)	1 (33.33%)	3
40	0 (0.00%)	8 (100.00%)	8
41	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5
Total	123 (39.55%)	188 (60.45%)	311

As can be seen in Table 26 the results showed variability in the use of the 3rd person singular marker -s. The analysis included 311 tokens of -s of which 123 tokens of [-s realisation] and 188

tokens of [zero -*s*]. The findings show that Saudis in this study seem to prefer [zero -*s*] (60.45%) more than [-*s* realisation] (39.55%). Figure 34 shows the distribution of the marker -s among all speakers.

Figure 34: Proportion of [zero -s] and [-s realisation] for each speaker
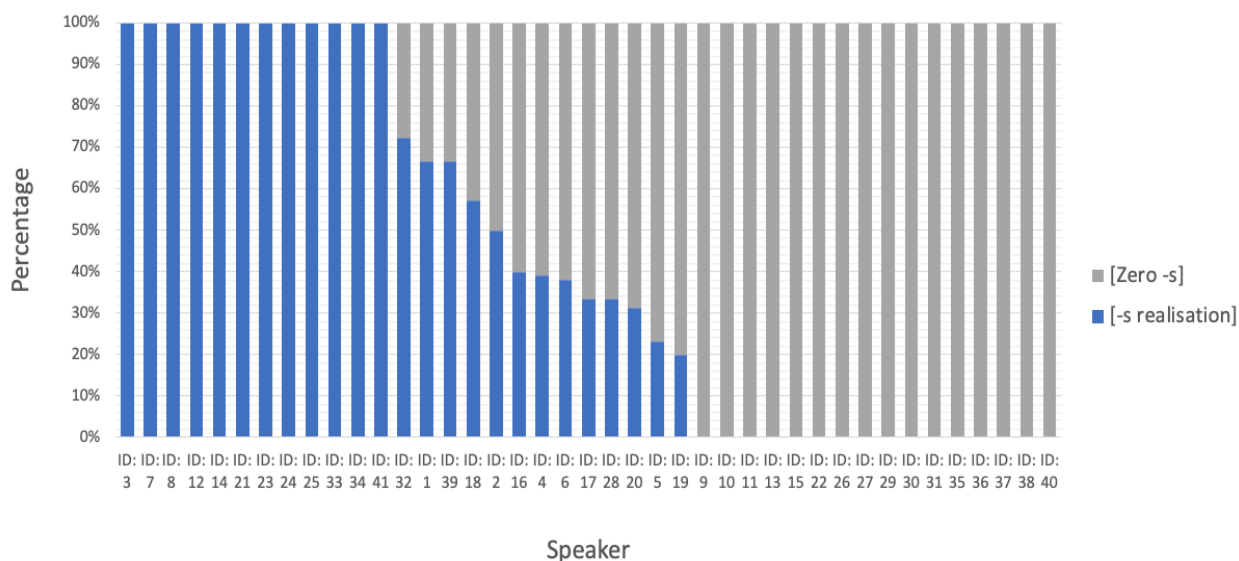
The frequency of -*s* in relation to three linguistic environments is presented in Table 27, and across social factors is presented in Tables 28. The linguistic environments are:

45. Type of subject. Heavy NPs, which includes relative (a) and demonstrative pronouns (b); pronominal subjects (c); and NP subjects (d):

    a. I've been here since August **that means** eight months.
    b. Yeah, in my opinion **who lives** here in the UK can speak fluently.
    c. **He prefers** to go back home.
    d. **My daughter prefers** English more than Arabic

46. Verb aspect. Dynamic verbs (a) and stative verbs (b):

a. She **speaks** good English.
b. It **means** you cannot communicate with people from around the world.

47. Phonological realisation of -*s*. /iz/ (a), /z/ (b), /s/ (c):

a. He never **catches** them.
b. It **depends** on what they are saying.
c. It's a good language. Everyone **speaks** it.

Table 27: Frequency of -s in relation to linguistic environments

	[-*S* realisation] N	[-*S* realisation] %	[Zero -*s*] N	[Zero -*s*] %	Total N
Type of subject					
Heavy NP	23	38.98%	36	61.02%	59
Pronoun	80	36.36%	140	63.64%	220
NP	14	43.75%	18	56.25%	32
Verb aspect					
Dynamic verbs	89	44.95%	109	55.05%	198
Stative verbs	34	30.09%	79	69.91%	113
-*S* pronunciation					
/iz/	4	20.00%	16	80.00%	20
/z/	75	37.13%	127	62.87%	202
/s/	38	42.70%	51	57.30%	89

The results, in Table 27, show within *type of subject*, heavy NPs, pronouns, and NPs favour [zero -*s*], 61.02%, 63.64%, and 56.25%. Verbs after NPs appear to favour retaining -*s* the most (43.75%). Morphologically, the variant [zero -*s*] occurred the most in stative verbs. However, in dynamic verbs both variants [zero -*s*] and [-*s* realisation] occurred almost equally, 55.05% and 44.95%. Phonologically, the three phonological manifestations of -*s* favour omission, /iz/ 80.00%, /z/

62.87%, and /s/ 57.30%. The results also show that -s is more likely to be realised when pronounced as /s/, 42.70%.

Table 28: Frequency of -s across social factors

	[-S realisation] N	[-S realisation] %	[Zero -s] N	[Zero -s] %	Total N
Gender					
Female	70	35.18%	129	64.82%	199
Male	53	47.32%	59	52.68%	112
Age					
18-25	23	42.59%	31	57.41%	54
26-35	46	30.67%	104	69.33%	150
36-45	54	50.47%	53	49.53%	107
Years of English education					
3-6 years	36	34.62%	68	65.38%	104
7-10 years	43	40.57%	63	59.43%	106
11 years +	44	43.56%	57	56.44%	101
Residency					
Saudi Arabia	26	44.83%	32	55.17%	58
UK	97	38.34%	156	61.66%	253
Tribalism					
Non-tribal	50	35.71%	90	64.29%	140
Tribal	73	42.69%	98	57.31%	171
Occupation					
Professionals	53	42.74%	71	57.26%	124
Students	70	37.43%	117	62.57%	187

The distribution of the third person singular marker -s among Saudi women and men was included in the analysis, Table 28. Similar to the findings in other variables, in which women preferred to use the new variants in verb *be*, indefinite article, women appeared to favour the [zero -s] more than men, 64.82% and 52.68%. However, women and men in this study used [zero -s] more than [-s realisation].

The findings also revealed that there were differences among the three age groups when it comes to the variable the third person singular marker -*s*. The younger groups (18-25 and 26-35) used the variant [zero -*s*] more than the oldest group (36-45), 57.41%, 69.33%, 49.53%, respectively. Table 28 shows that the oldest group favoured [-*s* realisation] the most, 50.47%.

Table 28 shows the distribution of the third person singular marker -*s* in three groups of years of English education (3-6 years, 7-10 years, and 11 + years). The results reveal that Saudis who had between 3 and 6 years of English education prefer to use the new variant the most, 65.38%. However, all three groups favoured [zero -*s*] over [-*s* realisation].

The factor 'tribalism' was also considered in the analysis of the third person singular marker -*s*. The results reveal that non-tribal Saudis preferred to use the zero variant more than tribal Saudis, 64.29% and 57.31%, respectively. This finding is similar to the findings in indefinite article and verb be in which non-tribal Saudis appeared to favour the zero variants more than tribal Saudis. However, it should be noted that both groups favoured [zero -*s*] more than [-*s* realisation].

Finally, Table 28 shows the distribution of the third person singular marker -*s* among Saudi professionals and Saudi university students. The findings revealed that the students used the new variant more than the professionals, 62.57%, and 57.26%. This result is in line with the previous result regarding verb *be* in which Students tend to use [zero *be*] more than professionals.

5.7.2 Multiple logistic regression

The regression analysis of -s (with [zero -*s*] as the application value) included 192 tokens of -*s* in analysis (A) and 311 tokens in analysis (B). The first regression analysis (A) of -s included only variable speakers. It also included social factors, language use results, attitudinal test results and the linguistic factor *verb aspect*, see Table 4. The analysis did not result in matched significant predictors in the first or the second run. In the third run, only the social factors and the linguistic

factor *verb aspect* were added which resulted in matched significant predictors (Log. Likelihood -121.493). The linguistic factors *type of subject* and *-s pronunciation* were not significant even after conducting an analysis that only included the social factors and the linguistic factors or only the linguistic factors. Table 29 shows the social factor *gender* outranks the linguistic factor ($P. <$ .01 and $P. <$ .05, respectively). Similar to verb *be*, in section 5.1, women seem to favour the new variant more than men (Log odds 0.491). The results also revealed that stative verbs are more likely to have [zero *-s*]. On the other hand, *-s* is more likely to be realised in dynamic verbs (Log odds -0.391). In the second analysis (B), which included all speakers, only the linguistic factor proved to influence variation in *-s*. Similarly, stative verbs favour [zero *-s*] (Log odds 0.376) and dynamic verbs favour [*-s* realisation] (Log odds -0.376).

Table 29: Significant factors influencing [zero *-s*]

[Zero -s]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.596			0.682		
Total N.	192			311		
Log. likelihood	-121.493			-171.923		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Gender	P. < .01					
Women	0.491	65%	162	Not significant		
Men	-0.491	40%	30			
Linguistic constraint	P. < .05			P. < .05		
Stative verbs	0.391	74%	57	0.376	70%	113
Dynamic verbs	-0.391	56%	135	-0.376	55%	198
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang.			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang.		

	use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs.	use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs.
	Attitude questionnaire: Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.	**Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

5.8 Third person singular marker -s Discussion

The status, functions and variability of the 3rd p. sg. -*s* have been studied extensively in L1 and L2 research. Variation in -*s* has been documented as a feature of English as a lingua franca in European Englishes (Breiteneder, 2009). It has also been discussed in relation to B. B. Kachru's (1985) three circles. It can be found in Inner Circle varieties, for instance, in East Anglian dialects in the United Kingdom (Trudgill, 2002). It has been studied as a frequent feature of African American vernacular English (AAVE) in the United states (Walker, 2001). It has been reported in Outer Circle varieties, such as Singaporean English (Platt, 1977). In Expanding Circle varieties, the omission of 3rd p. sg. -*s* has been studied as a learner error, for example in Saudi English (Ahamed, 2016; Al-Quyadi, 2016; Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015). In addition, it was reported as a feature of Saudi English in World Englishes studies (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

Similar to previous studies in L1, the distribution results of the variable show variation across syntactic, morphological, and phonological environments. The distribution results of the 3rd p. sg. -*s* are presented in section 5.7.1. Syntactically, verbs that are preceded by heavy NPs, which includes relative pronouns (48) and demonstrative pronouns (49), and pronominal subjects (50). Verbs with NP subjects (51) favour [zero -s], however, the results show more instances of [-*s* realisation] after NPs compared to heavy NPs.

    48. If we have good language skills that mean Ø we can apply for better job.
    49. Because I would like to be aware of what happenØ around us here.

50. She want Ø English channels, however, her sister prefers Arabic.
51. I see it when Lana talk Ø with her friends.

In AAVE, Bailey, Maynor, Cukor-Avila (1989) found that NP subjects favoured [-*s* realisation], whereas pronouns favoured [zero -*s*], and that heavy NP subjects are more likely to have inflected verbs compared to NP subjects. The findings of Van Herk's and Walker's (2005) study showed that in some AAVE varieties NP subjects favoured inflected verbs. Phonologically, the variable marker -*s* has three phonetic manifestations: [s] after voiceless consonants (52); [z] after voiced consonants (53) and vowels (54); and [iz] after fricatives (55). The phonological environments that might constrain the use or omission of the 3rd p. sg. -*s* have also been investigated in AAVE. For example, Poplack and Tagliamonte (1989), found that [iz] favoured -*s* realization. Although only 20 instances of -*s* as a bi-segmental allomorph occurred in the data, however, in 16 instances [zero -*s*] was used (as in, 56).

52. They do parties and it cost[s] lots of money
53. In general, their accent sound[s] nice it can be understandable.
54. My wife studie[s] medicine.
55. He never catche[s] them.
56. She watch Ø cartoons on her iPad.

The results of this study also show that the 3rd p. sg. -*s* varies semantically. That is the type of verb aspect, stative or dynamic, influences the realisation or omission of -*s*. This grammatical factor has been studied in AAVE (Van Herk and Walker,2005; Walker, 2001). The distributional analysis reveals both dynamic verbs (57) and stative verbs (58) tend to be uninflected, although stative verbs are more likely to have [zero -*s*], Table 27, section 5.7.1.

(57)
   a. This is like a small institute which give Ø you like general English language
   b. When he finishe[s] his university there he will find some difference

(58)

    a. But she understand Ø me when I am talking to her in Arabic

    b. It just look[s] like strange

The primary analysis of the data shows five instances of verbs inflected with -*s* after plural NP subjects (59a-d) and after a first-person plural pronoun (59e). These examples in my data mirror instances found in AAVE, after a first-person plural pronoun (60a) and plural NP (60b and c). The use of the variable -*s* as a plural marker is found to be a feature of AAVE (Bailey, Maynor, & Cukor-Avila, 1989; Van Herk & Walker 2005).

(59)

    a. When Australians speak[s] English.

    b. And most of them want[s] their kids to learn the language.

    c. the foreigner people who come[s] to Saudi Arabia.

    d. I think nowadays all people go[es] to job fairs.

    e. Because at home, we speak[s] Arabic.

(60)

    a. We all biages [begs] to you to please to intersied for us. (Van Herk & Walker 2005, p.119)

    b. The nations that are around us needs help. (119)

    c. Owr father and mother wher in good heyll and sendys yow ther blessyngs. (Bailey, Maynor, & Cukor-Avila, 1989, p. 290)

In the following section, I will discuss the results of the regression analysis. The results show that, zero 3rd p. sg. -*s* is governed by a social constraint, *gender*, and a linguistic constraint, *verb asp*ect, as presented in Table 29.

5.8.1 Gender

Gender is the first predictor shown to have a significant effect on the use of [zero -*s*], Table 29. Similar to the variant [zero *be*], in section 5.2.6, women tend to use [zero -*s*]. In addition, similar

to [zero *be*], this gender effect on [zero -*s*], will be interpreted in relation to social factors that affect Saudi women and men differently.

Early variationist studies that looked into gender as a factor came to two conclusions: either women are more sensitive to social judgements which leads them to using prestigious language (Labov, 1966), or men use local variants to show in-group solidarity (Trudgill, 1974). Eckert (1989), on the other hand, argues that gender should be studied in relation to other social categories to understand its effect on language. To understand women's tendency to use [zero -*s*], it is important to look into other social contexts that define the social and economic roles of women and men in Saudi Arabia. There are several issues that only affect women in Saudi Arabia. The first issue is freedom of mobility. Until 2019, Saudi women were forbidden from travelling, working, or leaving their homes without a male guardian's permission. The second issue is having limited opportunity for advancing their careers. Living in a conservative collectivist society, women are expected to live up to the norms. The norms of the Saudi society give men authority over women and enforce gender stereotypes that women's main roles to be wives, mothers and homemakers. Therefore, seeking careers outside the home could be perceived as challenging these norms. These issues resulted in women, who completed their education, to seek jobs deemed appropriate by social norms, such as health, education and public services (Al-Asfour, Tlaiss, Khan, & Rajasekar, 2017). According to the Saudi Central Department of Statistics and Information, as of 2017, there are 809,362 illiterate Saudis, of which 75.33% are women, and only 24.67% are men. In addition, as of 2019, women constituted 34.38% of the country's native workforce. On the other hand, the percentage of employed Saudi men was much higher, 65.62% (General Authority for Statistics, 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019). Figures 35 and 36 show the employment rates of Saudi women and Saudi men between 2016 and 2019.

Figure 35: Employment rates for Saudi women, 2016-19
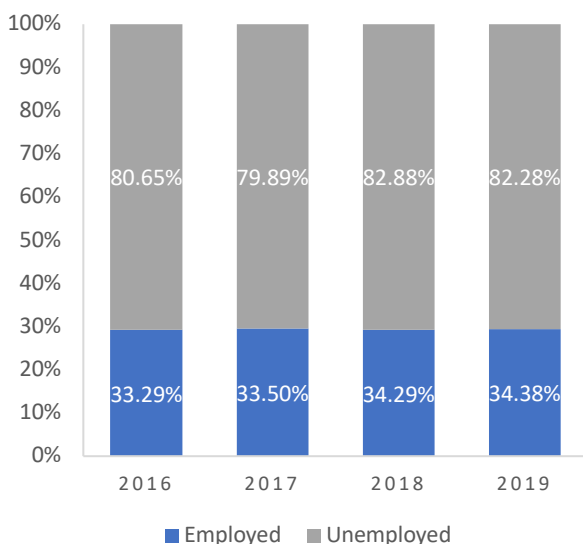
Figure 36: Employment rates for Saudi men, 2016-19
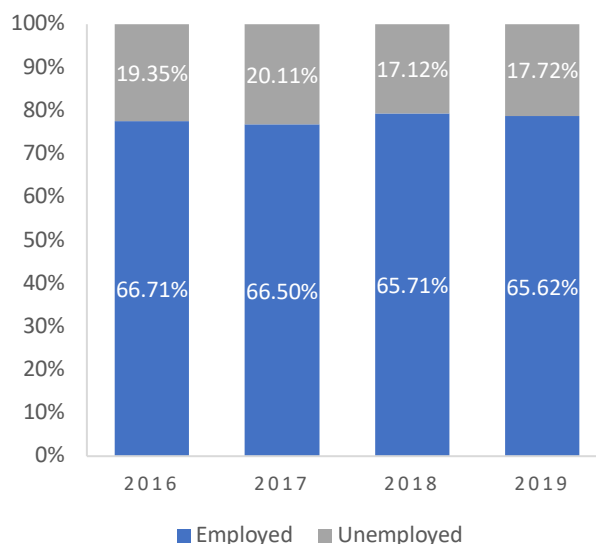
Women are more likely to be unemployed compared to men, which could limit their social networks to family members and close friends which in turn could limit their English use. Men, however, can have wider networks which could increase their English use. The speakers' self-reported language use rates might shed light on the extent of English use in women's and men's social networks. Figures 37 and 38 show the results of the language use test for the speakers who were included in the analysis of the variable -s only, rather than all the speakers in my study. The results reveal that men use English more than women in different situations and places (at work, at home, with friends, and with non-Arabs). The social pressure on women and the limited work opportunities could explain the results in Figures 37 and 38 that women use English at work and with non-Arabs less than men.

Figure 37: Rates of women's self-reported language use
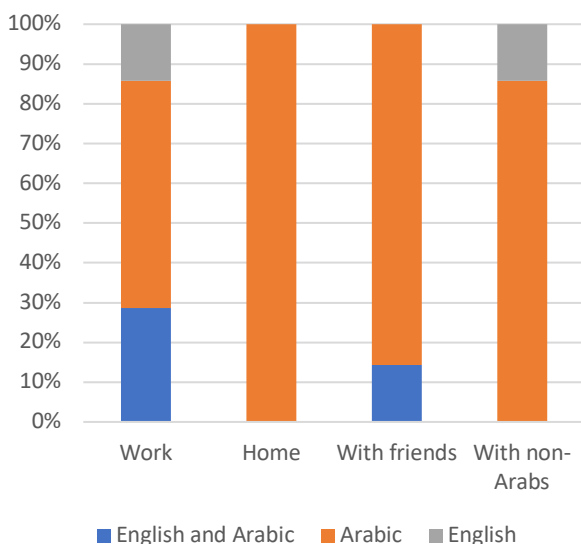
Figure 38: Rates of men's self-reported language use
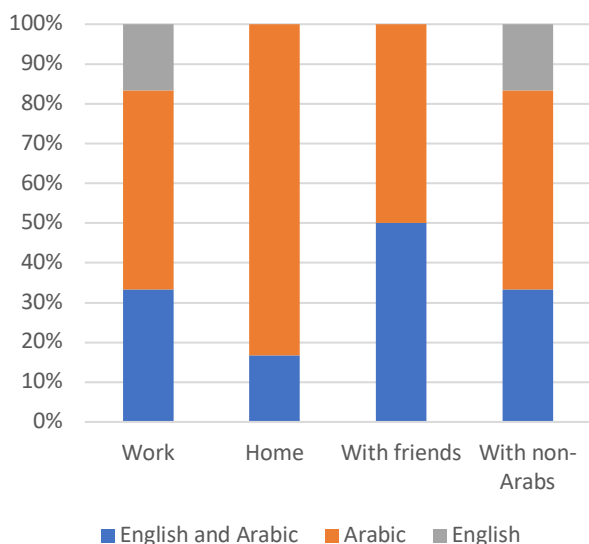
The type of social network could impact the use of linguistic variables (Milroy, 1987). In a study of Cajun English, for example, Dubois and Horvath (2000) found that women in closed networks use Cajun English features. On the other hand, women in open social networks, where they interact with members outside of their communities, tend to use Louisiana Southern English. In a variationist study of local features, glottal variation in /t/ and (ing), in the speech of Polish English speakers in Manchester, Drummond (2011; 2012b) found a gender effect at work. He argues that to conclude that women and men simply have different speech is inadequate. He also argues that gender is a social construct that is better understood in relation to other social factors which themselves could be gendered. In his study, it is context of L2 use with regard to occupation that provided a clearer understanding of gender-differentiated language variation. That is, women who had high contact with native speakers at work used local features more. Therefore, to understand the gender effect on -*s* variation here, it might be better interpreted in relation to social network. Having different types of social networks may explain the reason Saudi women tend to use [zero -*s*] more than men. That is, men have open social networks, where they

have more opportunity to use English, retain the ICE variant -*s*. On the other hand, women have closed social networks, where they use English less, use [zero -*s*].

5.8.2 Verb aspect

Verb aspect proved to be the only linguistic constraint that governs -*s* variation in Saudi English. As shown in Table 29, stative verbs favour [zero -*s*] (Log odds 0.391, in A; and 0.376, in B). while dynamic verbs favour [-*s* realisation] (Log odds -0.391, in A; and -0.376, in B).

In standard English the variable -*s* marks present tense and denotes aspectual meanings at the same time, stative/habitual and dynamic/durative. In other varieties of English that are aspectual-prominent rather than time-prominent, -*s* is conditioned by type of verb aspect (Poplack & Tagliamonte, 1989). In my data verb aspects were coded based on the lexical properties of the verb itself rather than contextual information, hence they were coded as stative and dynamic rather than habitual and durative. Stative verbs (such as feel, look, sound, seem, and mean) refer to a state or condition, on the other hand, dynamic verbs (such as give, work, study, eat, and walk) refer to action. Walker (2001) argues that progressive forms could be used as a habitual marker. Therefore, to avoid any confusion and as the focus here is to study the use of -*s* and [zero -*s*] rather than t/d and zero t/d or *be* and zero *be*, I eliminated progressive verbs with habitual aspects.

As mentioned earlier, [zero -*s*] was reported as a feature of English in Saudi Arabia in two World Englishes studies (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Al-Rawi (2012) points out that Arabic verbs have default third person morphemes, masculine singular (61) or feminine/ masculine plural *ya*- (63) and feminine singular *ta*- (62). Alrawi argued that to account for Arabic influence on -*s*, she would have to find instances where -*s* is used with plural subjects. However, as I mentioned earlier my data included instances, albeit few, where -*s* is used as a plural marker. Therefore, the variation of -*s* could be influenced by the grammatical system of Arabic. Similarly,

researchers who reported variation in *-s* as a feature of ELF in Europe, attributed this variation to language contact (Breiteneder, 2009). In East Anglian dialects, *-s* variation is also attributed to language contact, Dutch, French and English (Trudgill, 2002).

(61)

		‘ila إلى	al-maktab المكتب
Khalid خالد		to	the office
ya-dhhab-**u** يذهبُ			
go	Khalid		

Khalid goes to the office

(62)

| **ta**-dhhab-**u** تذهبُ | Fatimah فاطمة | ‘ila إلى | al-maktab المكتب |
| go | Fatimah | to | the office |

Fatimah goes to the office

(63)

| **ya**-dhhab-**u** يذهبُ | ‘asdiga’i أصدقائي | ‘ila إلى | al-madrasti المدرسةِ |
| go | my friends | to | school |

My friends go to school

The existence of a morpheme in Arabic equivalent to *-s* or the lack thereof may explain the use of [zero *-s*], however, it does not explain the reason stative verbs favour [zero *-s*]. In addition, as Poplack & Tagliamonte (1989) point out, the fact that *-s* can occur variably with different grammatical persons means it is not an agreement marker, rather, it probably has another grammatical function. The variable *-s* has been extensively studied in AAVE research which might help in understanding the conditioning of this variable by verb aspect in Saudi English. In their study of AAVE, Poplack & Tagliamonte found that the use of [zero *-s*] was conditioned by type of subject, phonetic forms of *-s* and verbal aspect. However, unlike my findings, they found that the verbal aspects that favoured [zero *-s*] were punctual and durative. They also found that verbal aspect influenced [*-s* realisation], in this case habitual verbs favoured [*-s* realisation]. Walker (2001), in his study of African English varieties, studied the variable *-s* in three sets of data, African

Nova Scotia English, Samaná, and ex-slave recordings. He found that durative verbs with third singular subjects favoured [zero -*s*] in the Samaná data, durative verbs with third plural subjects favoured [zero -*s*] in the Samaná and the ex-slave recordings, and durative verbs with non-third person subjects favoured [zero -*s*] in all three sets of data. Habitual verbs favoured [-*s* realisation] with different types of subjects in the three sets of data. In a similar study of African English varieties, Van Herk and Walker (2005) found that verbal aspect was a crucial factor in understanding -*s* variation.

Explaining this phenomenon, that is, the influence of verbal aspect on the use of -*s*, Poplack & Tagliamonte (1989) point out that verbal aspect is an important factor that conditions -*s* variation. They argue that in African English -*s* can be interpreted as an aspectual marker, rather than a number marker, which is "alien to English grammar" (p. 76). Van Herk and Walker (2005) and Walker (2001) also concluded that in African English varieties -*s* has an aspectual function, in their studies -*s* is habitual and [zero -*s*] is durative. Walker (2001) argues that since habitual verbs favour -*s* regardless of grammatical person, -*s* has an aspectual function in African English varieties.

The results of the present study suggest that -*s* variation in Saudi English is not governed by type of subject or by the phonetic forms of -*s*, rather, it is influenced by verbal aspect. In addition, the use of -*s* with plural subjects may enforce the interpretation that -*s* or [zero -*s*] in Saudi English has an aspectual function rather than a concord function. However, contrary to the findings in African English varieties, stative verbs favour [zero -*s*]. To understand this, I should consider Arabic influence on verb aspect in Saudi English. Amin (2020) explains that present verbs in Arabic can be used to refer to unfinished actions in the present moment events or refer to the future. The example in 64 was taken from Amin's article (p. 84) in which he explains that present tense verbs are used to refer to future events or plans. An accurate English translation of the sentence rather than literal is *Yusuf would/will go to our father, take his permission and come back*. In

Arabic, present verbs are also used to "show the aspectual continuity of a situation at the moment or at several intervals (i.e., habitual present)", (p.84). This statement echoes Walker's (2001, p. 10) argument that "the present tense may also refer to events that hold true both for the present and for other times (or all time), including frequentative, habitual, or iterative contexts, which express timeless truths or generalizations". Thus, L1 transfer could explain -*s* variation in that stative verbs, that denote habitual states or condition that were true in the past, are true in the present and will continue to be true in the future, should not be marked with -*s* that represents the present moment.

(64)

yazhab-u	Yusuf-u	'ila	'ab-i:na	wa	yast'azin-u-hu	thumma	ya'u:d
يذهبُ	يوسف	إلى	أبينا	وَ	يستأذنهُ	ثمَ	يعود
Yusuf	goes	to	our father	and	takes his permission	then	comes back

To sum up, there are two possible interpretations of the results that, in Saudi English, stative verbs favour [zero -*s*]. First, is that -*s* has an aspectual function rather than an agreement function which explains its use with plural subjects. In this case, -*s* might refer to a dynamic/durative aspect; therefore, stative verbs or habitual aspect do not need -*s*. The second interpretation is that, as a result of Arabic transfer, stative verbs which denote habituality in English are used the same way in Arabic, that is, present forms may denote the past, the present, and the future without needing an aspectual morpheme. Although the number of tokens where -*s* is used as a plural marker is low, this can indicate two possibilities. Either -*s* in Saudi English can vary to refer to plural subjects, or it is a result of *standard* English education due to overgeneralisation. Whereas L1 interference might explain variation in L2, L2 education and the ideology of a perfect ICE variety that is unattainable could explain these instances of overgeneralisation. However, the use of -*s* as a plural marker needs more research.

5.9 Devoicing of /v/ - Results

5.9.1 Distributional results

Table 30: Total count for [v] and [f] for all speakers

Speaker	[v]	[f]	Total
1	16 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	16
2	0 (0.00%)	18 (100.00%)	18
3	15 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	15
4	21 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	21
5	0 (0.00%)	12 (100.00%)	12
6	0 (0.00%)	17 (100.00%)	17
7	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	10
8	0 (0.00%)	14 (100.00%)	14
9	13 (50.00%)	13 (50.00%)	26
10	7 (50.00%)	7 (50.00%)	14
11	11 (50.00%)	11 (50.00%)	22
12	0 (0.00%)	23 (100.00%)	23
13	0 (0.00%)	24 (100.00%)	24
14	0 (0.00%)	21 (100.00%)	21
15	16 (48.48%)	17 (51.52%)	33

16	0 (0.00%)	35 (100.00%)	35
17	16 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	16
18	0 (0.00%)	12 (100.00%)	12
19	23 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	23
20	13 (48.15%)	14 (51.85%)	27
21	15 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	15
22	17 (50.00%)	17 (50.00%)	34
23	11 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	11
24	13 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	13
25	0 (0.00%)	15 (100.00%)	15
26	0 (0.00%)	13 (100.00%)	13
27	4 (50.00%)	4 (50.00%)	8
28	0 (0.00%)	14 (100.00%)	14
29	18 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	18
30	27 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	27
31	0 (0.00%)	16 (100.00%)	16
32	19 (50.00%)	19 (50.00%)	38
33	11 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	11
34	0 (0.00%)	17 (100.00%)	17
35	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	10

36	12 (54.55%)	10 (45.45%)	22
37	13 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	13
38	0 (0.00%)	11 (100.00%)	11
39	21 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	21
40	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	10
41	18 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	18
Total	365 (48.41%)	389 (51.59%)	754

Devoicing the labiodental fricative /v/ appear to be another feature of Saudi English. The distribution analysis included 754 tokens of the variable /v/ of which are 365 tokens of the voiced variant [v] and 389 tokens of the devoiced variant [f], Table 30. The results show that devoiced [f] seems to be slightly favoured over the voiced variant [v], 51.59% and 48.41%, respectively. Figure 39 shows the percentages of [v] and [f] in the speech of all speakers.

Figure 39: Proportion of [v] and [f] for each speaker
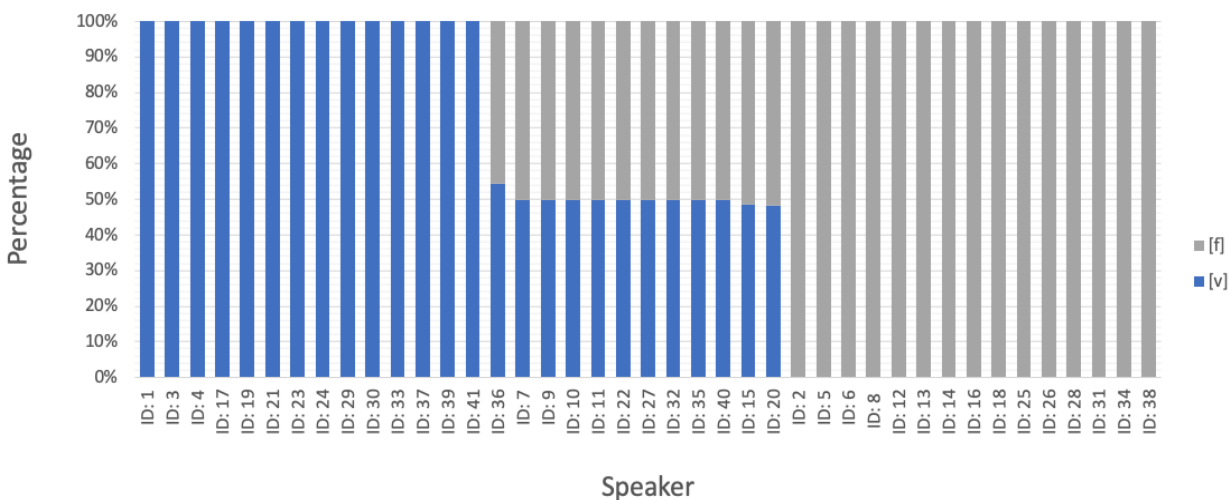
The distribution of /v/ devoicing in the speech of Saudis was counted across three positions, word initial, medial, and final. The results, presented in Table 31, show that there are more instances of voiced [v] than devoiced [f] in word initial position. On the other hand, middle /v/ and coda /v/ are more devoiced, 52.20% and 53.37%, respectively. As explained in section 4.3.1, data regarding /v/ was gathered through using a word list that included words that has /v/ in final (3 words), middle (4 words), and final position (3 words). The tokens from the word list was added to the analysis to test whether different styles (casual/conversation and formal/reading word list) influences variation in /v/. The results show more instances of the devoiced variant [f] in casual speech (51.59%) and more [v] in reading the word list (71.15%).

Table 31: Frequency of /v/ in relation to linguistic environments

	[v] N	[v] %	[f] N	[f] %	Total N
Position					
Initial	65	55.08%	53	44.92%	118
Medial	141	47.80%	154	52.20%	295
Final	159	46.63%	182	53.37%	341
Style					
Conversation	365	48.41%	389	51.59%	754

| Word list | 291 | 71.15% | 118 | 28.85% | 409 |

Table 32 shows the frequency of the variants of the labiodental fricative /v/ across social factors. Regarding the first factor gender, the results in /v/ showed a similar pattern found in previous findings in verb *be*, indefinite article, and the third person singular marker -*s*. The results showed that women preferred to use the devoiced variant (60.90% [f] and 39.10% [v]) while men seemed to favour the voiced variant (41.13% [f] and 58.87% [v]).

Saudis in different age groups appeared to have different preferences regarding pronouncing the fricative /v/. Table 32 shows that the older groups of Saudis (26-35 and 36-45) favour the devoiced variant [f] more, 53.87% and 60.63%, respectively. On the other hand, the youngest group (18-25) seemed to prefer the voiced variant [v] more, 69.43%. Factoring *years of English education* in the analysis, the results show that Saudis who had more than 11 years of English education had the highest rates of the devoiced variant [f], 58.88%.

When it comes to the factor *residency*, Saudis in Saudi and in the UK show similar rates of [f], although Saudis in Saudi produced [f] slightly more, 53.28% and 50.71%, respectively. Similarly, the distribution of [v] and [f] in relation to *tribalism* does not seem to be noticeably different. Table 32 shows that non-tribal Saudis used the variant [f] slightly more than tribal Saudis, 53.33% and 50.62%, respectively. The factor *occupation* showed different results, that only professional Saudis seem to favour [f], 64.49%. Students appeared to prefer the voiced variant [v] more, 55.86%.

Table 32: Frequency of /v/ across social factors

	[v] N	[v] %	[f] N	[f] %	Total N
Gender					

Female	156	39.10%	243	60.90%	399
Male	209	58.87%	146	41.13%	355
Age					
18-25	109	69.43%	48	30.57%	157
26-35	143	46.13%	167	53.87%	310
36-45	113	39.37%	174	60.63%	287
Years of English education					
3-6 years	58	48.74%	61	51.26%	119
7-10 years	138	61.61%	86	38.39%	224
11 years +	169	41.12%	242	58.88%	411
Residency					
Saudi Arabia	121	46.72%	138	53.28%	259
UK	244	49.29%	251	50.71%	495
Tribalism					
Non-tribal	126	46.67%	144	53.33%	270
Tribal	239	49.38%	245	50.62%	484
Occupation					
Professionals	98	35.51%	178	64.49%	276
Students	267	55.86%	211	44.14%	478

5.9.2 Multiple logistic regression

In the regression analysis of /v/, the variant [f] was the application value. Analysis (A) included 254 tokens of /v/ and analysis (B) included 754 tokens. The analysis included all the factors presented in Table 4, social factors, language use results, attitudinal test results, and the linguistic factor *position*.

The first run of analysis (A), which included only variable speakers, was successful resulting in a significant predictor of [f] (Log. Likelihood -172.577). As can be seen in Table 33, the factor *position* proved to be the only predictor of [f] (*P*. < .05). Within that factor, coda /v/ is more likely to be devoiced (Log odds 0.451). On the other hand, the labiodental fricative /v/ in initial position is less likely to be devoiced (Log odds -0.515). Analysis (B) results in similar findings, that [f] is favoured in word final position (Log odds 0.513) and [v] in word initial position (Log odds -0.588).

Table 33: Significant factors influencing /v/ devoicing

[f]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.465			0.523		
Total N.	254			754		
Log. likelihood	-172.577			-241.2		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Position	*P.* < .05			*P.* < .05		
Final	0.451	58	111	0.513	53	341
Middle	0.064	48	102	0.075	52	295
Initial	-0.515	34	41	-0.588	45	118
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang. use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.					

The second analysis of [f] included tokens of /v/ from the interviews and the wordlist to test whether style (formal and informal) influences /v/ devoicing. In the second analysis the variant [f] was the application value in this analysis. Analysis (A) included 373 tokens of /v/ and analysis (B) included 1163 tokens. They included all the factors presented in Table 4 (social, language use, attitudinal) and the linguistic factors *style* and *position*.

The first run of analysis (A) resulted in two significant predictors of [f] (Log. Likelihood -251.189). The results, presented in Table 34, show that *tribalism* and *style* significantly influence /v/ devoicing, both are significant at the *P.* < .05 level. They revealed that tribal Saudis are more likely to use the variant [f] (Log odds 0.259). Within the factor *style*, the results show that /v/ is more

devoiced in informal speech (Log odds 0.265). In analysis (B) all speakers were included which reveal slightly different results. The findings, presented in Table 34, show that the factors *style* and *position* are significant predictors of /v/ devoicing at the *P*. < .01 level. In the factor *style* informal (conversation) speech favours the variant [f] (Log odds 0.93) whereas formal speech favours [v] (Log odds -0.93). In the factor *position* devoiced [f] is more likely to be used in word final position (Log odds 0.821) and [v] is more likely to be used in word initial position (Log odds -0.840). That is /v/ is more likely to be devoiced in word final position in informal speech.

Table 34: Significant factors influencing /v/ devoicing, conversation and wordlist data

[f]	Variable speakers (A)			All speakers (B)		
Input prob.	0.412			0.126		
Total N.	373			1163		
Log. likelihood	-251.189			-430.248		
	Log odds	%	N.	Log odds	%	N.
Tribalism	*P.* < .05					
Tribal	0.259	48	204	Not significant		
Non-tribal	-0.259	43	169			
Style	*P.* < .05			*P.* < .01		
Informal	0.265	50	254	0.93	52	754
Formal	-0.265	36	119	-0.93	30	410
Position				*P.* < .01		
Final	Not significant			0.821	51	464
Middle				0.019	43	458
Initial				-0.840	30	241
Not significant	**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang.			**Social factors:** Age, Gender, Region, Tribe, Years of Eng. Edu., Occupation, Residency. **Language use test:** Lang. use at home, Lang. use at school/Uni, Lang.		

	use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.	use at work, Lang. use with friends, Lang. use with non-Arabs. **Attitude questionnaire:** Perception 1,2,3, Investment 1,2,3, English for career advancement 1,2,3, English for leisure 1,2,3, Westernisation 1,2,3, Accent 1,2,3.

5.10 Devoicing of /v/ - Discussion

5.10.1 Sound position

Devoicing /v/ has been studied in EFL research carried out in Saudi Arabia (Alfallaj, 2013; Hago & Khan, 2015; Binturki, 2001). It has also been documented as a feature of the speech of Dutch English speakers (Simon, 2010). In addition, it has been found to be a feature of southern British English (Verhoeven, Hirson & Basavaraj, 2011), see section 3.2.4. The labiodental fricatives /v/ and /f/ are realised phonetically with full, or no vocal fold vibration. The data of /v/ included 754 tokens which included 365 tokens of the voiced variant [v] and 389 tokens of the devoiced variant [f], see section 5.9 for the overall results. The regression analysis shows that the voiced fricative /v/ in final position is more likely to be devoiced [f] (Log odds 0.451, in A; and 0.513, in B), Table 33. Additionally, after adding tokens from the word list to the data, the regression analysis shows that final word position favours [f] (Log odds 0.821, in B), see Table 34.

Previous studies of [v] and [f] in the speech of Saudis concluded that difficulty to pronounce the voiced fricative /v/ was due to L1 transfer (Alfallaj, 2013; Hago & Khan; 2015; Binturki, 2001). Indeed, the Arabic language only has the voiceless labiodental fricative /f/, which can occur in word initial (65a), middle (65b), and final (65c) positions regardless of preceding and following phonological environments. For example, voiceless /f/ preceding voiced stop /b/ (66), a voiceless fricative /s/ (67), a nasal sound /n/ (68), and a glottal stop /ʔ/ (69). However, my results show that Saudis in this study are more likely to use [f] in word final position. Thus, L1 transfer might

explain the devoicing of /v/, but there might be other factors, phonological factors, that govern its use in final position specifically.

(65)

a.	pride	**f**akher	فخر
b.	key	muf**t**ah	مفتاح
c.	knowledge	m'ari**f**	معارف

(66)

غلف **ب**در الهدية

ġalla**f B**adr al-hadyati
Badr wrapped the gift

(67)

غلف **س**الم الهدية

ġalla**f S**alim al-hadyati
Salim wrapped the gift

(68)

غلف **ن**اصر الهدية

ġalla**f N**asser al-hadyati
Nasser wrapped the gift

(69)

غلف **أ**حمد الهدية

ġalla**f 'A**hmed al-hadyati
Ahmed wrapped the gift

Researchers who investigated fricative variation found that the surrounding phonological environments and word position could affect the articulation of /v/. According to Verhoeven, Hirson and Basavaraj (2011, p. 2070), "the prime factor that seems to determine devoicing is the phonetic context in which the fricative occurs with significant effects of word position (word-final

fricatives are devoiced most often)". They explain that surrounding phonological environments affect, i.e., increase or decrease, the vocal folds vibration that results in fricative sounds we hear. Simon (2010) found that Dutch English speakers tend to devoice voiced fricatives in a pre-pausal position, and pronounce voiceless fricatives as voiced before voiced stop sounds. She explains the latter pattern as a result of L1 transfer in which regressive voice assimilation is used to voice voiceless sounds followed by other voiced sounds. Regressive assimilation is a process where a sound is influenced by the following sound that results in sharing some characteristics of the following sound for easier transition in pronouncing both sounds. This rule might explain the results of this study. Examining the following sounds after coda [f], I found that voiced [v] is realised when the following word begins with fricative (69.39%) or nasal sounds (66.67%), and the voiceless fricative [f] is more likely to be used in final position when the following word starts with a stop consonant (68.29%), Figure 40.

Figure 40: Percentages of [v] and [f] before consonants
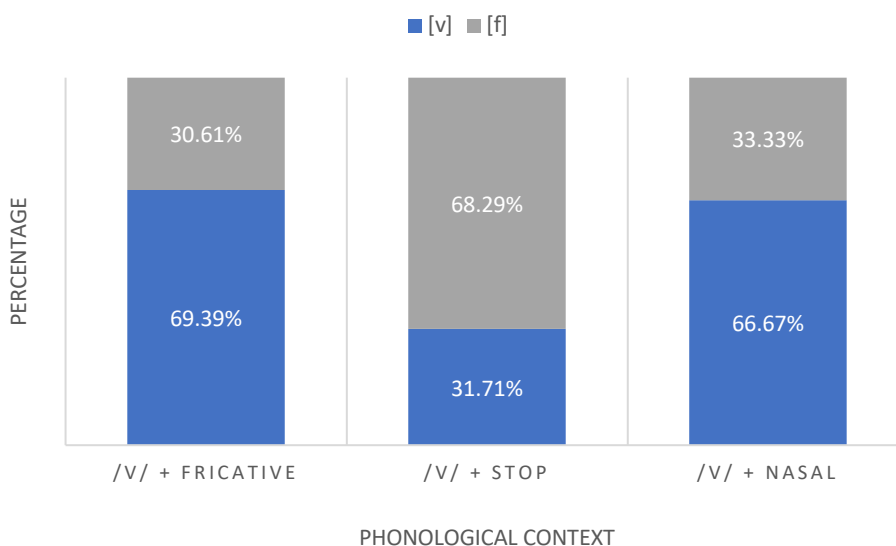
In addition, in the data devoiced [f] seems to be used more after voiceless sounds. As shown in Figure 41, word beginning with voiced fricatives seem to favour voiced [v] while devoiced [f] and voiced [v] almost equally occurred preceding voiceless fricatives. Figure 42 shows that devoiced [f] occurred more (79.25%) compared to only (20.75%) voiced [v] before voiceless stops. Therefore, devoicing of /v/ in Saudi English might be interpreted as a result of L1 transfer, where an equivalent of voiced [v] does not exist. On the other hand, it might be a result of regressive assimilation when /v/ is followed by a voiceless consonant.

Figure 41: Percentages of [v] and [f] before voiced and voiceless fricatives
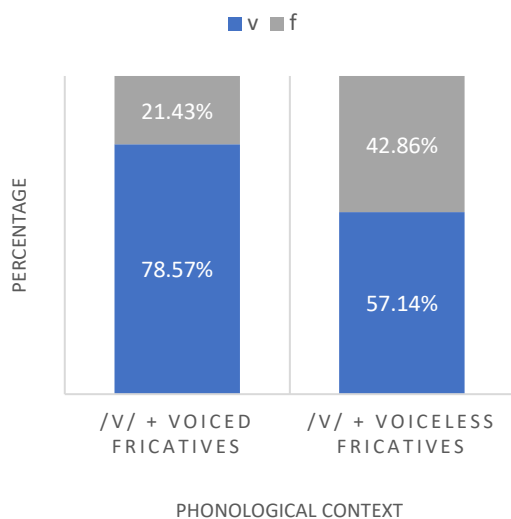
Figure 42: Percentages of [v] and [f] before voiced and voiceless stops
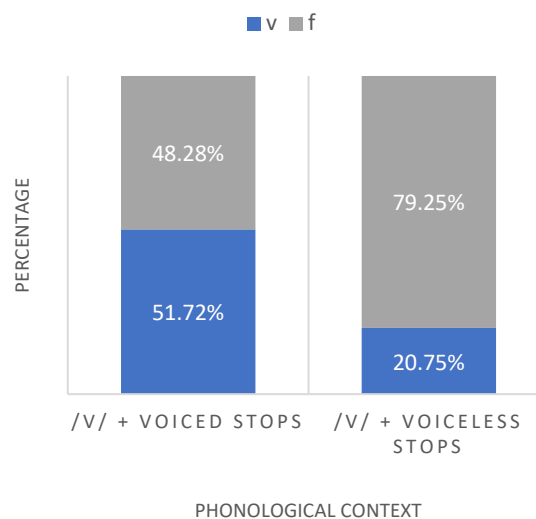
Comparing the occurrences of [v] or [f] in a final position before voiceless consonants (fricatives and stops) with instances in pre-pausal position might make it clearer as to whether devoicing /v/ is influenced mainly by phonological environment or just L1 transfer. In the interview data there are only seven tokens of pre-pausal /v/, however, the word list includes three tokens of /v/ in final pre-pausal position for each speaker. Figure 43 shows that /v/ is devoiced more before voiceless consonants (68.92%) in conversations. In pre-pausal position, [v] is used slightly more

than [f], 55.15% and 44.85%, respectively. This result might indicate regressive assimilation is the primary factor in devoicing /v/. However, because of the low number of tokens and the different speech styles (conversation and reading word list) this is not a conclusion but an observation to be investigated in future research.

Figure 43: Percentages of [v] and [f] before voiceless consonants and pre-pausal
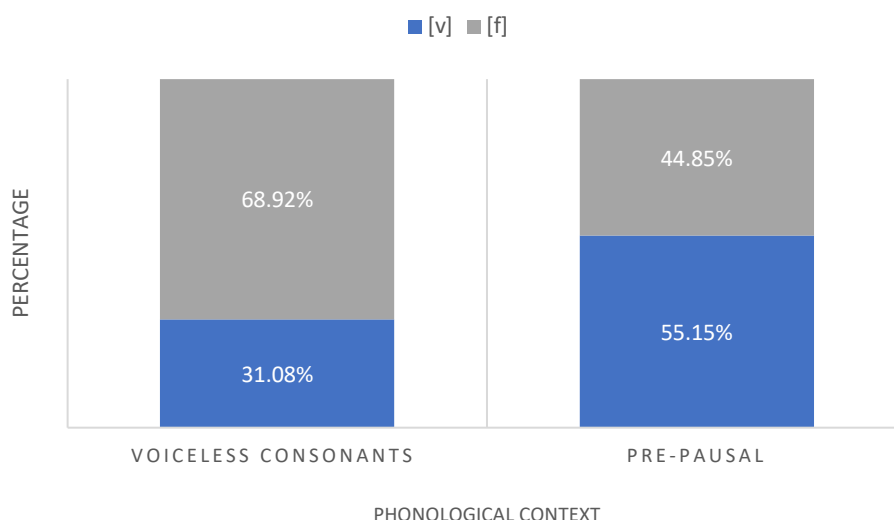
In the following section, I will discuss the results for devoiced [f] after adding tokens from the word list to the analysis. The aim of adding the word list results to the analysis is to test style shifting effect on the variable /v/. After each interview, speakers were asked to read a word list that included ten words that had the voiced fricative /v/ in initial position (a), middle position (b), and final position (c). To do the second analysis, I added ten tokens from the word list for each speaker to the current data.

(a) Very, Velvet, Voice   (b) Pavement, Government,   (c) Glove, Positive, Slave
                                 Lavish, velvet

The second regression analysis of /v/ and style show that devoicing of /v/ is governed by a social factor, *tribalism*, and *style*. Within the factor *tribalism*, in this study tribal Saudis are more likely to use [f] instead of [v], (Log odds 0.259), Table 34. Within the factor *style*, it seems that the speakers in this analysis prefer to use [f] in informal speech (Log odds 0.265, in A; and 0.93, in B). Additionally, the results of the second analysis (B), which included all speakers, show that [f] is more likely to be devoiced in final position (Log odds 0.821). That is, devoicing /v/ seems to be favoured in informal speech in word final position, Table 34, section 5.9.2.

5.10.2 Tribalism

In their study of southern British English, Verhoeven, Hirson & Basavaraj, (2011) found that the social factors of age and gender had a primary effect on the use of devoiced /v/. Similarly, the results in this section show that /v/ devoicing is socially motivated, as well as stylistically. Social class is one of the factors that showed meaningful correlation with linguistic variables in early sociolinguistic studies (for example, Labov, 1966). To understand the influence of tribalism on language variation, it is important to understand its influence on the Saudi society. In Saudi Arabia, tribalism is a major component of the Saudi society, and as I discussed in section 2.2.2.1, it is central to the construct of social class. Additionally, tribalism proved to affect variation in the definite article which could be viewed as a reflection of aspects of speakers' tribal identity, see section 5.6.4. Tribalism in Saudi is an identity that is different from but a part of national identity. Tribalism is built on traditional tribal and Arab values, networking and kinship Maisel (2015).

Tribal Saudis' identity, as Maisel points out, is in contrast to any other identities, including Muslim identity or any other Arab identity. Maisel explains that tribal identity is built on traditional Arabian concepts, therefore, being Arab constitutes a crucial aspect of Saudis' tribal identity which Arabic could reflect. As a result, tribal Saudis might be more likely reject any linguistic rules that are associated with other groups. In this case, English as an ICE variety, to tribal Saudis, could be perceived as a foreign language whose rules they are less inclined to follow. Figure 44 shows

how Saudis, who are included in this particular analysis, responded to the questionnaire statement 3.5, *speaking English will make me forget Arabic*.

Figure 44: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.5, *speaking English will make me forget Arabic*
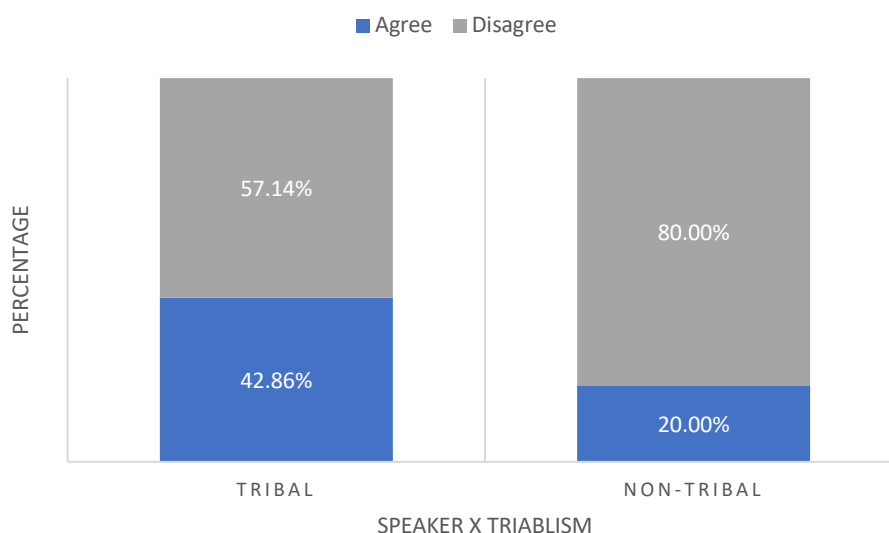
The majority of non-tribal Saudis in this study do not think that learning English could result in them forgetting Arabic, (80%). On the other hand, tribal Saudis have almost equally divided opinions whether English is a threat to Arabic in this way (42.86%) or not (57.14%). It could be argued that tribal Saudis are less inclined than non-tribal Saudis to use the ICE variant [v] because this sound does not exist in the phonological system of Arabic with which they identify. However, this interpretation is based on a small-scaled analysis, to understand language variation among tribal and non-tribal Saudis it should be tested in a larger study.

5.10.3 Style

Style, as Tagliamonte (2012, p. 27) puts it, refers to "the amount of attention paid to speech", a concept which has been studied in first wave variationist sociolinguistics research. Style varies

from casual or informal speech as in conversation to formal as in reading a passage or a word list. Style shifting has been found in L1 and SLA studies. In L1 context, for example, Trudgill (1974) found that the non-standard variant of (ing) [ɪn] was used in casual speech by all social classes in Norwich English. In formal speech, [ɪn] was used less and the standard form [ɪŋ] was used more. In an SLA context, Beebe (1980) found that Thai English speakers increased the use of R initial and R final in reading word list more than in conversation. She argues that her findings support the view that style shifting can occur in interlanguage just like in L1.

In the second analysis of /v,f/, ten tokens from the word list for each speaker were added to the data. As I mentioned earlier, these tokens included words where /v/ is in initial, middle, and final positions. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 34 above. The goal of adding tokens from the word list is to see whether speech style, conversation (informal) and word list (formal) has any effect on the use of devoiced /v/. The results show that Saudis in this study tend to use [f] more in casual speech (Log odds 0.265, in A; and 0.93, in B). The results also show that the speakers used [f] less in reading the word list (28.85%) compared to (71.15%) of [v], Figure 45. In casual speech, however, [v] (48.41%) and [f] (51.59%) were almost equally used. These findings also support the argument in Beebe (1980) that interlanguage has the same style shifting that is found in L1. These findings add to the research of variationist sociolinguistics in SLA, that language variation can occur in second language, as well. Producing more ICE-like forms in formal speech, when attention is paid to speech, could be seen as L2 education interference rather than L1 interference in casual speech where variation can occur.

Figure 45: Percentages of [v] and [f] in conversation and word list
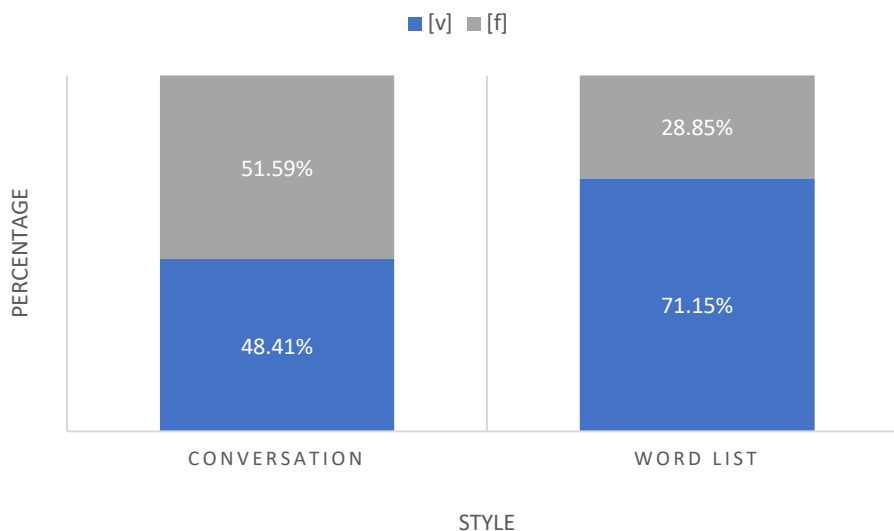
Style has been studied in relation to social class in sociolinguistic research that theorised that through style it can be inferred whether linguistic variables are indicators of regional varieties or markers of social class. A linguistic variable is called an indicator when it shows variation by social class but does not vary by style. On the other hand, a linguistic variable that correlates with social class and style is called a marker (Tagliamonte, 2012). An example of an indicator is vowel backing in Norwich English, in words like *path* and *bath* that are pronounced with a front vowel in standard British English. This variant remained stable across styles but showed class variation (Trudgill, 1974). An example of a marker is the variant [ɪn]. Trudgill found that [ɪn] was used more by working class speakers in casual and formal speech when compared to middle class speakers' speech who also showed style shifting.

Since the results show that *style* and *tribalism* both affect [f], there could be an interaction between the two factors. Figure 46 shows that in casual speech, tribal Saudis in the current analysis tend to devoice /v/ more than non-tribal Saudis in both styles. In formal speech, tribal Saudis used [f] (40.68%) more than non-tribal Saudis (31.67%). In the conversations there is only a slight difference between tribal and non-tribal Saudis in devoicing /v/, 50.34% and 49.54%,

respectively. What can be observed in these results is that non-tribal Saudis decreased the use of [f] from (49.54%) in the conversation to (31.67%) in the word list. On the other hand, tribal Saudis' use of [f] remained almost the same from (50.34%) in the conversation to (40.68%) in the word list. That is, tribal Saudis in the current study continued to use [f] regardless of whether or not they paid attention to their pronunciation. These results support the previous findings that tribal Saudis tend to devoice /v/ more than non-tribal Saudis. In addition, based on the findings, it could be argued that devoiced /v/ might be a social class (tribalism) marker in Saudi English as tribal speakers used [f] in both speech styles more than non-tribal Saudis. This finding needs further investigation with more speakers in each group with different English education backgrounds and different occupations. However, this finding adds to the study of the relationship between social class or tribalism in Saudi and language which, to my knowledge, has not been studied before.

Figure 46: Tribal and non-tribal Saudis' use of [f] in the conversations and the word list
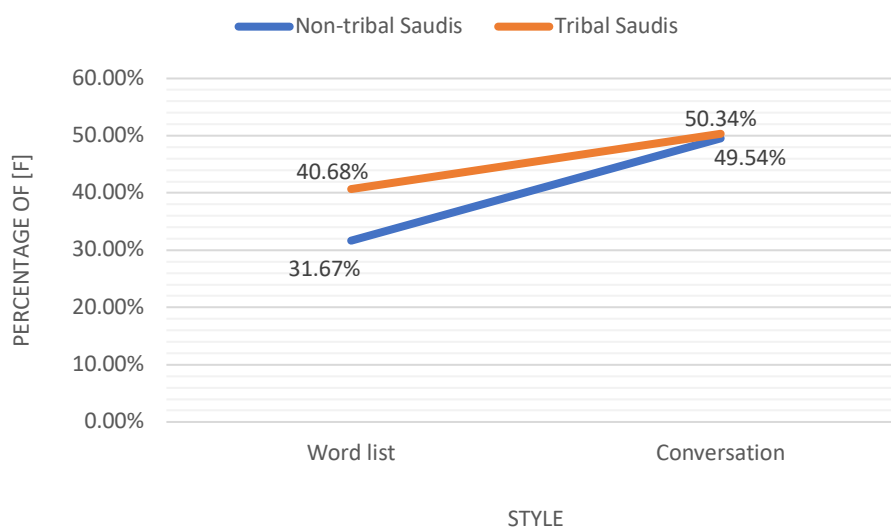
5.11 Conclusion

In this section I will summarise the quantitative analysis findings and the arguments presented in this chapter to answer the first research question: What specific features emerge in the English of Saudi speakers, and do these features vary in linguistic environments to an extent that they contribute to the creation of a separate variety of English in a similar way to features of, for example, African American English and Sri Lankan English?

To answer the first part of the first research question a series of multivariate analyses revealed five linguistic features that vary in Saudi English: verb *be*, indefinite article, definite article, 3rd person singular marker *-s*, and the labiodental fricative /v/. The results showed that all five variables vary in Saudi English, that they are rule-governed and that they are influenced by internal linguistic constraints and by external social, educational and attitudinal factors. To answer the second part of the question three criteria were used. Bayley (2005) explains that interlanguage variation is better explained in relation to multiple linguistic and social factors. In addition, he argues that similarities and differences in variation patterns between different Englishes that have different L1 backgrounds could help determine whether or not variation is a result of L1 transfer. Two criteria were used to explain English variation in the speech of Saudis in this study: similarity to Arabic, and similarity to other Englishes, such as African English varieties, Sri Lankan English, and Cameroon English. Another criterion was used to argue that the features presented above are peculiar to Saudi English which is the effect of social, attitudinal, and educational factors.

The results showed that *are* is more likely to be deleted, which is also found in Sri Lankan English Herat (2005). The second linguistic constraint that favours [zero *be*] is in line with the finding that *are* favours deletion (Auxiliary + Present + Plural). In the second environment *are* in an auxiliary position in the present tense is more likely to be deleted. Variation in the *Auxiliary + Present + Plural* position could be explained as a result of Arabic influence in which *be* is only possible in

the past tense. It could also be a result of English rule complexity where in this position *be* seems to be redundant, hence, deleted before another verb. The third linguistic factor that constrains *be* deletion is *type of complement* in which *be* preceding a V-ing favours deletion, which is also a feature of African American English (Labov, 1969; Wolfram, 1969). Additionally, *type of subject* proved to influence *be* variation. In this linguistic environment NPs favours [zero *be*] more than pronouns. The last linguistic factors included in the analysis was *preceding phonological environment* in which nasal and voiced consonants favours [zero *be*]. *Be* deletion in this environment could be attributed to L1 influence.

The indefinite articles also varied in different linguistic environments (a/an + NPs/quantifiers, and an vs a). The data of this study showed that *an*, more than *a*, favours deletion. The findings also revealed that [zero *a/an*] is more likely to be used before non-adjacent nouns. The deletion of indefinite articles could be explained as a result of Arabic influence, in which indefinite articles do not exist, or could be attributed to complexity of English article rules. In addition, the indefinite articles could be viewed as having different semantic and pragmatic functions depending on understanding speaker's and hearer's shared discourse which may or may not require an indefinite article. That is, what is perceived as new information by English L1 speakers might not be considered new by Saudi English speakers based on their specific shared discourse. These functions of *a/an* are common in other varieties, such as Cameroon English (Takam, 2011).

The definite article showed variation in the data of this study. The results revealed that the new variant [Saudi *the*] is more likely to be used before nouns with generic reference. This variation could be attributed to Arabic influence in which the definite article is used before nouns with generic reference. However, this feature is common in other English varieties that have different L1 backgrounds, such as Indian English, Singaporean English, Philippine English, Kenyan English, (Wahid, 2013) and Cameroon English (Takam, 2011). In addition to attributing the use of [Saudi *the*] to Arabic influence, it could be viewed as the definite article having different semantic and

pragmatic functions in Saudi English, a finding which is similar to that regarding the variation in indefinite article.

The use of the 3rd p. sg. -s in the speech of Saudis in this study also showed variation which could be predicted by a linguistic factor (verb aspect). The results showed that -s is realised in dynamic verbs and deleted in stative verbs. This variation could be attributed to Arabic transfer. That is, the use of zero marker for present tense verbs in Arabic may influence the use of [zero -s] in English. However, this feature is also common in other English varieties that resulted from contact with different L1s, for example, African English varieties (Poplack & Tagliamonte, 1989; Walker, 2001). Therefore, the use of [zero -s] in Saudi English was explained as a result of -s having a different function. That is, in Saudi English -s has an aspectual function (dynamic/durative) rather than an agreement function.

Devoicing /v/ appeared to be a feature of English used by Saudis in this study. The results showed that the devoiced variant [f] is used more in final position. In addition, speech style proved to be significant in predicting /v/ devoicing, that is [f] tends to be used in conversation more than in reading a word list. Similar to the previous features, devoicing /v/ could be attributed to Arabic transfer which only has the voiceless labiodental fricative /f/. Other Englishes have similar patterns of voicing /f/ or devoicing /v/, such as Dutch English (Simon, 2010) and southern British English (Hirson & Basavaraj, 2011). In addition, similar to the process that results in /v/, /f/ variation in other Englishes, the data showed that /v/ is devoiced by means of regressive assimilation when followed by voiceless consonants.

While variation in all five features mirrors some linguistic rules in Arabic, they were better explained when compared to variation processes in other English varieties. For example, the use of [zero *be*] in the *Auxiliary + Present + Plural* position was better understood in comparison to African American English that has this feature. As AAE resulted from the contact between English

and other dialects of American English (Labov, 1969) or a creole-based system (Wolfram, 1969), then [zero *be*] in the *Auxiliary + Present + Plural* position might not be attributed to Arabic. Hence, this variation was explained as a result of internal English rule complexity that verb *be* is deleted before another verb. Similarly, in the case of the 3rd p. sg. *-s*, the existence of a morpheme in Arabic equivalent to *-s* or the lack thereof may explain the use of [zero *-s*], but it does not explain the reason stative verbs favour [zero *-s*]. Research in African English varieties showed that variation in *-s* has an aspectual function which helped understand variation in *-s* in Saudi English. Whereas in African English varieties *-s* is stative, in Saudi English *-s* is dynamic.

All five features appeared to be influenced by external factors: social, attitudinal, or educational. This shows that variation in Saudi English, which is influenced by external factors relevant only to Saudi, is unique to English in Saudi which sets it apart from other English varieties.

Gender proved to significantly affect variation in two features, verb *be* and the third person singular marker *-s*. The results showed that Saudi women in this study seemed to lead in producing the Saudi English variants [zero *be*] and [zero *-s*]. Differences in gendered language use was attributed to having different social roles and education and career opportunities where women seemed to have low-density and less diverse social networks. Attitudinal and educational factors emerged as significant factors to affect variation in the definite and indefinite articles. Saudis' perception of and attitude to English as an ICE variety seemed to influence their use of the Saudi English variants [Saudi *the*] and [zero *a/an*] to show in-group identity and distance themselves from the other group and the western values they hold. Tribalism is another factor that influenced variation in Saudis' English use. Devoicing of the fricative /v/ and preferring to use [Saudi *the*] appeared to represent Saudis' tribal identity.

The findings of this study contribute to the existing research in SLA, World Englishes and sociolinguistics, especially in Saudi and in Outer and Expanding Circle contexts. Through

examining linguistic features of English in Saudi that have been studied and presented as *errors* in SLA research carried out in Saudi, this study adds a new perspective to explore variation in Saudi English as systematic patterns that may or may not result from L1 influence. It also adds a new contribution that has not been investigated before in SLA research in Saudi. Rather than examining Saudi English as an interlanguage striving to reach native speaker likeness, this study explored the social factors which exert an influence on variation and which make Saudi English socially and linguistically a unique English variety different from other ESL/EFL varieties. Through applying a variationist sociolinguistic approach to study variation in an EFL variety by correlating linguistic variables with social factors, this study adds to the existing literature in VS that started with investigating variation in L1 varieties and which has only recently been applied to examine variation in L2 varieties.

6: Qualitative results and discussion

As there have not been any sociolinguistic studies that links the Saudi society to Saudis' linguistic behaviour regarding English, a qualitative analysis was conducted to complement the findings in the quantitative analysis. In this chapter I present the findings of the qualitative analysis. Then, I will discuss the results in relation to the quantitative results to answer the second and third research questions: To what extent can Saudi English be seen to play a role in the construction of Saudis' identities? And, what are the attitudes that Saudis hold towards English and its use in an Arabic and Islamic society?

6.1 Thematic analysis

The coding of the interviews was based on claims presented in previous research carried out in Saudi Arabia and based on theories I discussed in chapter 2. The aim of this analysis is to challenge or support notions in the literature regarding Saudi's attitude towards English and their linguistic investment (Al-Samadani & Ibnian, 2015; Alkaabi, 2016), hence, I used the codes *investment*, *kids' education*, and *imagined future language*. In addition, the participants in my study talked about how English is perceived in their community, therefore, the codes *perception*, *language in Saudi*, *language and religion*, *language at home*, and *identity* were introduced to support or refute Mahboob' and Elyas' (2014) claim that English has been localized to fit the Islamic Saudi society. The code *westernisation* was added in order to investigate an issue raised in Al-Abed Al-Haq 's and Smadi's (1996) findings that Saudis might have a negative attitude to English as a form of westernisation. The code *ideology* reflects Saudis' opinions on how they were encouraged or discouraged to learn and use English. Analysis along these lines resulted in 833 examples to be considered, as shown in Table 35.

Table 35: Qualitative codes

Codes	N.

Attitude towards inner circle English (e.g., 21)	139
Attitude towards varieties of English (e.g., 22)	38
Attitude towards their own English (e.g., 23)	81
Investment: English for career advancement (e.g., 24)	39
Investment: English for other purposes (e.g., 25)	21
Language at home (e.g., 26)	31
Kids' education (e.g., 27)	74
Imagined future language (e.g., 28)	24
Language and religion (e.g., 29)	36
Perception (e.g., 30)	39
Ideology (e.g., 31)	73
Identity (e.g., 32)	48
Westernisation (e.g., 33)	77
Language in Saudi (e.g., 34)	113
Total N.	833

(21)

I prefer to keep the [British] accent but I don't know if because they (her children) grew up here, so but I don't know if with the environment will they still keep the same accent, or this will might change.

(22)

I don't like Indian accent actually. It's clear for me to understand but still not a good way of English, you know. I mean to be honest I prefer the American.

(23)

I feel my accent is not the best one. I feel my Arabic accent you know affects my English.

(24)

I use it because we are all from the same field which is medical field so a lot of terms a lot of vocabs we should use in English and some of them also we do not know in Arabic so I mean medical terms.

(25)

As I said I think because it's the second language here because it's universal as I said before like everywhere you have to speak English.

(26)

Yeah, me and her mother we speak Arabic. I tried to speak Arabic at home but she replies in English.

(27)

I'm planning to take them (her children) to [an] international school, insha' Allah. They just teach them all the subjects in English and beside they give them the religion subject and the Arabic. The private schools, they teach them in Arabic, all the subjects in Arabic.

(28)

When you think of the future is it Arabic or English?
I believe it's English. I think Saudi is heading to that point like most of the Saudis will be bilingual one day.

(29)

It (education) should be in Arabic because our country is based on religion so when… this is the truth everything in my country [is] based on religion.

(30)

it's (English) a prestigious thing, so if they're (Saudis) going to use it, they're going to use it because of prestige.

(31)

English is more common because of the Media.

(32)

Actually, I'm proud of my Arabic, and I don't want to change it at all. Okay, I can learn another language, and use it, but I don't want to leave mine. I don't know, it is something inside. I feel it, as, if I change my language, I change my identity. So, I don't want that.

(33)

The whole world's becoming westernised. Look at your life. I mean, we spend, I believe, maybe more than four hours a day watching TV, which is coming definitely from movies and all of that. News, I believe we watch... Even, right now, soccer. If you watch... Or football, okay? We're watching only the, I think, European, for example, European football matches or whatever. So everything is becoming westernized. I think so.

(34)

umm it's an international language English is an international language where if you want to develop your country, then you need to get... you need to be able to communicate with the other countries who have the science. For example, if you want to bring science into Saudi Arabia, then you have to communicate with the countries and the people who have the science so you can learn from them and bring that to Saudi Arabia.

6.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire had three parts: the first demographic information, the second part was a language use test, and the third part was an attitudinal test. The three parts were implemented in the quantitative analysis, however, only the results of part two and three will be presented in this section. Similar, to the qualitative themes, the questionnaire results were used to support the results of the quantitative analysis in that they complete the picture that reflects Saudis' language preference, dispositions, and linguistic behaviours.

As shown in Figure 47, the language test showed the participants' language preference in different domains, at home, in school, at work; and in different situations, with friends, and with non-Arabs. The results revealed that they prefer to use Arabic in these domains and situations (87.8% at home, 87.2% in school or university, 40% at work, 82.9% with friends, and 46.3% with

non-Arabs). However, the results also showed that some participants prefer to use English with Arabic or mostly English (12.2% Arabic and English at home; 51.30% English in school or university; 22.5% Arabic and English, and 22.5% English at work; 17.1% Arabic and English with friends; and 14.6% Arabic and English, and 39% English with non-Arabs).

Figure 47: Self-reported language use results
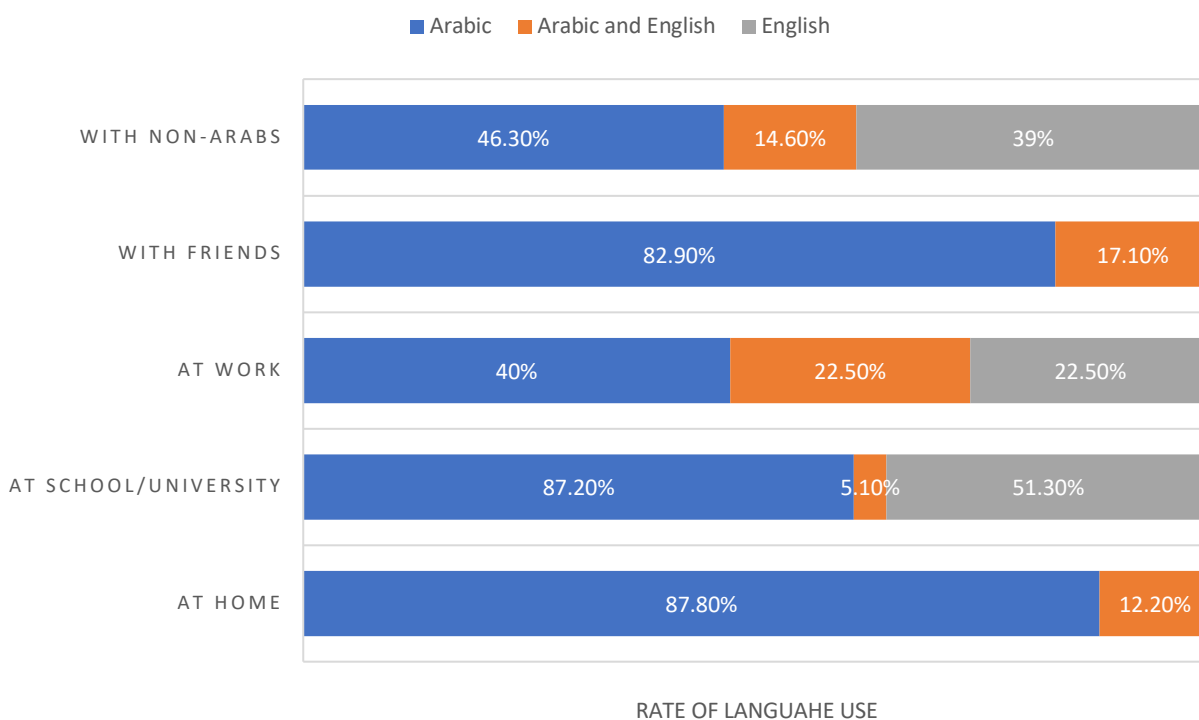
The attitudinal test consisted of three statements about perception, three about investment, three about English use as a career requirement (Eng. for career), three about English use for entertainment (Eng. for entertainment), three about westernization, and three about accent, presented in Figure 48. As I explained earlier, the five-point Likert scale was reduced to three for the analysis as I am interested in knowing whether they approve or disapprove of each statement.

Figure 48: Attitudinal test results
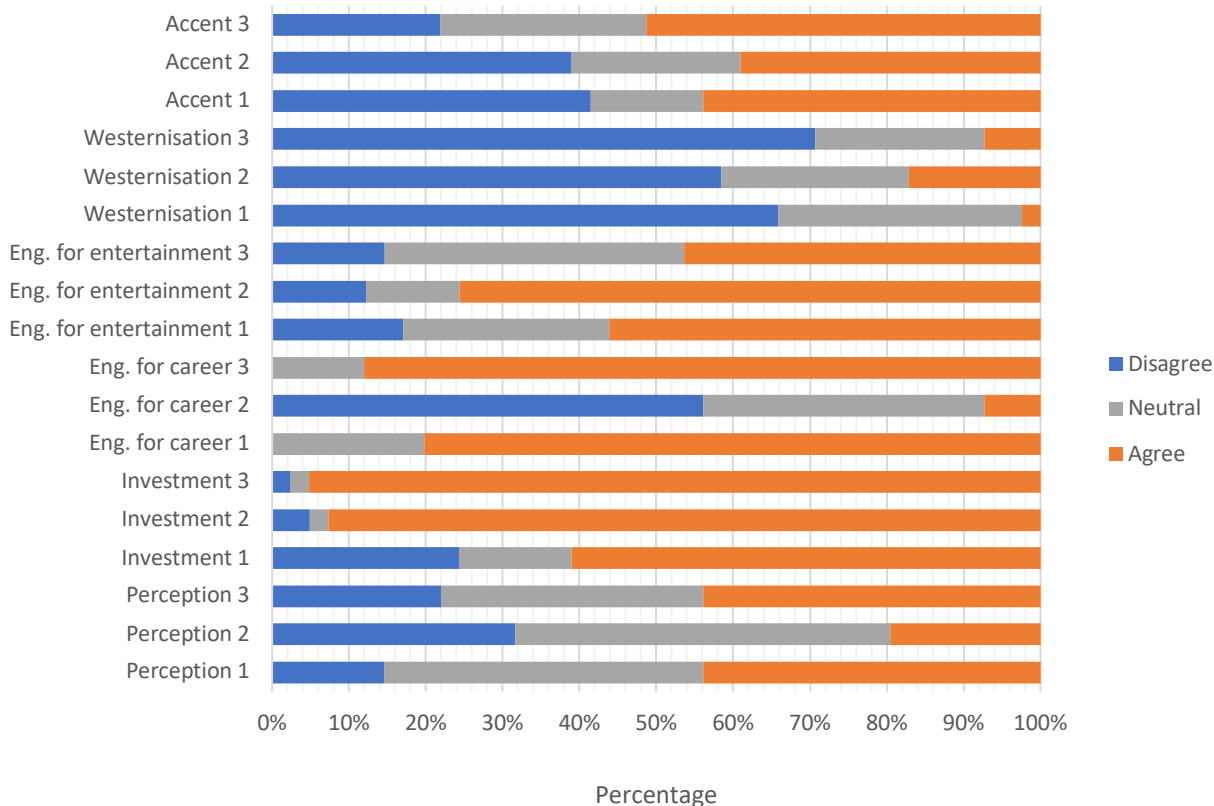
The general perception of English was positive, 43.9% agreed that it made them sound sophisticated and that it is a prestigious language. In addition, 56.1% and 88% thought English was important to find a job and increase their career prospects. Therefore, 61% of Saudis in my study planned to invest in their children's education by sending them to schools that use English as a main language and 92.7% agreed they would want them to learn English since we are living in a globalised world. In addition to being used to increase their employment opportunity, English was used for reading 56.1%, watching T.V. 75.6%, and listening to music 46.4%. Besides, 65.9% disapproved of the notion that English would make them forget Arabic, and 58.5% disagreed with the claim that English was a threat to Arabic. Also, 70.7% did not think that English was a form of

westernisation. These results contrast with Abed Al-Haq and Smadi's (1996) finding that English to Saudis is merely instrumental and supports their findings that Saudis do not perceive English as an indication of westernization, hence, a threat to Arabic. In addition, 43.9% agreed that they were proud of how they sound when they speak English, and 39% did not want to change that. However, 51.3% would like to sound 'nativelike' when they speak English, although the question did not specify any inner circle varieties. I can only assume they were referring to either American or British English as they are the only varieties taught in Saudi Arabia. This finding was not surprising as some Saudi researchers, like Alsamani (2014) who calls for teaching students how to imitate native speakers' facial expressions to achieve nativelike competence, dominate English research in Saudi Arabia. These results and the results of the language use test will be discussed in the following chapter in support of the qualitative codes and quantitative results.

6.3 What is actually happening in Saudi?

Here, I give the speakers in my study a chance to voice their opinions, concerns, and aspirations regarding English in Saudi. Incorporating qualitative analysis with quantitative analysis strengthens our understanding of language variation as language is the product of its speakers, and its speakers are the product of their society. Language, people, and society are interconnected: each is influenced by and influences the other.

As Saudi English is a new variety, this study adds to the previous two studies on Saudi English that presented some of its features (Al-Rawi, 2012; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). In the following sections, this study sheds light on the speakers who speak Saudi English. I discuss key concepts, such as English *correctness* and *native-speakerism*, and I talk about ideologies that may have shaped the speakers' perception of English. Silverstein (1979, p. 193) defined linguistic ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use". Exploring the linguistic ideologies that influence the speakers' perception of English helps understand their language use which resulted in Saudi English.

Finally, I allow the speakers to inform us about their language use in their homes: what language do they use to communicate with their children and what language do their children prefer. I give the speakers a chance to explain their different kinds of motivation to learn and speak English. Through allowing the participants to explain the reasons they are invested in English, they demonstrate that they have agency in choosing to be English speakers despite the conflicting ideologies that are with or against the spread of English in Saudi.

6.3.1 Who is a *good* English speaker?

The findings of the qualitative analysis clearly show the influence of ideologies such as *standard English* and *native-speakerism* which can be attributed to the educational system in Saudi Arabia. In the interviews, I asked the speakers questions to elicit their opinions, attitudes, and preferences regarding English varieties and accents. I used the term *accents* instead of *dialects* for two reasons: first, the speakers in my study might not be aware of the difference between the two terms, or they might not understand the term *dialect* at all, as *accent* is more common. As the results show they understood the meaning of accents in relation to English varieties, such as Indian, Australian and American Englishes. Second, as Thomas et al. (2004, p. 175) put it, "although dialect and accent are technically separate entities, they are often treated as the same thing because of their close connection." Questions about accents were used in the interviews to refer to and distinguish English varieties, rather than accents per se.

One of the recurrent themes that appeared in the conversations is the notion of *correctness* represented in the speech of native speakers. For example, Ola (70) is a Saudi female, who at that time was a postgraduate student at Manchester Metropolitan University. Reflecting on her English language and responding to the question *are you an English speaker?*, she said:

(70)

I'm actually working on this and hopefully, hopefully, hopefully I become an English speaker <u>as a native speaker, but I know now, sometimes my grammar is not good. Sometimes my accent is not good</u>. But <u>I still am looking forward to being as a native speaker</u>. You know, I'm studying English as an academic language more than the slang language, which is street language. I know some slang words, but not all the words. I want to become like a native speaker. <u>I want to when I chat with a British or an Australian or an American person</u>, I can understand them fully. Not some words, not the academic words and not slangs, I want to understand them fully, I don't know why.

It can be seen in Ola's comment that the notion of English *correctness* that can only be represented by native speakers' language plays an influential role in determining the concept of *English speaker*. In her opinion she cannot be classified as an English speaker until she manages to speak English like native speakers despite the fact that she learned English in Saudi, she took English classes in Manchester that qualified her to study a postgraduate course in a British university, and she had been using English living in Manchester. According to Ola, *good* grammar and accent are what native speakers use in Inner Circle countries (British, American, or Australian). She is unaware that most people in Manchester, where she had been living for five years, speak an English variety that is different from the standard British English variety. Having an unrealistic perception of English and how it should be spoken can be interpreted as a result of English education that is based on and perpetuates these ideologies, not only in Saudi, but in English classes for international students. For example, Ola (71) said that she was encouraged to become like a native speaker in order to be able to speak English well in one of the English classes she attended in Manchester,

(71)

When I was studying English, <u>in the English classes, they told us 'You are not like a native speaker, you need to become like a native speaker</u>'. So, they, they mentioned that as long as you speak English well, you will become a native speaker.

My conversation with Ahmed (72) was interesting as we discussed the meaning of standard English, the idea of native speakers, and accents in relation to different English varieties.

(72)

Ahmed: I think my accent is really poor.
Interviewer: what do you mean poor?
Ahmed: I mean it's not good I'm struggling with the accent.
Interviewer: what's a good accent?
Ahmed: I believe when you speak a foreign language, try to speak as good as native as possible.

Ahmed was a lecturer at a Saudi university. At that time, he was studying a postgraduate course in the University of Liverpool after studying English in Saudi and in the UK. He thinks that although his English in general is good, his accent was *poor*. The reason he struggled with accent, according to him, was that he did not acquire a native-like accent. When I challenged him with the idea of native-speakerism (73), he replied as follow:

(73)

Interviewer: Who is a native speaker of English?
Ahmed: English (British) people, American people, Australian people.
Interviewer: So, which one is the best?
Ahmed: For me British people speak the best English?
Interviewer: Really? Which part of Britain?
Ahmed: I love the scouse accent but it's a bit difficult the accent of Liverpool is a bit difficult.
Interviewer: So, if you have the ability to learn their accent would you use it in Saudi?
Ahmed: Yes, yes, yes!
Interviewer: Don't you think you'd sound silly?
Ahmed: I think yes but…
Interviewer: Which accent of English is more acceptable for education?
Ahmed: Maybe London.
Interviewer: What?
Ahmed: Maybe London. What I believe is prophet Muhammed says Allah loves when someone does something, they do it in the best way, so the best way is to pronounce it correctly and to pronounce it correctly you have to do what the native speakers do that's what I believe.

Ahmed explained that native speakers who represent a *good* accent in his perspective is sounding American, Australian or British, which is similar to Ola's opinion about speaking a *good* English.

Out of these varieties, he thinks British English is the *best English*. Again, this statement shows the influence of *standard English* and *native-speakerism* ideologies. Unlike Ola, Ahmed showed awareness of the different accents in the UK, Scouse and London, which further shows that ideologies shaped his opinion regarding English. That is, although Scouse and London are different, he perceived both to be *good* English accents as they are native speakers' accents. He even justified his view with a saying by Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him, that a person should excel at whatever they are doing in terms of work or education. So, according to Ahmed, to be best at English, or to pronounce words *correctly*, as he put it, means achieving a native-like accent. Both Ahmed and Ola perceive *standard* or *good* English as the language spoken in a homogeneous community of native speakers whether American, British, or Australian. Ameerah (74) and Maha (75) defined what it meant to be an English speaker in relation to different aspects of the language other than accent. Ameerah explained:

(74)

Ameerah: [an English speaker] is fluent in all language components. So, let's say, in all aspects. Let's say reading, writing, speaking, all of those stuff. Listening. So, I would say if you're going to ask me this question about Saudi Arabia, I would say that we are fluent, or we can speak more, and we understand listening more than reading and writing.

Interviewer: So, are we English speakers?

Ameerah: I don't feel like that we are up to the level of English speakers.

According to Ameerah, being able to communicate or speak in English is not enough to classify someone as an English speaker. Unless *we are up to the level of English speakers* (we can assume she meant L1 speakers) in reading and writing as well as listening and speaking we are not English speakers, even though we conducted that interview in English. Maha had a similar view:

(75)

Maha: For me no. <u>I would like to be well qualified and understand everything</u> because it bothers me sometime when I translate something if a new word you have not heard this word before I have to translate it and I mean in general <u>it's bothering me I have to translate everything</u>.

Maha does not consider herself an English speaker unless she is able to understand every English word without needing to translate them. Ameerah's and Maha's perceptions of what classifies a person to be an English speaker reflect the issue in English education that focuses on achieving native speaker standard rather than focusing on the new role of English as an international language, which is communication. Some speakers in my study showed awareness of Saudi English. For example, Ahed (76) when asked about her English, said:

(76)

Ahed: Sometimes I find myself I speak like Saudi accent. But sometimes when I talk with some Saudi friend, I feel no, I'm better than them.
Interviewer: Why better? Because…
Ahed: Because it's similar to native. Similar to British or…. You know, I mix some words, it depends on where I heard them first. For example, some word I learned this word from a movie, so I say this word as I heard it in [the] movie. You know?

While Ahed recognised her accent as Saudi, which probably means pronouncing words with an Arabic accent, however, she explained her English is better than her Saudi friend's accent as her English is more native-like or British. Muneer (77), an English teacher who has a Ph.D. in linguistics, also expressed similar awareness of the Arabic accent:

(77)

Muneer: People from Jeddah (a city in the west of SA), they have <u>Jeddah English</u>, I would call it. Riyadh (a city in the middle of SA), they have <u>Riyadh English. Hail (a city in the north of SA), they have Hail English</u>. Of course not all of them do this, but some, let me say, if this <u>problem</u> happens, I would call it <u>Hail Arabic because the intonation is Hail, their vowels are Hail</u> because there all vowels coming into the words that are not actually English and the structure. <u>Because they drop definite articles. They drop some vowels. They drop a lot of syntactical or morphological morphemes. So, if they do, they don't sound actually like English accents</u>.

Muneer acknowledged that when Saudis speak English, they reveal some of their regional Arabic dialects through intonation and vowel sounds. However, he referred to them as a *problem* as they deviate from English accents. He expressed how Saudis' English language is different grammatically and criticised them for dropping articles and other *syntactical or morphological morphemes.* In addition, Muneer (78) was aware of the difference between English spoken by Saudis and by other Arabic speakers:

(78)

Muneer: Egyptian for instance, when they speak up, you would say that they are Egyptians. They are not Saudi. Libyans, Tunisians, Kuwaitis sound different from Saudis. So, I would definitely say that this guy is Saudi. Whether the accent is actually a native or native like it depends. People who have been exposed outside of Saudi Arabia, most of them have got good English. Very, very good English. But those who have remained in Saudi Arabia, I don't think there's much maintenance to their English. So, it's still stable without any improvement.

Muneer claims that he can distinguish between English spoken by Saudis and English spoken by other Arabs, such as Egyptians, Libyans, Tunisians, and Kuwaitis. However, he suggests that sounding like an Arab when speaking English indicates that a speaker has not had enough English exposure in an L1 environment to improve their language. It is interesting, although not surprising, that a linguist and an English teacher who is knowledgeable about the language holds the belief that Saudis should change the way they speak to sound like L1 English speakers. This belief has been reflected in many SLA studies carried out in Saudi Arabia (For example, Hashim,1980; Alsamani, 2014; Abdelrady & Ibrahim, 2015). To the best of my knowledge, until this day Saudi researchers and linguists encourage Saudis to improve their English and be native-like after reaching the same conclusion every time that Saudis use the language differently. Muneer's following comments (79) about his own English reveals the contradiction between what he believes regarding English education, which is clearly influenced by *native-speakerism* ideology, and what he actually experiences in reality:

(79)

Muneer: Someone working in the library told me he's <u>from London and I told him, your English is perfect</u> I like that, I really do miss it. He said, 'I pick American and Australian when you speak', he said that to me. I said, <u>'well, I've become a melting pot, like a mixture of American, Australian'.</u> You know how Australian sounds, like long vowels. I'm on the continuum of the interlanguage and whether it's been improved.

Interviewer: Where are you heading? American accent, or Australian?

Muneer: I think most likely American.

Interviewer: Why?

Muneer: That's what I feel when I speak. I go more to the American.

On one hand, Muneer describes his English as *a melting pot, like a mixture of American, Australian* having studied American English in Saudi and studying for two years in Australia. On the other hand, he describes the accent of the person from London as *perfect* while he calls his English an interlanguage that needs to be improved. These conflicting opinions that Saudis in my study show could be a result of English education policies that position ICE varieties in the centre and set them as a goal that Saudis should achieve which in reality does not represent the role of English as a communicative international language. Qala (80) shared Ahed's and Muneer's views regarding English in Saudi Arabia. When I asked her about the way English is spoken in Saudi, she seemed to be aware that English is spoken with a Saudi accent,

(80)

Interviewer: How is English spoken in Saudi?

Qala: It's really different.

Interviewer: How?

Qala: First of all, it's a <u>Saudi accent by English words</u>. Really, if you see, if you hear someone who's from the East of Saudi Arabia, they speak English by the <u>East Saudi Arabia accent</u>, really. And if you hear someone who is in <u>the middle, they speak their English</u> by the Saudi accent. So, <u>it's kind of English by Arabic accent, by Saudi accent</u>. <u>So, if you see, hear Saudis speak English, you would know they are Saudis and you can know where they are from in Saudi Arabia.</u>

Qala claims that she can hear regional Arabic variation in Saudis' English speech, which is similar to Muneer's claim earlier. Furthermore, she labelled them in general as Arabic or Saudi accent

claiming that she would recognise a Saudi person when they speak English despite the effect of their regional Arabic variety on their English accent. Farah (81) had a similar opinion that regional Arabic varieties can influence Saudis' English accents:

(81)

Farah: It depends <u>on the regions</u>. For example, a Saudi from the south, he would speak <u>English like with a south accent</u>. I think it depends on their <u>previous region</u>, where did they come from?

In addition to showing preference to ICE varieties, especially, in comparison to their own use of English which reveal the influential impact of *standard English*, *correctness*, and *native-speakerism* ideologies, this impact can be observed through their perception of Outer Circle English varieties, such as Indian English and Chinese English. Commenting on Indian English, Ahmed said,

(82)

Ahmed: They are very very good grammatically they are very fluent, but they are maybe <u>they don't work hard towards the pronunciation things.</u> Maybe it's not all of them but I believe, for example, for me, when I see an Indian speaks different than other Indians like speaks like British English or American English, I feel he is one single step tiny step <u>better than the others.</u> I have that feeling.

Earlier, Ahmed (73) stated that he preferred ICE varieties, American, British, and Australian, which he perceived to represent *good* accents. However, he has a different attitude towards Indian English speakers who he thinks have good grammar but need to *work hard* on their pronunciation (82). Justifying his opinion about Indian English he explained:

(83)

…for example when an Indian speaks, I'm not criticizing them, I'm not saying they are bad, but for example, when even us <u>Arabs we don't pronounce things correctly</u> like when an Indian speaks, and <u>they pronounce 'we' they pronounce it 'vee'</u>, for example.

His justification for thinking that Indians need to improve their Indian accent is because they pronounce some sounds differently, just like Arabs have different pronunciation. At that point, I challenged him by pointing out that in Australia, a variety he prefers, some people say *die* instead of *day* to which he replied:

(84)

But when <u>Australians speak, they don't speak… they pronounce it (referring to 'we') correctly</u>, and I didn't know they pronounce 'day' 'die' and things like that I didn't know that.

His perception of Indian English, especially in comparison to Australian English, highlights a problematic issue in the current English education which is discrimination, favouring ICE varieties and their speakers and marginalising other varieties spoken in other countries. Ola (85) had a similar perception of Chinese English:

(85)

…sometimes <u>accent is important</u>, it depends on how they say the word. For example, I have a friend from <u>China. I can't understand her, and she got six in IELTS, in speaking</u>. So, she has the ability to talk with any person who speaks English. But I can't understand her. Their accent is really, I mean, <u>the Chinese accent really affects their English.</u>

Ola, like Ahmed, stated earlier that she preferred ICE varieties and that her goal was to achieve a native-like accent (70). Ola's favouritism of American and British Englishes and her criticism of Chinese English also reflects the discrimination against other English speakers embedded in the current English education in Saudi. Some speakers had different opinions about the intelligibility of Indian English:

(86)

Interviewer: Do you think Indian English is as good as American or British English?

Fahad: No, because the accent <u>messes up a lot of words. It could lead to misunderstanding</u>.

(87)
Interviewer: Do you think Indian English is as good as American or British English?
Nader: No, because their accent is kind of like… you <u>cannot understand it</u> sometimes.

(88)

Aziz: Sometimes the accent gives you, throws you away when you're listening to words. <u>This is something we suffer from in the university</u>. Some professors their accent sometimes throws, throws us away <u>throws the students away</u>.

(89)

Badir: They (Indians) have its not just English is their own language they as well have their accent and sometimes <u>it's clear for me to understand them more than native speakers.</u>

(90)

Abdul: <u>I didn't like the accent, the Indian accent</u>, actually. <u>It's a clear</u> for me to understand, but still <u>not a good way of English</u>. I mean, to be honest, <u>I prefer the Queen English</u>, that you find in London, for example, in south of the UK, but just I think there is something wrong when Indian people speak in English.

(91)

Qadeer: <u>It's proper</u>. You can't say that the accent is not good, after all they're speaking English. This is why I say I'm not so concerned about the accent, but do you like to listen to them? To me personally? <u>No. I like to listen to the American even more than the British,</u> to be honest.

Fahad (86) and Nader (87) stated they did not like Indian English because, as they claimed, it is not understandable. Aziz (88) said that some university students *struggled* to understand professors who had an Indian English accent. On the other hand, some speakers stated that Indian English was intelligible, even more intelligible than ICE varieties. For example, to Badir (89) Indian English is *clear* to understand *more than native speakers*. Both Abdul (90) and Qadeer (91) think the Indian accent is *clear* and *proper* but they prefer ICE varieties, *the Queen English* and *American English*, respectively. While some speakers expressed the importance of acquiring an ICE variety accent, marginalizing their own Arabic/Saudi accents and other non-ICE accents, other speakers disagreed. For example, Fatin (92) stated that what is important is being understood. Also, to Asma (93) successful communication is more important than sounding like a native

speaker. Maha (94) had a different view that her reason of using English is *for scientific purpose* where accent is not important. Finally, in Tahani's opinion, accent is not important, however, without accent communication with ICE speakers could be complicated (95). What can be inferred from her comment is that she could be conflating accent with pronunciation which is only one aspect of accent. And that in contexts where English is used as an international language, the burden of successful communication lies with L2 speakers. That is, only L2 speakers are expected to change and modify their communication strategies to accommodate L1 speakers.

(92)

Fatin: Some people are not concerned with accents. The most important thing, I don't know, this is my personal opinion. <u>The most important thing is to be understood, to be able to understand the person in </u>front of you when they speak English. <u>The way you express the message</u>, this is important to me, rather than the accent.

(93)

Asma': I don't care about that to be honest with you, because <u>accent is not an issue as long as you understand me</u>. So, that's a thing.

(94)

Maha: because I believe that I'm using this language just <u>for scientific purpose </u>not for leisure or something else I don't care about accent.

(95)

Tahani: <u>Not important but it's much easier for the person who listens to me</u> because sometimes when you speak in your language <u>it will be very heavy on a British man or woman</u>, that the first time they speak with a foreigner, so they would ask you to repeat it and repeat it until 'oh yeah I get it', you know? So, it's easier to speak in the same accent or a familiar accent to them.

There are three major issues that can be observed from the speakers' perception of the English language. First, the issue that *good* English can only be an ICE variety where native speakers are the authority of English. It seems that some speakers in my study perceive ICE speakers as belonging to one homogeneous community that represents *good* English. It can be observed from their comments that American, Australian and British Englishes refer to one English that is

correct. This can be further understood from Ahmed's favouritism for Australian English, and disfavouritism for Indian English for their pronunciation of *we* as *ve*. Jenkins (2009) points out that Australian English was considered non-standard until the 1970s. According to Jenkins (p. 37), "up until then, Australian English was evaluated in terms of its closeness to Standard British English (known locally as the 'colonial cringe'), with any distinctively Australian forms being regarded as 'bad' English."

The second issue is that their English language can never be good enough compared to ICE varieties. While some do not acknowledge ICE varieties as different, and those who do, do not perceive the differences as *wrong*, together they view their different English as always lacking. Even though they had been learning and using English for years, and some of the speakers had been living and studying in the UK, to them English as an international language is an interlanguage that needs to be improved and falls short in comparison to ICE varieties. This is reflected in the speakers' responses in the questionnaire where 51.30% wish to sound native-like in English, Figure 49. However, when the focus of the questionnaire statement shifted to their *Saudi accent* without comparting it to native speakers' accents, their responses changed, Figure 50. Responding to the statement, *I am proud of my Saudi accent when I speak English*, the speakers almost equally agreed 43.90% and disagreed 41.50%.

Figure 49: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.17, *It is important for me to sound like a native speaker when speaking English*
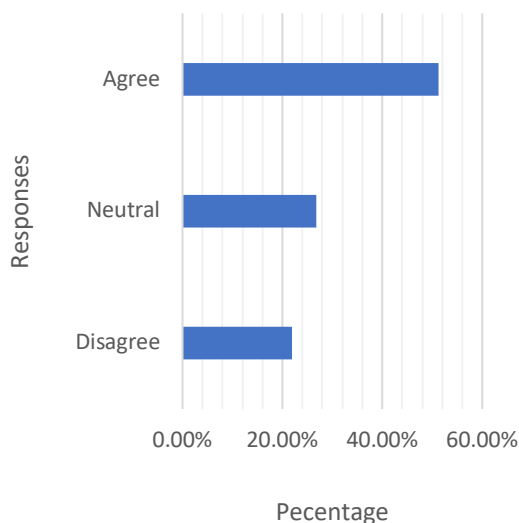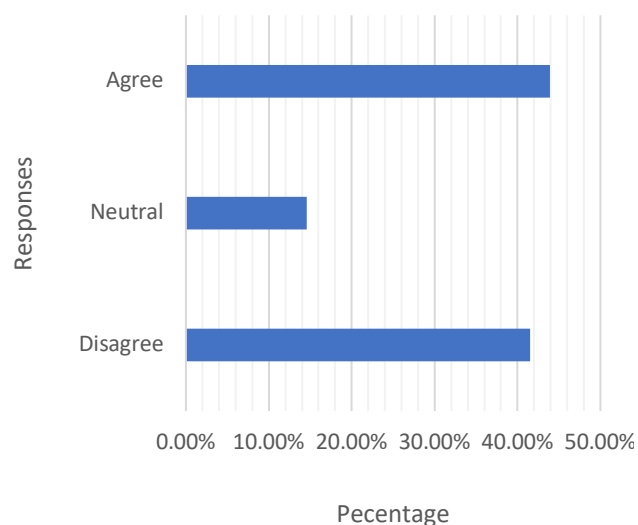
Figure 50: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.3, *I am proud of my Saudi accent when I speak English*

There could be another factor that triggered these responses, namely social identity, which will be discussed in the following section. However, it is important to highlight this now as it shows the contradictions in their attitudes towards English represented as an ICE variety and as their own when labelled *Saudi* English. It can be argued that this confusion is a result of the English education system that idealises ICE varieties and their speakers. Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, p. 14-15) maintain that the ideology of standardisation gave standard English power of its own through presenting "the standard as the primordial entity from which other dialects deviate." As a result, not accepting their English use and considering local features as deficient will deter speakers from identifying with their own local English (B. B. Kachru, 1992).

The third issue is marginalising Outer Circle and Expanding Circle Englishes even though some admit they are intelligible. While some speakers claimed Indian and Chinese Englishes were unintelligible, it could be argued that their negative perception of these verities could have led

to the assumption these varieties are incomprehensible as they are not *correct* English. By perceiving ICE varieties as inherently *correct* English despite their differences, then any other variety is perceived to be *incorrect*. In addition, it could be argued that the speakers' negative perception of Indian English is social rather than linguistic, as Indians constitute 1.6 million of the low-skilled workers in Saudi (De Bel-Air, 2014). Consequently, in Saudis' perception, ICE varieties could be associated with powerful and educated speakers, whereas Indian English could be associated with uneducated low-skilled workers.

English has been growing and spreading to such an extent that it is now used more by L2 speakers than L1 speakers. It has been diversifying, consequently, *English* has become *Englishes* influenced by other languages in different contexts that may or may not involve *native speakers*. Some researchers who promote the division standard and non-standard English, such as Quirk (1990), view Englishes in Outer Circle and Expanding Circle as an inadequate interlanguage that has not reached the target. This view has also been the main focus of English research in Saudi, see section 2.1.6. But, as B. B. Kachru (1991) argues, new Englishes have new functions in international contexts where speakers should not be expected to conform to Inner Circle norms. In Saudi, Mahboob & Elyas (2014) argue that English has been localized to reflect cultural practices, for example, the use of the masculine pronoun *he* as a generic pronoun in a masculine society. Thomas et al. (2004, p. 177) argue that the development of a standard variety "was based on social and political, rather than linguistic, choices." In addition, they maintain that the notion of *correctness* is based on the idea that standard varieties are logical, systematic and rule-governed, whereas other varieties are not. However, Thomas et al. point out that standard English is not always logical, for example, the verb *be* that has different forms for singular and plural (*is, are*) in present and past tense (*was, were*). Milroy and Milroy (1999) argue that variation in other Englishes, just like in standard English, have systematic rules, although, different rules. In my study, as discussed earlier, each feature is rule-governed that could be influenced by the Arabic linguistic system. Therefore, standardisation of certain varieties is,

predominantly, socially and politically motivated rather than linguistically. It's more about the perception of *correctness* rather than being correct or incorrect.

6.3.2 *Our* culture, *their* culture

As I explained in section 1.1, education, and the media have helped spread the English language in Saudi, that could be considered to serve a political ideology that puts importance on English to reform a deeply religious and conservative society through international relations between Saudi Arabia and the rest of the world and through introducing the Saudi society to other cultures, see section 2.3.2.2.1. This ideology, however, is faced with religious ideology that might have led to fear of westernization as a result of the spread of English and fear of losing the Arab and Islamic identity as a result of losing the Arabic language, see section 2.3.2.2.2. In this section, through the speakers' comments in the conversations and their responses in the questionnaire, I will discuss the current status of English in Saudi, how it has spread. I will discuss the speakers' views and concerns in relation to four topics, English education, language and culture, language and religion, and westernization.

6.3.2.1 Attitudes to English use by the media and the government

In Saudi, English, alongside Arabic, is used in the media and in official government websites. I asked the speakers about their opinions on this. Their responses varied between those who think that English use by the media and the government is meant for non-Arabs residents in Saudi, and those who think it could be for Saudis. Regarding using English in the media, some respondents thought that it had an educational purpose to help Saudis improve their English,

(96)

Osama: <u>It's like a practice for your language,</u> for example, if you want to study outside of Saudi and you want a good English and if you want to practice it you can listen or watch English programs.

(97)

Marzooqah: You know, I realized recently too many students and too many especially teenagers they like the English language more than Arabic and they prefer sometimes now French as well I realized some people now English with French, so they want to learn too many languages. Yeah, so they start to watch more movies and kids' channels for cartoons because you know kids' channels are clearer than movies, so they start with kids' channels then after that they develop their knowledge, they watch movies.

(98)

Maliha: Actually, I know <u>a lot of teenage girls, they improved their language from zero</u>. They study at a public school but they speak English better than me that I am studying in UK. <u>Because they watch English channels</u>.

On the other hand, some speakers believed using English in the media had other *useful purposes*, such as normalising the spread of English in Saudi (99), changing [*the*] *general attitude to English* (100), being aware of the world outside of Saudi (101) and spreading western culture in Saudi (102). A participant thought Saudis watching English channels were socially motivated to be *cool* among their peers (103), while another though that only Saudis who are from *a high educated background* would watch English channels (104).

(99)

Ola: Before Saudis were closed, close-minded in their language and traditional stuff, something like this. But after they tried to travel, visit many places, their horizons broadened, and they can understand English. <u>I think these channels [are] for, useful purposes, kind of to make speaking English as a habit for people</u>. And this can help them when they travel abroad, or when they find, or when they meet some international people in our country. I think that.

(100)

Belal: I think because maybe <u>to change the general attitude to English</u>. I have some friends who do not have any knowledge in science, but <u>they have good English from watching TV</u>, yeah.

(101)

Maha: I have to watch more English channels because I would like <u>to be aware about what happens around us</u>.

(102)

Taqreed: Maybe just <u>spreading their culture</u> maybe. How would you know others… others' culture if you don't just watch… <u>watch their movies and just to know what's their life is like</u>?

(103)

Qala: It became more popular, especially for Saudis, they like to watch English programs. Maybe the main reason is <u>to improve their English</u>. Maybe another reason just <u>to feel like we're cool, peer pressure</u>, maybe.

(104)

Farah: Who would watch MBC 2[5], or let's say Channel 2[6]? <u>They are from a very high educated background</u>.

When I asked the speakers about their opinion regarding the fact that, in Saudi, English, with Arabic, is used in official government websites, they had different opinions. Some speakers stated that English government websites were meant for non-Arab residents in Saudi (105, 107). Qadeer (108) finds the use of English in government websites unacceptable, however, she thinks the use of English might be away to communicate with people from other countries and inform them about Saudi. On the other hand, other respondents believed these English websites are for Saudis who grew up abroad and would not be able to understand Arabic (107). For example, I met Tahani in Newcastle where she was living with her family at that time. Like many other Saudis who had the opportunity to study in English speaking countries, her twelve-year daughter started school in the UK. Because her daughter started learning English in school before Arabic, she thinks one day her daughter would prefer to use *the English version* of the government websites. In the following section, I will talk more about the topic that children of Saudi students started to learn English before Arabic. Similar to Tahani's case, Nesreen (106) who was a postgraduate student in Manchester, thinks her children would use *English websites more than Arabic* for the same reason that they learned English before Arabic. What can be observed from the participants'

---

[5] MBC 2 is a channel owned by the Saudi broadcaster MBC Group which mostly broadcasts American movies.

[6] Channel 2 is a Saudi channel in the Saudi cable TV that broadcasts English programs.

comments is that their first intuition is English channels and government websites are meant for foreigners in Saudi.

(105)

Tahani: Because <u>we have foreigners</u> in our country not all of them speak Arabic, or <u>maybe Saudis who grew up outside</u>, so they are more comfortable to use English than Arabic. <u>I think my older daughter she would choose the English version</u>.

(106)

Nesreen: I didn't think about that before. Maybe in some situations, <u>people understand English more than Arabic</u>. I think <u>in the future, my kids will use English websites more than Arabic</u> because they always read English. So, it's easy to understand, more than Arabic.

(107)

Ameerah: I think it's <u>for the other countries</u>, or other people... <u>Foreigners in Saudi Arabia</u>. Or sometimes <u>if you read in English, you would understand more</u>, or the background. Or sometimes people they never know, sometimes people that don't speak Arabic at all, or they speak Arabic, but if they have a background, they're very... <u>If they spent their whole life outside the country or overseas, then they would prefer English</u>. So, maybe that's why.

(108)

Qadeer: Personally, <u>I don't find it acceptable</u>, it's a must. When the minister of higher education set a competition and said they want the logo in both languages (Arabic and English), <u>I didn't accept that because Arabic is our language</u>. Maybe <u>the government wants other people to know what Saudi Arabia is</u> or who they are. Maybe to show that we are competent in [the] English language, <u>we are well educated</u>, but that's the only reason I can think of.

6.3.2.2 Attitudes to English in education

Beside the media, in Saudi, English has spread through the education system. As I outlined in section 1.1, in the Saudi general education, English teaching policies kept changing and have been through stages since the 70s until now. In addition, since the 80s, Saudi universities have English departments and language centres or translation institutes (Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi, 1996). The speakers in my study reflected on the status of English in the Saudi education system. Some

speakers viewed the use of English in education positively, as English has an important role as 'a way of communicating with the world (109), therefore, it has become the language of instruction in Saudi universities that hire English speaking teachers, such as Indians (110, 111). Other speakers viewed it negatively stating that it is important to teach in Arabic as the Saudi culture is Islamic (112-115).

(109)

Fahad: Because I think it is <u>way of communicating with the world not just in Saudi Arabia</u>, and now in college <u>the main language used in colleges is English</u>, so I think it is something that will benefit them in the future.

(110)

Rahaf: I think many years ago we just focused on the English… the English module that we study in school, <u>but nowadays even universities, they started teaching English, they don't speak in Arabic. Even the teachers the doctors, they come from India</u>, I think. In King Abdul Aziz University, they teach us in English because some words you can't explain them in Arabic, but it should be in both of them, English and Arabic.

(111)

Basel: I will teach in English because <u>the education system has changed, so it's compulsory for us to teach in English</u>.

(112)

Taqreed: <u>Nowadays, people just focus more maybe on English because it's like the spoken language all over the world</u> but for me the most important thing is <u>to teach my kids Qur'an</u> and just to be to have the ability to read Arabic, that's all.

(113)

Hallah: <u>Our culture is different</u>, you know? Yes, maybe there are some who have the opportunity to go abroad and study there. But until now they are, how many, how many, when you compare them with the whole citizens there? So, <u>I think because our culture is religious culture, we have to stick with the Quran, with Hadith</u>, and this is tough. <u>Yes, you can speak English, but you can't, you can't just forget Arabic</u> at all. That's what I mean. If they forgot Arabic, how could they read Qur'an? <u>Keep Arabic because it is their original language, their identity, keep it for religious things</u>. <u>Keep English because this is the future, for their future, for studying in universities or abroad</u>.

(114)

Qala: <u>I do not think English is important</u>. I don't think it's the policy of the country, you can see it from schools. <u>If it was really important, they would have it from early age at school</u>, everywhere, even in public schools, but it's not. So, I don't think this is the mission or the vision for them to have bilinguals.

(115)

Maliha: <u>It should be in Arabic because our country's based on religion</u>. So, when... This is the truth, because the law is based on religion, everything is, in my country, based on religion. Qur'an is a center of our language. <u>So, they (Saudis) kind of fear this big change to English</u>.

Rahaf (110) and Basel (111) attested to the fact they were required to teach in English in Saudi universities. Abu Yaseen (116), Aser (117), and Rami (118) also confirmed that working in Saudi they were required to use English.

(116)

Abu-Yaseen: Maybe now I am <u>working in SABIC[7] most of our meetings, even if there are no foreign people we talk in English. I do not like it</u>. <u>We are Arabs, we have to speak Arabic</u>. If there is anyone and he can't speak Arabic okay, we have to talk English, but if all of us are Arab and we know each other why are we speaking English? <u>This is the language in SABIC and in ARAMCO[8]</u>.

(117)

Aser: English… English even <u>in field of my work (hospital)</u> we have more than eighty percent of the staff non-Saudis... non-Arabs and <u>we speak and send emails in English</u>.

(118)

Rami: I work at SABIC. I have people working under my organisation, <u>English people and Saudis, our all communications are in English</u>

Some of the speakers' comments about the English education in Saudi contradict their comments about their children English education. Whereas Taqreed (112) and Hallah (113) explained that both Arabic and English are important, though for different reasons, and that Saudis should learn both. When it came to their children education, they both stated that although their children

---

[7] Saudi Basic Industries Corporation is a Saudi multinational chemical manufacturing company.

[8] Arabian-American Oil Company is a Saudi Arabian multinational petroleum and natural gas company.

learned English in school before Arabic, however, their children are bilingual in both languages (119, 120).

(119)

Taqreed: I have two kids. My daughter is eleven years old and my son is eight years old. Their <u>English is perfect Masha' Allah</u>.
Interviewer: What about <u>Arabic</u>?
Taqreed: <u>still good Masha' Allah</u>.
Interviewer: how did you keep them both good?
Taqreed: We… <u>We talk at home in Arabic</u>, completely in Arabic, but sometimes when <u>they just play with each other with her brother they speak they talk in English</u> <u>because it's much easier</u> for them.

(120)

Hallah: I have three, fourteen, fifteen and eight.
Interviewer: how is their English?
Hallah: <u>They are better than me</u>. The two boys, they started learning English when they were five and six years old because I was in America for two years and a half and I had my third girl there.
Interviewer: What about their Arabic?
Hallah: <u>It's fine because at home we speak Arabic</u>. It's working especially with my little kid I think she is fine she knows now the alphabets in Arabic, she knows to write, also about Quran you know and these some religious things, and at home actually like in our free time <u>we force them to read Quran</u>. But It's hard sometimes, I think. Because <u>at home I refuse to reply to them in English</u>, but you know, this year, <u>sometimes I'm flexible with my daughter, because she is still young, so sometimes she speaks English, so I reply to her in English</u>. But most of the time, I say to her, 'I don't understand you, speak Arabic, please'.

On the other hand, Qala (121) said that her children's English language is *excellent*, and their *Arabic* is perfect. She explained that English is important for her children's future, it is important to find jobs and to travel. However, earlier when the focus of the question was about English education in Saudi, in general, she stated that English was not important (114). Similarly, Maliha who said earlier that education in Saudi should be in Arabic because Saudis would not cope with the change from Arabic to English (115), she said that her children learned English and that they are bilinguals in Arabic and English (122). She also expressed her approval that they are *native*

speakers having learned English in the UK, and her pride that their English is better than their cousins' who learned English in a private school in Saudi. Maliha's and Qala's cases are just two examples of similar conflicting views I found in my data. What they believe is right or should happen contradicts what they actually do or happens in reality.

(121)

Qala: Three kids, 14 and 12 and five years old.
Interviewer: how is their English?
Qala: When we came, they had the knowledge of the English language because they were in private schools. The little one, no, she was two years old. Now, I don't know, maybe the youngest is even better than me. The two older ones are competent. Excellent maybe, or very good we can say.

Interviewer: What about their Arabic language?

Qala: Perfect in both.

Interviewer: What do you use at home with them?

Qala: At home, Arabic. Except for some expressions or words, they may use the word in English instead of Arabic but the overall communication in Arabic, except the little one, of course. Because she grew up here (in the UK) and she finds it easier to communicate in English, but I try to respond to her in Arabic. She understands Arabic, but she finds it difficult to sometimes get the exact word or she speaks Arabic, but not as fluent as English.

Interviewer: Is it important that they stay bilingual?

Qala: It is important, yes. Because they need to know the other language in to get a job, to travel, or need to use the English language, specifically.

(122)

Maliha: I've got two kids. My son is nine years old and my daughter is five years old. They started learning English here (Newcastle). When I moved to Newcastle, my daughter was two... One year and a half, and my son was five years old, so I think they became native speakers now.
Interviewer: What about at home do you speak Arabic or English with...
Maliha: They speak both English and Arabic
Interviewer: Do you like that they are bilinguals?
Maliha: I like that because I can see the difference between them and my niece and my nephew, they, they study at a private school (in Saudi), but I can see the difference, so I am proud of my kids.

Earlier, when I asked the speakers about the English education in Saudi, in general, some of the speakers had positive views that it is important to learn Arabic and English. However, some of them had different views when the question was about English and Arabic, specifically. I asked the speakers whether English is a threat to Arabic, that is whether learning and using English could lead to forgetting Arabic. Similarly, the participants had different point of views. Some speakers thought that it is possible to be bilingual in both languages and that using English would not result in the loss of Arabic. For example, Tahani, earlier, showed an overall positive disposition to the English education in Saudi which is reflected in her own children's language abilities in English and Arabic (105). Commenting on whether Arabic could be forgotten, she said that *Saudi Arabia would be always proud of her language* (124). It is interesting that she referred to Saudi in the female pronoun *her*, whereas, in Saudi, the masculine pronoun *he* is used as a generic pronoun (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). It could be seen either as a slip or as an indication that Saudi women are more attached to their Arab identity. Saudis' pronoun use, by men and women, is worth investigating in future research.

(123)
Reedha: No, I think no. I think <u>we can have both of them, Arabic and English</u>. Why not?

(124)

Tahani: No, <u>Saudi Arabia would be always proud of her language</u>.

Other speakers believed that Arabic might be forgotten due the fact that international schools in Saudi are using English as a medium of teaching while Arabic is given as a subject which could lead to the loss of Arabic (125, 126). Another reason that Arabic could lose its status is parents not prioritising teaching their children Arabic. For example, Hallah, like Tahani, earlier had a positive attitude in general towards learning English and Arabic (113, 120). When asked about the possibility of forgetting Arabic, she said that Arabic would be lost if parents neglected to teach it to their children. She added because Arabic is part of her identity that her husband and she

decided to use Arabic with their children. She also stated that by changing her language, she would be changing her identity (127). Qala stated earlier that English is not important in Saudi although her children speak both languages (114, 121). Here, she said that she would like her children to keep both languages, however, if she kept speaking English at home, they would forget Arabic, which is more important as it *is after all, our language, the language of the Qur'an* (128). Her earlier comment could be interpreted as projecting her own fear that her children or Saudis in general in the future might substitute Arabic with English.

(125)

Salwa: <u>According to our new education policy</u> in Saudi there's a lot of English (international) schools I mean all the subjects are given in English, and I want my kids to study there, but I noticed my <u>friend's kids, they are good in English but they are very bad in Arabic.</u> <u>They lost their Arabic</u> like spellings, writing, the grammar of Arabic and even you can say they speak English Arabic they complete their sentences in the two languages. <u>I think yeah if we teach kids English and then give them only one Arabic subject it would be a big problem</u>.

(126)

Bander: In some way, yeah. <u>I faced this with my nephew, I gave him like a picture of an animal, he didn't say it in Arabic, he said it in English</u>.

(127)

Hallah: <u>If they speak English at homes, this is the dangerous</u>.
Interviewer: How?
Hallah: <u>If parents speak to their little kids in English, and at school, the same in English, they would forget Arabic</u>. Because I know one of my relatives, she lived in America until now. Now, she finished, but she has two daughters, she delivered them there, and she ... <u>Everything is in English, but at home they speak with them at Arabic, so they can speak Arabic</u>. It's good. Yes. About writing, and this is stuff that is hard, but with the speaking, yeah, they can speak and understand. And that's the main point. <u>I did that, and my husband. We decided that we want to keep their Arabic language</u>. I do know, because this is my belief also. Actually, <u>I'm proud of my Arabic, and I don't want to change it at all</u>. Okay, <u>I can learn another language, and use it, but I don't want to leave mine</u>. I don't know, it is something inside. I feel it, as, <u>if I change my language, I change my identity</u>. So, I don't want that.

(128)

Qala: It depends. It depends if you are... <u>For my youngest, if I keep on speaking to her in English, she will lose the Arabic</u>. <u>I'd like her to maintain both</u>, not to lose the Arabic because it's more important to me than the English. <u>Because Arabic is after all, our language, the language of the Qur'an</u>.

6.3.2.3 Attitudes to the spread of English and westernisation

In the conversations, the speakers were asked about the use and spread of English and whether it has any influence on the culture in Saudi. Although the question was about English and culture, their comments were about English and religion. Some of the speakers expressed their concerns that the spread of English could lead to neglecting the Arabic language, hence, undermining its importance as the language of the Qur'an. For example, Zeyad (129), Reedha (130) and Osama (131) think the spread of English could result in the loss of Arabic, the *language of our ancestors* and that Muslims should understand Arabic to be able to understand the Qur'an. I pointed out that there are many Muslims who are not Arabs, to which they responded similarly that non-Arab Muslims should learn Arabic to understand their religion and to be able to perform Hajj[8]. In addition, Zeyad thinks non-Arab Muslims should learn Arabic to be able to communicate with Saudis.

(129)

Zeyad: Yes, we <u>could lose the language of our ancestors and it's in our culture</u> it's the most used and like in religion. <u>The holy Qur'an is in Arabic</u>.
Interviewer: But there are non-Arab Muslims.
Zeyad: Yeah, but <u>it's harder to communicate with us (Saudis)</u> like when they come <u>to perform Al-Hajj</u> or to visit Al-Madeenah.

(130)

Reedha: I mean <u>as Arab people as Muslims, you have to understand Arabic for you to understand the Qur'an</u>.

Interviewer: There are Muslims who can't speak or read Arabic.

Reedha: But then I think also <u>other Muslims should understand some Arabic language, at least the basic, to understand their religion</u>.

(131)

> Osama: <u>we should secure our Arabic language</u> because it's the most important to be honest it's important for us to read the holy book, <u>the Qur'an is in Arabic</u>.
>
> Interviewer: But there are Muslims who can't read Arabic? Islam is not only for Arabs, you know?
>
> Osama: No, but it's in the it's in [the] Arabic language, so <u>if you are not… you can't read or write in Arabic, you will not understand it</u>. Even for western people, they sometime, they need if they want to discover Islam, they have to read in Arabic.

What can be understood from their comments is these speakers view Saudi as the centre of the Islamic world, and since Saudis are Arabic speakers, other Muslims are expected to be able to make themselves understood to Saudis when they perform Hajj in Makkah[9]. But that is not the main issue here. It is true that Arabic is the language of the Qur'an, consequently, Islam helped spread Arabic. However, not being able to understand Arabic does not render non-Arab Muslims less Muslim. In fact, Muslims from different nationalities visit Makkah and perform Hajj without needing to learn Arabic. To organise and help the visitors of Makkah, the Saudi Ministry of Hajj (SMH) hires seasonal guides who can speak the various languages of the visitors. However, as there are not always enough people who can speak different languages, SMH have been hiring guides who can use English as a lingua franca (Abdellah & Ibrahim, 2013).

I asked the speakers whether they think by learning and using English we are spreading the western culture in our society, or whether we are becoming westernised as a result of using English. The participants expressed no concerns and yet seemed aware of the extent of the impact of westernisation. The recurrent contradiction in the speakers' views can also be seen here in their responses when asked specifically about whether using English has led them to becoming westernised in comparison to when they were asked about their opinions regarding the spread of English in general earlier.

---

[9] Makkah is the holiest city in Islam, located in the west region of Saudi Arabia. Muslims from around the world visit the city for Hajj (pilgrimage).

(132)

Rami: <u>The whole world's becoming westernized</u>. Look at your life. I mean, <u>we spend, I believe, maybe more than four hours a day watching TV</u>, which is coming definitely from movies and all of that. News, I believe we watch... Even, right now, <u>soccer. If you watch... Or football, okay? We're watching only the, I think, European, for example, European football matches</u> or whatever. So, everything is becoming westernized. I think so.

(133)

Fahad: No, I don't think so. <u>You can speak English and you can be religious</u>. I don't think its related.

(134)

Tahani: Yes, <u>our clothes our normal clothes</u>. Now you can find we are not really traditional in our clothes. We wear western clothes pyjamas, for example. We don't wear like Jilbabs. <u>I don't think it's a bad to mix. It is bad when you like destroy your culture and substitute it with another culture</u>.

(135)

Qadeer: Yeah, maybe <u>the way they look, maybe their clothes, not the traditions</u>. <u>We still maintain our own cultural tradition</u>, I think.

(136)

Reedha: No, <u>I think the English language, or the European culture will affect our culture just in some ways, but not immediate effect</u>. I mean, not a big effect or not a big impact on our culture. We have our own culture.

(137)

Maha: <u>Not really. The English language is an important feature</u> or aspect to understand what happens around us but I think no. I think it depends on the people. <u>Maybe for the youngest people, they follow whatever they find, they don't care, they don't respect our social beliefs</u>.

(138)

Rahaf: <u>I think just the teenager</u>, maybe some of them not all of them. <u>For example, some occasions they celebrate that in Islam we don't celebrate</u>. Here (in Saudi) they celebrate Valentine's and Halloween more.

(139)

Marzooqah: It depends, <u>it depends on the families</u>. <u>If they just accept everything without any rules</u>, it will affect. But if they understand or they believe that <u>this is our culture, and we believe this is our</u>

religion, we are right, and they are wrong, so I think <u>it will not affect them</u> but if they go without any thinking where is the right and where is the wrong I think this will affect them.

(140)

Maliha: No, <u>not to make us westernised. To make us aware of what happens around us</u>.

The participants seemed to perceive westernisation positively, that it entails adopting some western values that might impact some cultural aspects such as the way Saudis dress. They also thought that learning English would not result in being affected by negative westernisation which entails in destroying your culture and substituting it with another culture (134). For example, Fahad (133) believes that using English and westernisation are not related, that it is possible to be an English speaker and be religious (Muslim). However, it can be understood from his comment that he seems to think being westernised opposes being religious disregarding or not being aware that there are western Muslims. Some speakers, such as Maha (137) and Rahaf (138) believed that negative westernisation might only influence teenagers. Therefore, as Marzooqah (139) stated, the extent of the influence of westernisation depends on parents who should set rules of what is right and what is wrong and teach their children how the Saudi culture is different from the western culture.

The first observation that can be made from the respondents' comments is that they do not seem to understand the idea that they can be Saudis, Muslim Arabs and be English speakers. For example, their comments about the reason Saudi English channels exist reflect this idea that they do not seem to be able to imagine there are Saudis who would *prefer* to watch these channels. Although some of the speakers think some Saudis would watch them to improve their English, their first intuition is that these channels are for *foreigners*. In addition to Saudis who watch them to improve their English and non-Arabs, there could be Saudis who *prefer* to watch English channels. Similarly, there could be Saudis who understand Arabic and English but *prefer* to use the English version of a government website. This option seems never to cross their minds even

though they feel that their children, in the future, would prefer to use the English version of government websites. What can be understood from their responses is that the speakers still classify themselves as perpetual L2 learners despite their English levels, their frequent use of the language, and their creative use of English.

The speakers attested to the fact that the use of English has been increasing in Saudi that now it has an important status as a language of instruction in schools and universities and a means of communication at work. However, there are some speakers who showed resistance to the increasing use of English. This resistance could be seen as denial of the important role of English in Saudi considering that they themselves participate in the spread of English through teaching their children English. This denial might have stemmed from fear of losing their Islamic or Arab identity. This confusion can be seen in the speakers' opinions about English education in general and their own children's English education. For example, Qala's (114) and Maliha's (115) views that English is not a major component of the Saudi education system, although some speakers attested to its role in schools and universities, and that Saudis would not accept the change from Arabic to English despite it has already happened. On other hand, their positive views regarding their children's English skills and education (121, 122).

Another confusion can be seen in some of the speakers' dissatisfaction with the spread of English in Saudi, which they believe could undermine the importance of Arabic as the language of the Qur'an. It is true that Arabic is the language of the Qur'an and it might be a valid point that some meanings of Qur'anic verses could be lost in translation to other languages, however, not all Muslims are or must be Arabic speakers. Speaking Hebrew does not make any person Jewish and speaking Arabic does not make any person Muslim. Languages do not possess social or religious values; speakers attach social or religious values to languages. Labelling Arabic Islamic is the same as labelling a language prestigious. Hence, a Muslim English speaker is not less Muslim than a

Muslim Arabic speaker by virtue of their language. The social identity theory could explain this reaction to the spread of English, in which they take part, when the *Self* is in contrast to the *Other*, see section 2.3.1.1. This issue could be seen as a result of an English education that promotes the ideology that English is the language of the west. When taking into account this perception of English as just an ICE variety, the speakers' perception that English is not the language of Muslims could be understood. Whereas some speakers overtly expressed their concerns with the spread of English by stating that Arabic is part of their identity (as in 116, 127), others did so covertly through claiming that other Muslims should learn Arabic (as in 129, 130, 131). It seems that the speakers do not understand the concept of multilingualism when they themselves and their children are bilingual. They do not seem to understand that two or more languages can be used for certain purposes detaching these languages from any social or religious values. That is, perceiving the purpose of using English as an international language or a lingua franca in contexts that do not involve pertaining to social and religious norms of the west.

These issues of perceiving English as the language of the west with their non-Islamic norms, and not understanding the concept of multilingualism, that a person can speak different languages for different purposes without losing one's religious or cultural identity, could explain some of the speakers' concerns that Arabic might be forgotten. However, the speakers' responses in the questionnaire do not reflect their sense of fear that the spread of English could result in the loss of Arabic, which they expressed in the conversations. Figure 51 shows the speakers' response to statement 3.12, *learning English is a threat to Arabic*, with which the majority 58.50% disagreed. In addition, the majority 65.90% disagreed with statement 3.5, *speaking English will make me forget Arabic*, Figure 52.

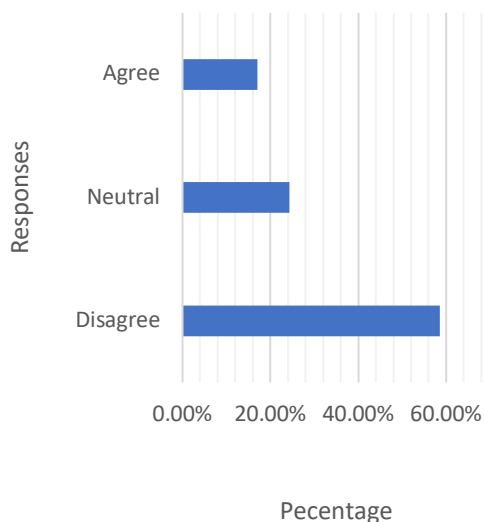Figure 51: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.12, *Learning English is a threat to Arabic*
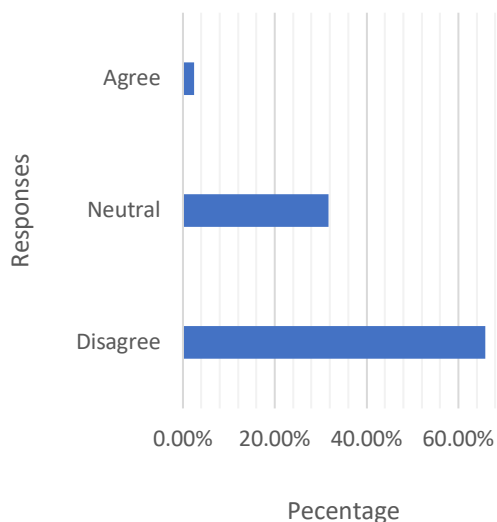
Figure 52: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.5, *Speaking English will make me forget Arabic*

Salwa (125) and Qala (128), who stated Arabic had to be maintained or it could be lost due to the spread of English, disagreed with both statements. Hallah (127) said Arabic would be lost due to English education if parents neglected to teach Arabic to their children. In the questionnaire, Hallah disagreed with the idea that speaking English would make her forget Arabic, but she was undecided whether English is a threat to Arabic both of which contradict her views in the conversation. Tahani (124) stated in the conversation that *Saudi Arabia would be always proud of her language* which English will not change. Her responses in the questionnaire are different, that she was undecided whether speaking English would make her forget Arabic, but she disagreed with the idea that English is a threat to Arabic. Bander (126), who in the conversation agreed that learning English could result in forgetting Arabic, remained undecided if speaking English would make him forget Arabic, but disagreed with the statement that English is a threat to Arabic. These different responses could be due to two reasons: either because in the questionnaire they could not detail their views which they could do in the conversations, or their

responses changed when they were being interviewed by another Saudi who might share their religious beliefs and cultural views.

Another contradiction in the speakers' views can be seen in their responses to whether English has influenced the Saudi culture and whether English has made Saudi westernised. In the former, the speakers seem to conflate culture with religion, or to view Islam as the basis of their culture. It seems that they understood the question as whether the spread of English has influenced their faith rather than their culture. Viewing Islam as a crucial part of the Saudi culture and Arabic as the language of Islam could explain their responses that *we could lose the language of our ancestors and it's in our culture* (129), *as Arab people as Muslims, you have to understand Arabic for you to understand the Qur'an* (130), and *we should secure our Arabic language* (131). On the other hand, when they were asked specifically about *westernisation*, the speakers showed no concerns and viewed it positively. The speakers provided examples of how *westernisation* could positively influence aspects of the culture in Saudi, such as clothes and technology. Their comments in the conversation differed from their responses in the questionnaire where 70.70% do not think that English is an indication of westernisation, Figure 53. In the conversation they showed awareness of the difference between having western aspects in our culture and adopting western values. Therefore, the difference in their responses might be interpreted as understanding the concept *westernisation* in the questionnaire as referring to western values.

Figure 53: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.18, *Learning English is an indication of Westernization*
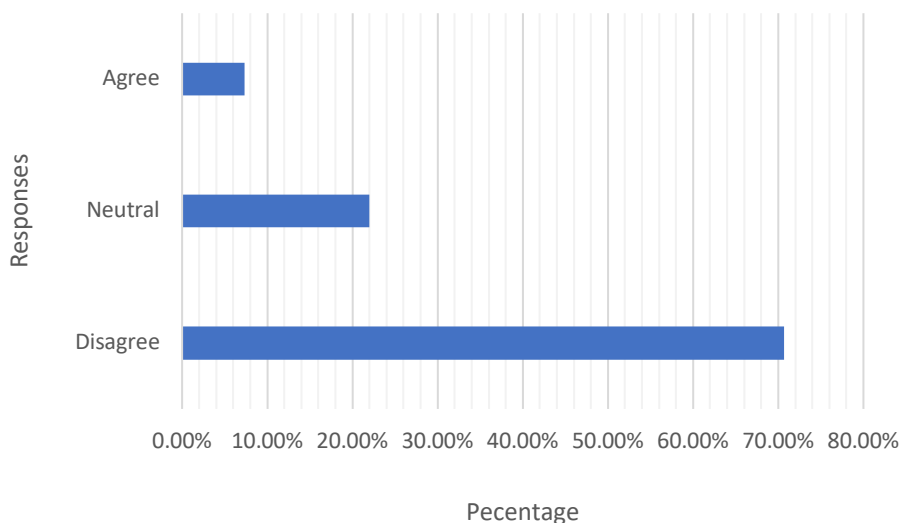
Earlier, in section 2.3.3.2, I reviewed a study that tested the notion of *westernisation* in Saudi (Al-Hag & Samdi, 1996). To the best of my knowledge, it is the only study that has investigated *westernisation* as a result of the spread of English in Saudi. As I pointed out in section 4.4, I constructed the questionnaire and the interview questions, in my study, partially based on Al-Hag's and Samdi's study to test and add to their findings regarding *westernisation* and Saudis' motivation, which will be discussed in the following section. Although their study was conducted in 1996, there is a similarity in their results and the results of my study regarding the spread of English and *westernisation*. Al-Hag and Samdi found that 64.8% of Saudis in their study disagree with the idea that English is an indication of westernisation. In my study, as figure 53 shows, the majority 70.70% also do not think that English is an indication of westernisation. The difference between our studies lies in our interpretation of the findings. Explaining the finding that the majority do not associate learning English with *westernisation*, Al-Hag and Samdi argue this view indicates that Saudis' motivation of learning English is *merely* instrumental:

Another interesting finding is that the majority do not find a link between learning English and Westernization. English to them is merely an instrument for cultural and technological transfer and advancement. (Al-Hag and Samdi, 1996, p. 311)

However, the findings in Al-Hag's and Samdi's study show that 65.9% would like to learn English because "English makes me more prestigious socially" (p. 310). The researchers also explained this finding as an indication of Saudis' instrumental motivation:

The majority of the respondents link the knowledge of English to their social prestige. This finding can be explained in the light of the fruits and privileges gained by the use of English as a means for developing and enriching their personalities and cultural experiences. It is a fact that qualified persons in English language are given priority in employment and have more access to promotion and advancement in KSA. (Al-Hag and Samdi, 1996, p. 311)

Assuming this interpretation is accurate, the findings that were supposed to reveal whether Saudis, in their study, have integrative motivation were left out without any interpretation. In their study 43.7% agreed that "the use of English in some life affairs is an indication of cultural advancement", and 50.3% disagreed that "the use of English in some life affairs is an indication of cultural backwardness" (p. 310). Westernisation in itself could be viewed as a motivator to learn and use English, as the speakers, in my study, viewed it to have improved different life aspects. Although, I disagree with Al-Hag's and Samdi's interpretation, however, the speakers' opinions about *westernisation* could be linked to their various types of motivation to learn and use English. In the following section, I will discuss my findings on the types of motivation the speakers have including the traditional categories, instrumental and integrative, and others, such as viewing English as an investment, as an international language, and as a prestigious language.

6.3.3 English is a universal language

In section 6.3.2, I discussed Saudis' perception of being English speakers, their opinions regarding the status of English in Saudi, their views regarding the effect of the spread of English on the Saudi culture, and their reactions to westernisation. I also talked about the role of media and

education in spreading English (see section 1.1). However, although the media and education in Saudi have played a significant role in spreading English, without speakers who are willing to use the language, English would not have spread. So, how often do they really use English? And what motivates them to use it? In this section, I present different types of investment that Saudis in my study seem to have, and I discuss how the concept of investment is more accurate in describing motivation which may seem instrumental or integrative when examined separately.

6.3.3.1 Investment in children's English education

In section 6.3.2, I talked about Al-Hag's and Samdi's, (1996) study in which they claimed that because Saudis, in their study, did not view learning English as a form of westernisation, they were instrumentally motivated. Alsamani (2014) also associated the type of motivation Saudis should have with integration with the *target* culture. Unlike Al-Hag and Samdi, he argues for encouraging Saudis to be more integrative with the *target* culture to improve their English. A full review of Alsamani's study and other studies on motivation in Saudi can be found in section 2.3.3.2. What Al-Hag's and Samdi's and Alsamani's studies failed to achieve is investigating Saudis' actual English use, which, it could be argued, represents Saudis' actual motivation to learn and use the language. If I look at the reasons Saudis want to learn English to get better jobs in isolation, I could claim they are instrumentally motivated. If I focus on Saudis' use of English for other purposes other than education or for career advancement, I could conclude that they are integratively motivated. However, there is another side that should be considered to complete the picture regarding Saudis' motivation, which is communication. That is, using English as a language of communication in various contexts, at home, at work, in educational settings, and in international contexts. The previous studies on motivation presented binary types of motivation as fixed characteristics giving English speakers no agency; learners are either instrumentally or integratively motivated. While some studies maintain it is instrumentally motivated English speakers who are successful, others maintain it to be integratively motivated students.

Through the speakers' comments below, I argue that Saudi English speakers, in my study, have agency in shaping their own motivation. Their type of motivation might be better explained by the notion of investment, which includes speakers' various desires to take part in different "social interactions and community practices in which they are situated" (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Clarifying the difference between the traditional notion of motivation and the construct of investment, Norton & Toohey explain:

> Previous work on motivation frequently conceived of individuals as having unitary, fixed, internalized and ahistorical 'personalities'. Investment, on the other hand, sees language learners as having complex identities, which change across time and space, and which are constructed on the basis of the socially given, and the individually struggled-for. Thus, while motivation can be seen as a primarily psychological construct (Dörnyei, 2001), investment is a sociological construct, and seeks to make meaningful connections between a learner's desire and commitment to learn a language and their changing identities. (P. 420)

The investment of the Saudis in my study can be seen, at least in part, in their children's English education. In the examples below (141-145), the participants expressed their desire to enrol their children in international schools where English is the language of instruction. In addition, they explained the importance of attending international schools as all subjects are taught in English in addition to teaching an Arabic subject and a religion subject (142, 143). Some speakers went further and explained that since international schools are expensive, they would teach their children English if they could not afford to send them to international schools (144, 145).

(141)

Rahaf: <u>There is an international school there</u>. <u>I will not put her maybe in a government (public) school</u>. Because I think this is the language that <u>everyone now all people now spend lots of money to learn this language </u>and so it is very easy to catch that language from beginning and for example if we return when she maybe I don't know maybe she will be six or seven I think she will have the standard basic for English language.

(142)

Maliha: Private schools in Saudi Arabia, they don't teach English as a second language. They teach English as a subject, a curriculum. <u>But in international schools, they bring curriculums from America, or the UK. So, the curriculum… they teach English as a second language, not a curriculum.</u>

Interviewer: But don't you think that it will create a problem for their Arabic language? They won't be learning Arabic more.

Maliha: But in an international school, they, they teach Arabic as well. Not just English.

(143)

Tahani: I'm from Makkah, so we have just as I mentioned one international school. I contacted them and arranged to take the children to do the exam on those things, insha' Allah, I think in June, July. I am planning to send them to an international school, it would be much easier for them to study in English and of course I don't want to them to forget Arabic, so they… in any international school mostly they would have Arabic as a second language or they would study religion and Arabic language in Arabic, science and math in English, so it is good a good balance, I think.

(144)

Reedha: Yeah, to be honest, I'm just thinking to put them in an international school, if I can. But you know what? If the fees of international schools are quite high, still quite high, so I'll do my best to keep their English, keeping going.

Interviewer: Why?

Reedha: Because I think the future and science are all in English, the English language. You can't get access, a good access to science or for new knowledge, or, for example, reach advancement in the world. You have to have English language.

(145)

Maha: It depends on our circumstances, but I actually prefer to send them to an international school that they can study both curriculums. I mean Arabic and English if that is possible, but if not if they will study in Arabic, I will let them improve their (English) skills. We have to read our books in English we have to listen to any useful materials because most kids now they have iPads or somethings so we have to continue, I will not stop.

The participants' investment in their children's education reflects their desire to have a better future for their children in contexts where they will use Arabic and English. This finding supports Mansory's (2019) results which showed that Saudi parents in the UK wanted their children to be speakers of English to have better education, although, prioritising English at the expense of Arabic. The views of the speakers, in my study, which they expressed in the conversations mirror

their responses to the questionnaire statement 3.9 (Appendix 1), *living in a globalised world, it is important that my kids speak English*, where the overwhelming majority 92.70% agreed with the statement, Figure 54.

Figure 54: Responses to questionnaire statement 3.9, *Living in a globalised world, it is important that my kids speak English*
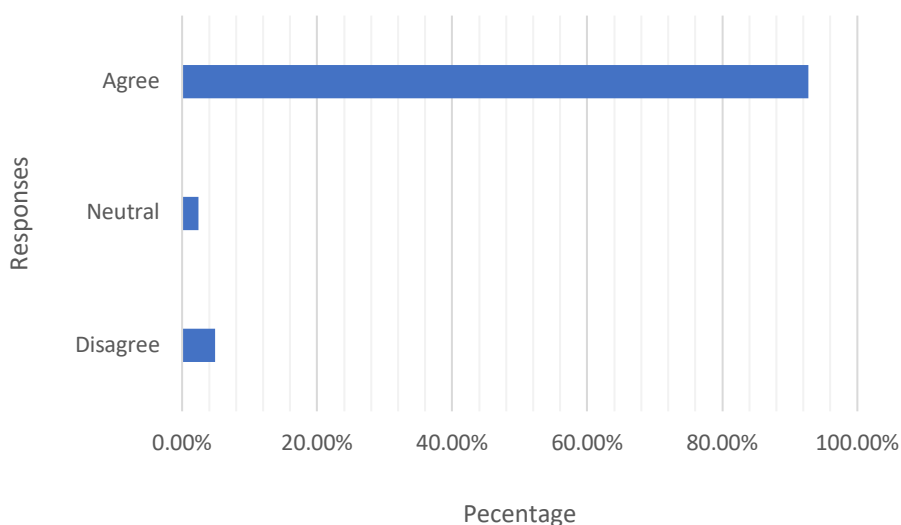
In addition to having their children attend international schools where English is the primary language, the Saudi scholarship program that gave around 150,000 Saudis the opportunity to study abroad, mostly in English speaking countries, resulted in English becoming the first or second language of many Saudi children (Mansory, 2019). As a consequence of attending international schools in Saudi and attending or even starting school in English speaking countries, there is a generation of Saudi children who learned English before Arabic, therefore, they tend to speak English more often than Arabic although they understand the latter. I asked the speakers about their language use at home, the speakers stated that their children prefer to speak in English even though they understand Arabic. For example:

(146)

Rahaf: <u>She does not speak Arabic</u>. Yeah, I always talk with her Arabic even about everything when we are talking about lunch about the school <u>she understands me, but she replies in English</u>.

(147)

Marzooqah: <u>She Prefers English</u>. Yeah, she tries… even sometimes <u>she tries to talk with me English, but I respond to her in Arabic</u> because I don't want her to lose her language even with her brother and sister the big brother and sister, she will she try to talk with them in English but they answer her in Arabic.

(148)

Farhan: But I've always been a good speaker of English.
Interviewer: Why do your family speak English?
Farhan: My dad studied in the US for like 24 years then he came back here with all <u>my siblings they spoke English before they spoke Arabic so that's why they speak a lot of English around me</u>.

While it can be argued that parents who invest in their children's English education might be instrumentally motivated to allow their children to have better education and future. However, the participants reflected on how this investment resulted in their children becoming English speakers who prefer to speak English even though they understand Arabic. Some of the participants stated that they have to communicate with their children in English who prefer to speak English despite being able to understand Arabic for example (146, 147). Farhan (148) might be an example of the extent of the influence of having children learn English before Arabic in an English country. His father had a scholarship to study in the US before he was born, however, all of his older siblings started school and learned English in the US. As a result, Farhan said, his siblings used mainly English at home which resulted in him learning the language and that he always has *been a good speaker of English*. Speaking English at home became a necessity that the concept of instrumental or integrative motivation cannot accurately describe.

Even though using English at the expense of Arabic might not be the outcome the participants desired, having children who are speakers of English is a reflection of their investment in the

language. In a similar study, Mansory (2019) investigated Saudi parents' language use at home and he found that despite their fear of losing Arabic, the parents prioritised teaching their children English. Although the speakers in my study said that they prefer to use Arabic at home, their children's preference for English or, in some cases, inability to use Arabic might reveal that one language is being prioritised over the other.

6.3.3.2 Investment in English as a career advancement language

In addition to investing in their children's English education, the speakers reflected on their own investment in the language as they explained the importance of English in Saudi as a job requirement. The participants reflected on the vital role of English to increase one's *job opportunities* with high salaries for example (149-151). In addition, Abu-Yaseen (151) explained that the job market in Saudi demands the ability to speak English. The speakers seemed to be aware that English would increase their opportunities of finding jobs with high salaries which could be considered as a reflection of their investment in learning the language. While this type of investment might be viewed as having instrumental motivation, this is just one side of the speakers' general investment in English.

(149)

Rahaf: Because nowadays every… <u>all jobs require two languages,</u> and you have for example experience in computer or something you need to speak English. <u>One of my friends, she didn't complete her bachelor, just high school, she speaks three languages Arabic, Turkey and English. And when she applied for a job, she absolutely got the job and she has high salary</u>, yeah.

(150)

Rasha: <u>I plan to teach my student if I go back Insha'Allah to Saudi Arabia</u>. Because my major has many, many, many vocab in English and then <u>if a student needs to research any articles, she will research with English not with Arabic, and if anyone wants to have a PhD or a master's, she needs English not Arabic</u>.

(151)

Abu-Yaseen: Now <u>all big companies and all innovations are in English</u>. So, <u>if you want to be on track, you have to learn English otherwise you will be very late or behind what is going now around the world</u>, you get my point?

6.3.3.3 Investment in English as an international language

In addition to investing in English as a language that will increase their career prospects, the speakers, in my study, showed awareness and interest in the role of English as an international language. Investment in English as an international language is another side of Saudis' motivation that previous studies failed to acknowledge. Pavlenko and Norton (2007) argue that in the era of globalisation, the role English will play in its speakers' future shapes their desires and motivation to be members of *imagined communities*, see section 2.3.3.4. The following comments are examples of the respondents' awareness of the new role of English as an international language which seems to shape their motivation to be speakers of that language in international contexts (152, 153). 'Ahed (153) talked about the importance of English as *a global language* that it is the language of communication in international *political, economic, and educational conferences*, therefore, learning English is essential.

(152)

Salwa: because it's an international language, because there's a lot of people speak English and it helps me understand the world, every book now is in English, everything is in English. When you travel or you want to buy something, all the new creams, the media, everything is in English.

(153)

'Ahed: English is a global language. It is the language of business. Any events, political, economic, and educational conferences, even in any research, all the references are in English. If we divide the schools as well, medical schools, engineering all are in the English language. So, it's really important to teach our people English, because this is the future. The generation from now and on. Especially within the scholarship program. Most of the majority of the Saudi society are studying abroad, doing their master's, or different degrees in English.
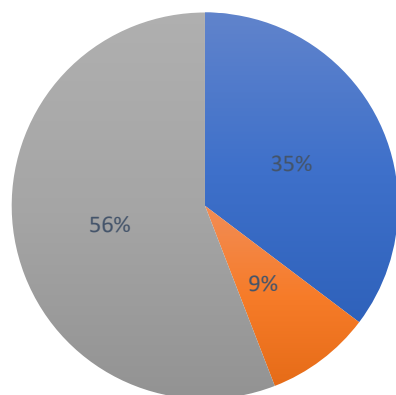
So far, I have illustrated and discussed three types of investment in being English speakers that I found in my data. First, investment in children's English education, which can be seen in their

plans to send their children to international schools, and in their persistence to keep teaching their children English despite their fear of forgetting Arabic. Second, investment in using English to advance their careers, that is reflected in their awareness of the importance of English to find jobs with high salaries. Third, investment in English as an international language that can be observed from their perception of the importance of English as an international language that can be used in international contexts. As I discussed earlier, these findings undermine claims that one type of motivation or the other could result in or thwart learning English. What my results show is that Saudis have moved on from the status of *English learners* to that of *English speakers*, even though they might not be aware of that given their opinions about their English use as deficient in comparison to ICE varieties, discussed in section 6.3.1.

The comments above demonstrate the speakers' desires and motivation to learn and use English which contradict claims and arguments found in previous studies of English learning motivation in Saudi simply because those studies relied heavily on questionnaires and failed to take into account Saudis' other non-educational desires and plans regarding using English in general. In the questionnaire of the current study, the speakers were asked about their language use in their leisure time, in terms of reading books, watching TV, and listening to radio programs or music which would be interpreted as having integrative motivation in the traditional sense of motivation. In addition, the speakers were asked about the role of English in advancing their careers which would be interpreted as having instrumental motivation. They were also asked about their preference when it comes to their children's English education. On the other hand, in the conversations, they were asked about their other plans, intentions, desires, and motivation regarding English. They were given the chance to elaborate on their views regarding their investment in English that can be seen in their children's education, their views of English's role in advancing their careers, and in their perception of English as an international language. They were given a chance to imagine their future as speakers of English in different settings. Looking at their responses to the questionnaire statements regarding their use of English in their leisure

time 3.4, 3.10, and 3.16 (Appendix 1) and its importance as a tool to find jobs 3.1, 3.8, and 3.13 (Appendix 1), the results show 56% of the participants are instrumentally and integratively motivated in the traditional sense of motivation, Figure 55. The results from the conversations, in Figure 56, show that only 13% who said they were learning English to improve their careers, 27% used English mainly for educational purposes, and the majority 49% said they wanted to learn English because of its status as an international language. The rest 11% said they prefer English because it is a prestigious language. Therefore, categorising Saudis as instrumentally or integratively motivated would not be accurate. They do not fit in the *integratively motivated* category because, as I explained in previously in section 6.3.2, they are attached to their Arabic and Islamic culture. They do not fit in the *instrumentally motivated* category because to them English has several functions as a language of communication at home, at work and in international settings, which the concept of having several types of investment encompasses.

Figure 55: Responses to 'motivation' statement in questionnaire

Figure 56: Speakers' motivation expressed in the conversations
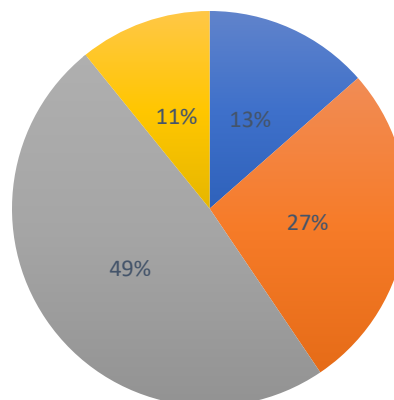
The type of motivation that Saudis, in the current study, have is not separate from the observations I made earlier in the previous two sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, in fact their motivations can be seen as a result of the speakers' perception of English, their own culture and first language, and westernisation. Consequently, their motivation represented in their investment in English has influenced their language use. We have already seen, in section 5.4.4, that motivation has a significant effect on their use of the indefinite article. Specifically, I found that Saudis who viewed English as a career advancement language and Saudis who preferred to use English in leisure time to watch English TV were more likely to use the variant [zero *a/an*]. Saudis' attachment to their Islamic and Arabic culture and their identity as Muslim Arabs, despite their investment in the language seems to have influenced their English use. For example, in section 5.6.2, I found that Saudis who preferred to use Arabic with their friends were more likely to use [Saudi *the*]. Viewing motivation as a result of the speakers' perception of English as an international language detached from any culture, and their perception of their L1 and own culture, allows them to have and express a more complex identity of bilinguals in a wider community where they can use both languages rather than being just monolinguals of one language or another. In section 5.4.3, I found that Saudis living in the UK had a tendency to use [zero *a/an*] more than Saudis in Saudi Arabia. I argued that living in a western culture, Saudis' sense of social identity increased to distance themselves from that culture which in turn shaped their language use. As Norton (2000) argues that language constitutes and is constituted by its speakers' social identity. That is through language, L2 speakers can negotiate their sense of self, in this case, whether English and Arabic speakers or Arab Muslim English speakers and can have access to social networks that create more opportunities for the L2 speakers to use their L2. Through viewing learning/using English as an investment in using the language in imagined communities where the speakers are given agency to reimagine themselves and reimagine the purpose of using English, the notion of motivation can be understood. As Norton and Toohey (2011) put it, in imagined communities, L2 speakers create various affiliations such as:

> …nationhood or even transnational communities, which extend beyond local sets of relationships. Such imagined communities may well have a reality as strong as those in which learners have current daily engagement and might even have a stronger impact on their investment in language learning.

Pavlenko and Norton (2007, p. 592) also argue that English speakers may appropriate and indigenise English "constructing national identities simultaneously through and in opposition to English." Although English in a postcolonial context was the focus of their argument, however, this might apply to other countries such as Saudi where English has spread and has an important role not only in education, but in other domains, as I have already illustrated, to the extent that English in Saudi has its own systematic features. Although English was brought to colonized countries by English settlers, in the current modern globalised world, English, the language of the previously perceived as colonisers, has spread in countries like Saudi through other means, such as the internet, education, political policies and the media. I argue that English in Saudi may take the same route of appropriation and indigenisation that it took in postcolonial countries, where Saudis can construct their national or social identity, as Pavlenko and Norton said, "simultaneously through and in opposition to English". We have already seen, in my study, that social identity was a significant factor in the use of a Saudi English variant [zero a/an]. Mahboob and Elyas (2014), in a study of Saudi English from a World Englishes perspective, found that English has a local and sociocultural flavour. In addition, as I discussed, in section 6.3.2, Saudis are attached to their Islamic values, Arab culture, and Arabic language despite prioritising English. We have already seen that English has a vital role in their lives that Saudis now seem to be invested in the language.

6.4 Discussion

The purpose of this section is to discuss the qualitative findings (discussed in this chapter) in relation to the quantitative findings (discussed in chapter 5). This section will start with a summary of this chapter which will be followed by a discussion aligning the qualitative and the

quantitative findings to answer the second and third research questions: To what extent can Saudi English be seen to play a role in the construction of Saudis' identities? and what are the attitudes that Saudis hold towards English and its use in an Arabic and Islamic society?

This chapter shed light on speakers of Saudi English who appeared to be active participants in spreading English in Saudi and producing its features (discussed in chapter 5) which made conducting this study possible. In this chapter the speakers informed us about their language use in their homes and their daily life. They explained their different kinds of motivation to learn and speak English. In addition, they expressed their opinions, worries, concerns, and hopes regarding English in Saudi.

The first finding discussed in this chapter was the perception of *correctness* and of English as the language of *western native s*peakers. The results showed that Saudis in this study share a common belief that *good* English means any ICE varieties, whether American, British or Australian. Therefore, all other English varieties, such as Indian and Chinese Englishes, including their own English are perceived as *incorrect*. This finding could be attributed to ideologies adopted by the education system and SLA researchers in Saudis which promote the notion of ICE varieties as being the benchmark for correct English use. As we have seen in section 6.3.1, words such as 'proper', 'good', and 'correct' were used to refer to ICE varieties, while words such as 'bad', and 'incorrect' were descriptions of other English varieties including the speakers' own language use. The speakers in this study were equally proud of their Saudi English accent and wishing to sound native-like in English. By saying so, it could be understood that the speakers established boundaries between the *Self* and the *Other*. They do not mind their own English use but feel the need to sound like the *Other* because the *Other's* English is the correct English.

Perception of English as the language of *western native s*peakers could be seen to influence the speakers' attitudes regarding the spread of English in Saudi. Clearly setting the distinction

between the *Self* and the *Other* could have resulted in having contradicting attitudes towards English in Saudi as observed in the speakers' opinions. The first issue observed in the speakers' opinions was equating Arabic with being Muslim and English with being non-Muslim. Hence, the second issue was the notion that speaking English could result in the loss of Arabic. The third issue was equating faith with culture and English as a westernised language. These three issues the speakers raised contradicted with the fact that they and their children are English speakers taking part in spreading English in Saudi. The speakers' expressed concerns could be understood when observed bearing in mind the *Self* and the *Other* distinction. When the *Other*'s language is perpetuated by educational ideologies to be English, the *Self's* beliefs and values have to be maintained through defending and protecting the existence of the language that represents those beliefs and values. That defensive and protective stance was clearly expressed by the speakers even though it contradicted what was happening in reality.

Despite their concerns, it could be seen that the attitude that Saudis in this study showed towards English in Saudi was generally positive. They viewed English positively as a language of education, a career improvement tool, and an international language. Despite their fear regarding Arabic and their culture, Saudis in this study appeared to be invested in English. They managed to imagine their future selves in relation to English through imagining several functions of English as a language of communication at home, at work and in international settings. They were invested in English as a language of their children's education, as a language of careers advancement, and as a language of international communication.

The relationship between identity expression, attitude or perception, and motivation or investment is interconnected and reciprocal. The speakers' attitudes to and perception of English could be seen as a factor that affects their motivation to use English in ways that represent their identities. Similarly, expressing a social identity could be a motivator to use English innovatively to distance oneself from other groups as a result of perceiving that group negatively. This

interconnected relationship between identity, attitude, and motivation proved to be a factor that affected variation in Saudi English. As discussed in sections 5.4 and 5.6, the results showed that the participants used the variants [Zero *a/an*] and [Saudi *the*] to express their social identity distancing themselves from ICE English as the language of the west. Speakers who were living in the UK used the Saudi English variant [Zero *a/an*] more than Saudis living in Saudi. This finding was explained in relation to their perception of English as a westernised language. To Saudis in the UK English seemed to be associated with the western world that has different values and norms. Consequently, they appeared to favour the Saudi English variant [Zero *a/an*]. Similarly, Saudis who preferred to communicate in Arabic in their social circles and who expressed their attachment to their culture appeared to prefer [Saudi *the*].

The notion that English is the language of *western* native *s*peakers emerged in the qualitative findings. As discussed earlier, Saudis in this study set a distinction between the *Self* and the *Other* as a result of viewing English as a westernised language and Arabic as the language of Islam. These findings answer the second research question: to what extent can Saudi English be seen to play a role in the construction of Saudis' identities? Variation in articles could be interpreted as reflecting aspects of Saudis' social identity. This could be seen in using the variants [Zero *a/an*], [Saudi *the*], and [f] to distance themselves from English as a western language, although I argued that this process was below the level of consciousness. The speakers may not be aware of the linguistic feature they use; however, they may distance themselves from the cultural norms and values that ICE varieties represent through not adhering to ICE rules.

This fear of English as a westernised language that could threaten the existence of Arabic emerged in the quantitative findings as a factor that seemed to affect variation in Saudi English. Saudis who believed the spread of English could negatively impact Arabic appeared to favour the Saudi English variant [Saudi *the*]. Additionally, Saudis who rejected the idea that English could have an important status in Saudi in the future showed preference for the variant [Zero *a/an*].

Similarly, the qualitative findings revealed that Saudis in this study had common concerns regarding the use and spread of English in Saudi even though they themselves are taking part in spreading the use of the language. However, they seemed to have a general positive attitude towards English that could be seen in investing in English as a language of their children's education, as a language of careers advancement, and as a language of international communication. This contradiction between their concerns and their investment was attributed to educational ideologies that promote English as a western language. The qualitative findings showed that despite their general concerns, Saudis in this study appeared to be able to imagine their future selves as multilingual speakers and imagine English as having different functions as a language of communication at home, at work and in international settings. These findings answer the third research question: what are the attitudes that Saudis hold towards English and its use in an Arabic and Islamic society? The general attitude of the Saudis in this study towards English could be summed up as being cautiously positive. Despite the overall concern that English could undermine Arabic, the language of Qur'an, they perceive English as an important international language which is reflected in their part in the increasing use of English in Saudi.

7: Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore Saudi English as a possible new variety and examine some of its features. The focus of the study was to investigate variable language use in relation to Saudi society; therefore, participants of different ages, societal and educational backgrounds, and from different regions in Saudi were included. The study aimed to answer three questions:

1. What specific features emerge in the English of Saudi speakers, and do these features vary in linguistic environments to an extent that they contribute to the creation of a separate variety of English in a similar way to features of, for example, African American English and Sri Lankan English?

The findings revealed five linguistic features that vary in Saudi English: verb *be*, indefinite article, definite article, 3rd person singular marker *-s*, and the labiodental fricative /v/. These findings support the results of Al-Rawi's (2012) study that [zero *be*], [zero *a/an*], [Saudi *the*], and [zero *-s*] are common variants of Saudi English. The results of this study add devoiced [f] to that list. Presenting and explaining the linguistic and social contexts in which each feature varies, this study has further contributed to our understanding of the variety. Critically, the findings demonstrate that variation in these features cannot always be attributed solely to L1 influence. What is more, in some instances, variation is context-specific due to complexity in some English rules. This study adds that what distinguishes Saudi English from other ELF varieties is that its features have distinctive linguistic functions and social meanings peculiar to Saudi English and its speakers. We have already seen that, while Saudi English shares some of the linguistic features of other varieties, some of the contexts in which these features vary are different from other Englishes. Additionally, the external factors (whether social, attitudinal, or educational) that appear to influence variation in all five variables differentiate Saudi English from other varieties.

2. To what extent can Saudi English be seen to play a role in the construction of Saudis' identities?
This study has explored the notion of identity in relation to variation in Saudi English and in relation to using English in general in Saudi. The findings reveal that variation in article use could be interpreted as reflecting aspects of Saudis' social identity. Saudis who seemed to be more attached to their culture and to the Arabic language used the Saudi English variants [Saudi *the*] and [zero *a/an*] more. The concept of social identity explained their desires to distance themselves from English as a western language, although I argued that this process was below the level of consciousness. While speakers may not be aware of the specific linguistic feature they use, they may distance themselves from the cultural norms and values that *standard* English represents through not adhering to ICE rules.

The concept of Identity was discussed in relation to religion and multilingualism. It was evident in the qualitative results that the idea of having a Muslim identity contradicted with being an English speaker. This could be attributed to an educational ideology that promotes teaching English as an ICE variety with western norms which contradict Muslims' and Arabs' values. The findings also showed that some speakers identified as English learners rather than English speakers despite the fact that English played an important role in their lives. This was also explained as a result of the education system in Saudi that promotes ICE varieties as the only correct Englishes rendering their English use as deficient in comparison and which needs to be improved.

The concept of *imagined identity* was discussed in relation to motivation, investment and imagined community. The results revealed three types of investment in English in Saudi: investment in children's English education, investment in using English to advance their careers, and investment in English as an international language. I argued that motivation to learn and use English should be investigated as an investment giving speakers some degree of agency in

identifying their own needs and plans to use the language in different contexts, and in imagining themselves in social situations where they would be English speakers.

3. What are the attitudes that Saudis hold towards English and its use in an Arabic and Islamic society?

The general attitude of the Saudis in this study towards English could be summed up as being cautiously positive. Despite perceiving English as an important international language and taking part in the increasing use of English in Saudi, there was a general concern that English could undermine Arabic, the language of Qur'an. The overall concern seemed to have stemmed from viewing English as the language of non-Muslim countries which I explained as the result of presenting English as an ICE variety through education in Saudi and excluding any other Englishes. While the speakers seemed to conflate religion with culture in some instances, *westernisation* as a possible consequence of the spread of English in Saudi was understood as positively enriching aspects of the culture in Saudi rather than adopting western values. I proposed that it would be effective to explore attitude and perception further through using various methods such as questionnaires and interviews allowing participants to explain and elaborate on their views.

This study contributes to research in variationist sociolinguistics in a second and foreign language context. It also contributes to the existing research in SLA and World Englishes, especially in Saudi and in Outer/Expanding Circle contexts. This study supports gathering and analysing data of innovation in L2 through applying variationist sociolinguistic methods. The findings support the notion that, just like in the case of L1, sociolinguistic variation in L2 is possible. In addition, the findings regarding variation in /v/ showed that the devoiced variant [f] were used more in informal speech. This supports the notion that L2 has the same style shifting that is found in L1.

Variation in all five features investigated in this study appeared to be rule governed and socially motivated. Factors such as *age*, *gender*, *tribalism* were shown to impact variation in the language use of Saudis in the current study. These findings add to and support previous findings that English in Saudi could be viewed as a Saudi English variety. The main contribution of this study which previous studies lacked is in providing the linguistic and social factors that constrain variation in Saudi English. In addition, this study provides explanation of the linguistic environments in which those features varied. In doing so, L1 transfer was not the primary factor to explain variation, rather it appeared to be a combination of L1 transfer and context-specific English rule complexity. Two criteria were used to interpret variation in the speech of Saudis in this study: similarity to Arabic, and similarity to other Englishes, such as African English varieties, Sri Lankan English, and Cameroon English. In addition, another criterion was used to argue that the features investigated in this study are peculiar to Saudi English, which was the effect of social, attitudinal, and educational factors.

This study is a new contribution to SLA research in general, and in Saudi specifically. The analysis and explanation of variation in the use of English as second language was conducted through applying a VS approach in which language use and society are interconnected. In this study English was examined as a language situated in Saudi society in which Saudi English speakers are active participants in using the language creatively to reflect aspects of their identities and social roles. In this light, Saudi English speakers are seen as having agency rather represented as being passive respondents who ought to follow exonormative rules when it comes to their English use. Social factors (gender, age, and tribalism) are primary factors that differentiated Saudis in this study which in turn impacted and differentiated their language use. Additionally, variation was examined and explained in relation to different concepts presented in the literature review. Education and language ideologies (such as, native-speakerism), and religion were crucial factors that helped understand Saudis' variable use of English and their perception of the language. The findings of this study support and validate the study of variation in English as a second and foreign

language. All five variables appeared to be influenced by one or more social, ideological, and educational factors. For example, variation in verb *be* and the third person singular marker *-s* proved to be gender-specific, that Saudi women and men had different linguistic preferences which reflected their different social roles. Another example is variation in the use of articles which reflected aspects of Saudis' social identity. Variation in articles was influenced by educational ideologies that promote English as the language of western native speakers that seemed to have led Saudis in this study to not adhere to ICE rules and use English innovatively in a way to show their social identity as Muslim Arabs.

This study supports the notion that L2 use, similar to L1 use, should be examined in relation to multiple factors, which leads to the second contribution. This study supports the new move to a bi/multilingual turn. It could be seen as an example of the original studies that Mendoza (2020) called for to add to the new bi/multilingual turn and move away from the traditional native/non-native distinction that is based on native speaker bias. Variation in Saudi English was not investigated or explained in relation to similarity to or differences from NS's language use. In addition, the motivation and investment of the speakers in this study were examined in relation to their own needs and plans as multilingual speakers in a wider multilingual community whether in Saudi or internationally. The only time native-speakerism was considered was in explaining the speakers' variable use of articles that they seemed to distance themselves from the notion of English as the language of western native speakers.

The findings of this study support the importance of considering identity when examining L2 variable use; what is language use if not a reflection of aspects of speakers' own identity? The results showed that some variation in Saudi English appeared to be a crucial factor in the process of identity construction. The use of [zero *a/an*] and [Saudi *the*] appeared to be a representation of some speakers' social identity. The use of the devoiced fricative [f] and [Saudi *the*] appeared to be a tribal identity marker. In addition, in the qualitative findings Saudis in this study described

aspects of their identity as multilingual speakers when given the chance to imagine their roles in future imagined communities where English is a language of communication.

The findings support the study of L2 motivation as types of investments in L2 in relation to self-representations in a global world and in future imagined communities where interaction with NSs is not a primary goal. This study shifts the focus from external factors, such as the desire to integrate with a western culture, to self-representations in examining Saudis' motivation and investments in English. The speakers' plans, hopes and desires regarding English use appeared to be the factors that shaped their motivation and investments. Therefore, this study supports the need to use multiple data gathering methods, for example, the use of questionnaires and interviews to allow respondents to elaborate and explain their goals and plans regarding learning and using an L2. In this study, Saudis were given agency to explain their own needs and plans. They were given a chance to imagine themselves as multilingual speakers rather than perpetual L2 learners. *Integrativeness* in this study was presented as investing in an L2 to take part in a wider multilingual community rather than integrating with a western culture. When given the chance in the interviews, the speakers appeared to be motivated to use English for different reasons: to improve their careers, to have better education, to speak an international language, and to be prestigious.

In conclusion, this dissertation is the first to examine localised English use in Saudi in relation to social and educational factors. I found systematic variation in English in an EFL context where English use came about through modernisation and globalisation, rather than colonisation, and where NSs' input is limited. Therefore, NSs' input was not considered in the analysis to measure the correctness of variable features as has been the case in many Saudi SLA studies. Instead, this study showed that exploring L2 variation in relation to local society, first language, and context specific internal constraints yields a more accurate picture. In addition to considering social, educational and ideological factors, L2 speaker identity was brought to the fore and considered

in the analysis and interpretation of linguistic variables rather than being regarded as given or passive. This study showed that L2 speakers within a community are not homogeneous. It showed that Saudis from different generations, genders, social backgrounds, and who had different educational experiences, use English variably.

Following the groundwork provided by this study, it is hoped that Saudi English will be further explored and that more of its features will be documented. This study bridges the gap between SLA and sociolinguistic research through employing a VS approach; this will hopefully inspire other researchers to examine EFL variation within local contexts and view World Englishes as varieties systematically used in their own right. It is hoped that SLA researchers and sociolinguists will build on the findings of this study, as it provides replicable data and findings in addition to detailed methods of data gathering and analysis, and rectify any points of weakness. Despite being presented in previous SLA research as inferior, this study has shown that English in Saudi could be a new emerging variety. It is unique in its features, which have linguistic meanings specific to their use in Saudi and which reflect Saudi social factors. This study has shown that Saudi English is the English Saudis use in their day-to-day lives (at home, at school/university, at work, with friends, and with non-Arabs). Therefore, English in Saudi is worthy of its own name, Saudi English.

8: Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1

The Questionnaire:

Part 1: Personal information

Age:
18-25
26-35
36-45
46-55
56+
Gender: Female – Male
I attended a private school for_____ years
I attended a public school for _____ years
Current status:
Employed, for_____ years. Where? _____
Student, degree_____ Major_____
Other: _____
Region of origin:
Northern
Southern
Central
Eastern
Western
Where do you live now? _____ For how long? _____

Part 2: English language education and skills

2.1 I started learning English in:
Preschool / kindergarten
Elementary school
Intermediate school
High school

2.2 years of English learning:
3-6 years
7-10 years
11 years or more

2.3 How would you rate your level of English?
Beginner
Intermediate
Upper intermediate

Advanced

2.4 What variety of English appeals to you most in terms of dialect or accent?
American
Australian
British
Canadian
Indian
New Zealand

2.5 Choose the option that best describes you:

a. How often do you use English at home?
100% Arabic, 0% English
75% Arabic, 25% English
50% Arabic, 50% English
25% Arabic, 75% English
0% Arabic, 100% English

b. How often do you use English in school, work, or university?
100% Arabic, 0% English
75% Arabic, 25% English
50% Arabic, 50% English
25% Arabic, 75% English
0% Arabic, 100% English

c. How often do you use English when you socialize with friends?
100% Arabic, 0% English
75% Arabic, 25% English
50% Arabic, 50% English
25% Arabic, 75% English
0% Arabic, 100% English

d. How often do you use English with household staff (e.g. the maids, the driver) or non-Arabs workers (e.g. at shopping centers and coffee shops)?
100% Arabic, 0% English
75% Arabic, 25% English
50% Arabic, 50% English
25% Arabic, 75% English
0% Arabic, 100% English

Part 3: Attitudes

3.1 Speaking English is important to me because many employers require English proficiency.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.2 I sound sophisticated when I speak English.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.3 I am proud of my Saudi accent when I speak English.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.4 I read English books or magazines.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.5 Speaking English will make me forget Arabic.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.6 I will send my kids to English medium schools.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.7 Speaking English makes me sound Educated.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.8 I do not need to speak English in order to get a job.

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Agree

3.9 Living in a globalized world, it is important that my kids speak English.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.10 I watch English TV shows or movies.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.11 I would like to lose my Saudi accent when I speak English.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.12 Learning English is a threat to Arabic.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.13 Speaking English will improve my career prospects.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.14 I want my kids to learn English.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.15 Speaking English makes me socially prestigious.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly Agree |

3.16 I listen to English radio programs or music.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree

3.17 It is important for me to sound like a native speaker when speaking English.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree

3.18 Learning English is an indication of Westernization.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree

8.2 Appendix 2

The Interview questions:

A. Language Education

1. What languages do you speak?
2. At what age did you start learning English?
3. Was your school English medium? And college?
4. Do you speak English at home? Why?
5. Do you speak English with your friends? Why?
6. Do you read books, magazines, or blogs in English?
7. Do you watch English programs / YouTube?
8. Do you text in English?
9. What makes a good English speaker?
10. Do you consider yourself a successful English speaker? Why/not?
11. Do you think Saudis are good English speakers? Why/not?

B. Attitude, Ideology and Identity

1. Do you think a lot of people across Saudi speak English?
2. How do you feel about the English spoken in Saudi?
3. What do you think about Asian English?
4. How would describe your accent?
5. How would describe my accent?
6. Is it different from British and American English? How?
7. Does any one sound more polite or sophisticated than the others?
8. Do you like Saudi English? What do you like/dislike about it?
9. Do you think Saudis speak in similar way?
10. Do you want to lose your accent? Why/not?
11. Do you think your accent makes it hard for other English speakers to understand you?
12. Would/do you want your kids to be English speakers? Why?
13. What would you do to achieve that?
14. Would/do you speak English or Arabic with them? Why?
15. Why do you think English is a compulsory subject in school/university?
16. Do you think education should be in English, Arabic or both?
17. Why do you think we have Saudi English Channels (e.g. Channel 2, MBC 2, and MBC Action)?
18. If you see two Saudis conversing in English, what would you think?
19. Do you think English could spread American/British or western culture?
20. Do you think by speaking English you have become westernized or made you adopt or like western norms?

21. Do you celebrate valentine's day/ new year?
22. Do you use English when speaking with non-Arabs in Saudis? Do you think they should be speaking Arabic since they work in Saudi?
23. Why do you think we have all government websites in English and Arabic (the ministry of education, and the ministry of civil affairs/service)?
24. Do you think English is a form of Westernization?
25. Do you think learning English is a threat to Arabic?
26. What does it mean to be an English speaker?
27. Would you identify yourself as an English speaker?
28. Do you consider Indians or the indigenous people in the US/Australia/Canada who speak English as their first language as English native speakers?

References

Abanomey, A. (2013). Do EFL Saudi learners perform differently with online reading? An exploratory study. *Journal of King Saud University - Languages and Translation*, 25 (1), 1-11.

Abdellah, A., & Ibrahim, M. (2013). Towards developing a language course for Hajj guides in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, a needs assessment. *International Education Studies*, 6(3), 192-212.

Abdelrady, A., & Ibrahim, A. (2015). Error analysis of inflectional morphemes made by preparatory year Saudi EFL students at Al-Jouf University. *SUST Journal of Humanities*, 16(4), 82-95.

Ahamed, F. (2016). An investigation of writing errors of Saudi EFL university students. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 4(2), 189-211.

Al-Abed Al-Haq, F. & Smadi, O. (1996). Spread of English and westernization in Saudi Arabia. *World Englishes*, 15(3), 307-317.

Al-Abed Al-Haq, F., & Smadi, O. (1996). The status of English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) from 1940-1990. In J. A. Fishman, A. W. Conrad, & A. Rubel-Lopez (Eds.), *Post-imperial English: Status change in former British and American colonies*, 1940-1990 (pp. 457-484). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Al-Asfour, A., Tlaiss, H. A., Khan, S. A., & Rajasekar, J. (2017). Saudi women's work challenges and barriers to career advancement. *Career Development International*, 22(2), 184-199.

Al-Bohnayya, Moayyad (2019). *Dialect variation and change in eastern Arabia: Al-Aḥsa dialect* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex]. Research Repository.

Al-Braik, M. (2007). Performance of KFU English major students. *Scientific Journal of King Faisal University*, 8(2), 647–677.

Al-Dosari, H. S. (2011). An investigation of attitudes towards varieties of spoken English in a multi-lingual environment. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(9), 1041-1050.

Al-Essa, A. (2008). *Najdi speakers in Hijaz: A sociolinguistic investigation of dialect contact in Jeddah* (Publication No. 898747000) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Al-Harthi, S. E. (2014). The impact of positive views on language learning and pupils' construction of L2: Imagined communities, possible selves, and investment in language learning. *Arab World English Journal*, 5(2), 70-86.

Al-Johani, H. M. (2009). *Finding a way forward: the impact of teachers' strategies, beliefs and knowledge on teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia* (Publication No. 02824C4C7A99C503) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Strathclyde]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Al-Kahtany, A. (1995). Dialectal ethnographic 'cleansing': ESL students' attitudes towards three varieties of English. *Language and Communication*, 15(2), 165-180.

Al-Mohanna, A. (2014). Errors in the usage of the English definite/indefinite articles among Saudi university-level students. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 7(3), 79-95.

Al-Nafisaha, K. & Al-Shorman, R. (2011). Saudi EFL students' reading interests. *Journal of King Saud University - Languages and Translation*, 23 (1), 1-9.

Al-Quyadi, A. (2016). Complexity level in the use of tense and aspect as perceived and experienced by Arab EFL learners. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(1), 135-174.

Al-Rasheed, M. & Piscatori, J. (2005). Transnational connections and national identity: Zanzibari Omanis in Muscat. In P. Dresch, (Ed.), *Connections and Identities: Understandings of the Arab Gulf*. London: I.B. Tauris, London.

Al-Rawi, M. (2012). Four grammatical features of Saudi English. *English Today*, 28(2), 32-38.

Al-Samadani, H., & Ibnian, S. (2015). The relationship between Saudi EFL students' attitudes towards learning English and their academic achievement. *International Journal of Education and Social Science*, 2(1), 92-102.

Al-Shabbi, A. (1989). *An investigation study of the practical preparation in EFL teacher preparation programs in colleges of education in the Saudi Arabia* (Publication No. 3740CD3A053291B4) [Doctoral dissertation, Cardiff University]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Al-Wer (2007). The formation of the dialect of Amman. In Catherine Miller, Enam Al-Wer, Dominique Caubet, & Janet Watson (Eds.), *Arabic in the City: Issues in Dialect Contact and Language Variation*. (pp.55–76). London: Routledge.

AlAmmar, D. (2017). *Linguistic variation and change in the dialect of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia: Feminine suffixes* (Publication No. 2009573875) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Alfallaj, F. (2013). The use of linguistics in teaching pronunciation to Saudi students. *Humanities and Administrative Science Journal*, 14(2), 134-143.

Alhaysony, M. (2012). An Analysis of Article Errors among Saudi Female EFL Students: A Case Study. *Asian Social Science*, 8(12), 55-66.

AlJarf, R. (2008). The impact of English as an international Language (EIL) upon Arabic in Saudi Arabia. *Asian EFL Journal*, 10(4), 193-210.

Alkaabi, A. M. (2016). *Saudi students' motivation and attitudes toward learning English as a second language and their willingness to invest in learning it* (Publication No. 40F60682BD3520A4) [Doctoral dissertation, St. Cloud State University]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Alsamani, A. (2014). Foreign culture awareness needs of Saudi English language majors at Buraydah Community College. *English Language Teaching*, 7(6), 143-153.

Alshahrani. (2016). A Brief Historical Perspective of English in Saudi Arabia Journal of Literature. *Languages and Linguistics*, 26, 43-47.

Alshayban, A. (2012). *Copula omission by EFL Arab learners* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Colorado State University.

Alsuwaida, N. (2016). Women's Education in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of International Education Research*, 12(4), 111-118.

Alzinaidi, M. H. & Abdel Latif, M. M. (2019). Diagnosing Saudi students' English consonant pronunciation errors. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(4), 180-193.

Amin, G. M. (2020). Pragmatic Aspects of Tense in English and Arabic: Based on a Neo-SRE Theory. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(4), 75-89.

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.

Appel, R. and Muysken, P. (1987). *Language Contact and Bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold.

Baghdadi, A. (1985). *The Educational Start in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Jeddah: Ashuruq Publishing House.

Bailey, G., Matynor, N., & Cukor-Avila, P. (1989). Variation in subject-verb concord in Early Modern English. *Language Variation and Change*, 1, 285-300.

Bamgbose, A. (1998). Torn between the norms: Innovations in world Englishes. *World Englishes*, 17(1), 1-14.

Bayley, R. (1996). Competing constraints on variation in the speech of adult Chinese learners of English. In R. Bayley & D. R. Preston (Eds.), *Second Language Acquisition and Linguistic Variation*: John Benjamins.

Bayley, R. (2005). Second language acquisition and sociolinguistic variation. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 14(2), 1-13.

Beebe, L. M. (1980). Sociolinguistic variation and style shifting in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 30(2), 433-445.

Binturki, T. (2001). *Analysis of pronunciation errors of Saudi ESL learners*. Southern Illinois University Illinois.

Bley-Vroman, R. (1983). The comparative fallacy in interlanguage studies: The case of systematicity. *Language Learning*, 33, 1–17.

Bolton, K. (2004). World English. In K. Bolton & B. B. Kachru (Eds.), *World Englishes: Critical concepts in linguistics*: Vol. 1 (pp. 186-216). London: Routledge.

Bonnici, L. M. (2010). *Variation in Maltese English*: *The Interplay of the Local and the Global in an Emerging Postcolonial Variety* (Publication No. 2011932399) [Doctoral dissertation, University of California]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Bourdieu, P ., & Passeron, J . S. (1977). *Reproduction In Education, Society, and Culture*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Boyle, B. (2010). Pattern of change in English as a lingua franca in the UAE. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 21(2), 144-161.

Boyle, B. (2012). Language contact in the United Arab Emirates. *World Englishes*, 31(3), 312-330.

Breiteneder, A. (2009). English as a lingua franca in Europe: an empirical perspective. *World Englishes*, 28(2), 256–269.

Bruthiaux, P. (2003). Squaring the circles: Issues in modeling English worldwide. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 159-178.

Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). *World English: A study of its development*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Bubios, S. & Horvath, B, (2000). When the music changes, you change too: Gender and language change in Cajun English. *Language Variation and Change*, 11, 287–313.

Bucholtz, M. & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: a sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7 (4-5), 585-614.

Burke, P. (1991). Identity processes and social stress. *American Sociological Review*. 56, 836-849.

Cameron, D. (2008). Language variation: gender under the microscope: Deborah Cameron puts new questions to the way we interpret research findings about gender differences in language use. *The English Review*, 18(4).

Cedergren, H. (1973). *The Interplay of Social and Linguistic Factors in Panama*. Cornell University. New York.

Cheshire, J. (2005). Age and generation-specific use of language. Revised version of 1987 paper. In U. Ammon, N. Dittmar, K. Mattheier, & P. Trudgill (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: an introductory handbook of the science of language and society* (2nd ed., pp. 1552-1563). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Cook, V. (1992). Evidence for multicompetence. *Language Learning*, 42, 557–591.

Cravens, T. D. & Giannelli, L. (1995). Relative salience of gender and class in a situation of multiple competing norms. *Language Variation and Change*, 7, 261-285.

Croft, W. (2001). *Radical Construction Grammar*. UK: Oxford University Press.

Cukor-Avila, Patricia and Bailey, Guy. 2001. The effects of the race of the interviewer on sociolinguistic fieldwork (Research Notes). *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5(2): 254-270.

Dashti, A. (2015). The role and status of the English language in Kuwait: How is English used as an additional language in the Middle East? *English Today*, 31(3), 28-33.

Davies, A. (1989). Is international English an interlanguage? *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(3), 447-467.

De Bel-Air, F. (2014). Demography, Migration and Labour Market in Saudi Arabia (No. 1). http://www.grc.net/

De Klerk, V. (1999). Black South African English: where to from here? *World Englishes*, 18(3), 11–24.

DeCapua, A. (2008). *Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-Native Speakers*. New York: Springer.

Dörnyei, Z. (2002). *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing*. MahWah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dornyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 9–42). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Drummond, R. (2010) *Sociolinguistic Variation in a Second Language: The Influence of Local Accent on the Pronunciation of Non-native English Speakers Living in Manchester* (Publication No. 30DCE99D3748CE44) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Manchester]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Drummond, R. (2011). Glottal variation in /t/ in non-native English speech: patterns of acquisition. *English World-Wide*, 32(3), 280–308.

Drummond, R. (2012a). The Manchester Polish STRUT: Dialect Acquisition in a Second Language. *Journal of English Lingu*istics, 41(1), 65-93.

Drummond, R. (2012b). Aspects of identity in a second language: ING variation in the speech of Polish migrants living in Manchester, UK. *Language Variation and Change*, 24, 107 – 133.

Drummond, R. & Schleef, E. (2016). Identity in variationist sociolinguistics. In S. Preece (ed.), The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity (pp. 50-65). Abingdon: Routledge.

Dubois, S., & Horvath, B. (2000). When the music changes, you change too: Gender and language change in Cajun English. *Language Variation and Change*, 11, 287–313.

Eagleton, T. (2007). *Ideology*. London: Verso.

Eckert, P. (1989). *Jocks and burnouts: Social categories and identity in the high school*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Eckert, P. (1997). Age as a sociolinguistic variable. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics* (pp. 151–167). Oxford: Blackwell.

Eckert, P. (2012). Three waves of variation study: The emergence of meaning in the study of variation. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41, 87-100.

Eckert, P., & Rickford, J. R. (2001). *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1997). Sticking together or falling apart: In-group identification as a psychological determinant of group commitment versus individual mobility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 617-626.

Elyas, T. (2008). The attitude and the impact of American English as a global language within the Saudi education system. *Novitas-ROYAL*, 2(1), 28-48.

Epstein, R. (2002). The definite article, accessibility, and the construction of discourse referents. *Cognitive Linguistics*, 12(4), 333–378.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. Essex: Longman.

Faruk, S. (2013). English language teaching in Saudi Arabia: A world system perspective. *Scientific Bulletin of the Politehnica University of Timişoara Transactions on Modern Languages*, 12(1-2), 73-80.

Feagin, C. (1979). *Variation and Change in Alabama English*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Field, A., Miles, J. & Field, Z. (2012) *Discovering Statistics Using R*. London: SAGE.

Fishbein, M. (1967). A Consideration of Beliefs, and Their Role in Attitude Measurement. In M. Fishbein (Ed.), *Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement* (pp. 257-266). London: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Flege, J. E., Yeni-Komishian, G. H., & Liu, S. (1999). Age constraints on second-language acquisition. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 41, 78–104.

Gardner, R. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning*. London: Arnold.

Gardner, R.C., & Lambert, W.E. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House

Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gattett, P., Coupland, N., & Williams, A. (2003). *Investigating Language Attitudes*: *The Social Meanings of Dialect, Ethnicity and Performance*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

General Authority for Statistics. (2016). *Labor market bulletin* (Fourth quarter). https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/814

General Authority for Statistics. (2017). *Labor market* (Fourth quarter). https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/814

General Authority for Statistics. (2018). *Labor market* (Fourth quarter). https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/814

General Authority for Statistics. (2019). *Labor market* (Third quarter). https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/814

Gonzalez, A. (1983). When does an error become a feature of Philippine English? In R. B. Noss (Ed.), *Varieties of English in Southeast Asia* (Selected papers from the RELC Seminar on Varieties of English and their Implications for English Language Teaching in Southeast Asia: Vol. 11), (pp. 50-172). Singapore: Singapore University Press.

Greenbaum, S., & Quirk, R. (1990). *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman Group Ltd.

Gupta, A. (1994). *The Step-Tongue: Children's English in Singapore*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Haeri, N. (1997). *The Sociolinguistic Market of Cairo: Gender, Class and Education*. London: Routledge.

Hagler, A. (2014). A study of attitudes toward Western culture among Saudi university students. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*: *Gulf Perspectives*, 11(1), 1-14.

Hago, O., & Khan, W. (2015). The pronunciation problems faced by Saudi EFL learners at secondary schools. *Education and Linguistics Research*, 1(2), 85-99.

Hall, S. (1982). The rediscovery of "ideology": Return of the repressed in media studies. In M. Gurevitch, T. Bennett, J. Curran, & J. Woollacott (Eds.), *Culture, Society and the Media*. London: Methuen.

Hashim, A. (1980). Common errors of Saudi high school students' written English: Their Causes and Remedies (Publication No. BB985888146ADB43) [Doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Hawkins, J. A. (1978). *Definiteness and Indefiniteness*. London: Croom Helm.

Hazen, K. (2000). Identity and Ethnicity in the Rural South: A Sociolinguistic View Through the Past and Present 'be'. In *Publication of the American Dialect Society* (Vol. 83). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Heath, S. (1989). Language ideology. *International Encyclopedia of Communications*, 2, 393-395.

Herat, M. (2005). BE variation in Sri Lankan English. *Language Variation and Change*, 17, 181-208.

Hillman, S, Ocampo Eibenschutz, E. (2018). English, super-diversity, and identity in the State of Qatar. *World Englishes*. 2018; 37: 228– 247.

Ho, M. L., and Platt, J. T. (1993). *Dynamics of a Contact Continuum: Singaporean English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hogg, M., & Abrams, D. (1988). *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Rutledge.

Holmes, J. (1997). Setting new standards: Sound change and gender in New Zealand English. *English World-Wide*, 18(1), 107–142.

Holmes, J. (2001). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Horesh, Uri (2015). Structural change in Urban Palestinian Arabic induced by contact with Modern Hebrew. In Aaron Butts (Ed.), *Semitic Languages in Contact*. (pp.198–233). Leiden: Brill.

Irvine, J. T. (2001). "Style" as distinctiveness: The culture and ideology of linguistic differentiation. In P. Eckert & J. R. Rickford (Eds.), *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation* (pp. 21–43). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaworski, A., Coupland, N., & Galasinski, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological Perspectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 157-181.

Jenkins, J. (2009). *World Englishes*: *A Resource Book for Students*. London, UK: Routledge.

Jia, G., Aaronson, D., & Wu, Y. (2002). Long-term language attainment of bilingual immigrants: Predictive variables and language group differences. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 23, 599–621.

Johnson, D. E. (2009) Getting off the GoldVarb Standard: Introducing Rbrul for Mixed-Effects Variable Rule Analysis. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 3(1), 359–383.

Jones, R., & Omran, A. (2015, March 6). Saudi Arabia Puts Squeeze on Foreign Workers. *WSJ*. https://on.wsj.com/2QLxF4U

Joseph, E. (2004). *Language and Identity. National, Ethnic, Religious*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Joseph, J. E. (1987). *Eloquence and Power: The Rise of Language Standards and Standard Languages*. London: Pinter.

Kachru, B. B. (1983). Models for non-native Englishes. In K. Bolton & B. B. Kachru (Eds.), *World* Englishes: Critical *Concepts in Linguistics* (pp. 108-130). London: Routledge.

Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the World*: *Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures* (pp. 11-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kachru, B. B. (1986). *The Alchemy of English*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Kachru, B. B. (1991). Liberation linguistics and the Quirk Concern. *English Today*, 7(1), 3–13.

Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The Other Tongue*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Kachru, B. B. (Ed.) (1982). *The Other tongue. English Across Cultures*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Kachru, Y. (1994). Monolingual bias in SLA research. In K. Bolton & B. B. Kachru (Eds.), *World Englishes*: *Critical Concepts in Linguistics* (pp. 413-416). London: Routledge.

Kachru, Y. (2003). On definite reference in world Englishes. *World Englishes*, 22(4), 497-510.

Kachru, Y., & Smith, L. E. (2008). *Cultures, Contests and World Englishes*. New York: Routledge.

Khatter, S. (2019). An Analysis of the Most Common Essay Writing Errors among EFL Saudi Female Learners (Majmaah University). learning. *Arab World English Journal*, 11(3), 364-381.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2007). *World Englishes*: *Implications for International Communication and English Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kroskrity, P. V. (2005). Language ideologies. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Labov, W. (1963). The social motivation of a sound change. *Word*, 18, 1-42.

Labov, W. (1966). *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Labov, W. (1969). Contraction, deletion and inherent variability of the English copula. *Language*, 45, 715–762.

Labov, W. (1972). *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Labov, W. (1981). Resolving the neogrammarian controversy. *Language*, 57: 267–308.

Labov, W. (1982). Building on empirical foundations. In W. Lehmann & Y. Malkiel (Eds.), *Perspectives on Historical Linguistics* (pp. 17-92). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Labov, W. (2007). Transmission and diffusion. *Language*, 83(2), 344-387.

Lamberton, D. M. (Ed.) (2002). *The Economics of Language*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.

Le Renard, A. (2008). Only for Women: Women, the State, and Reform in Saudi Arabia. *Middle East Journal*, 62(4), 610-629.

Likert, R. (1967). The method of constructing an attitude scale. In M. Fishbein (Ed.), *Readings in attitude theory and measurement* (pp. 90–96). New York: John Wiley.

Liton, H. A. (2012). Developing EFL teaching learning practices in Saudi colleges: A review. *International Journal of Instruction*, 5(2), 129-152.

Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics* (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyons, J. (1995). *Linguistic Semantic*: *An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mahboob, A. (2013). Middle Eastern Englishes: A focus on Saudi Arabia. In R. Akbari & C. Coombe (Eds.), *Middle East Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Dubai: TESOL Arabia Publications.

Mahboob, A., & Elyas, T. (2014). English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *World Englishes*, 33(1), 32.

Maisel, S. (2014). The new rise of tribalism in Saudi Arabia. Nomadic Peoples, 18(2), 100-122.

Maisel, S. (2015). *The Resurgent Tribal Agenda in Saudi Arabia*. Washington: Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington.

Major, R. C. (2004). Gender and stylistic variation in second language phonology. *Language Variation and Change*, 16(3), 169-188.

Mansory, M. (2019). Conversing in L2 English with Saudi Arabic (L1) Children at Home. Arab *World English Journal*, 10(1), 3-15.

Marian, V., Blumenfeld, H.K., & Kaushanskaya, M. (2007). The Language Experience and Proficiency Questionnaire (LEAP-Q): Assessing language profiles in bilinguals and multilinguals. *Journal of Speech Language and Hearing Research*, 50(4), 940-967.

Marschak, J. (1965). Economics of language. *Behavioral Science*, 10 (2), 135-140.

McCall, G. J., & Simmons, J. L. (1978). *Identities and Interactions*. New York: Free Press.

Mees, I. M., & Collins, B. (1999). Cardiff: A real-time study of glottalization. In P. Foulkes & G. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban Voices* (pp. 185–202). London: Arnold.

Mendoza, A. (2020). Negotiating the multilingual turn in SLA: response to Stephen May. *The Modern Language Journal*, 104(1), 304–308.

Mesthrie, R. (1992). *English in Language Shift*: *The History*, *Structure*, *and Sociolinguistics of South African Indian English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mesthrie, R., & Bhatt, R. (2008). *World Englishes*: *The Study of New Linguistic Varieties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Metz, H. C. (1992). Saudi Arabia: A Country Study. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress.

Meyerhoff, M. (2011). *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. New York: Routledge.

Mills, A. (2009). Reforms to women's education make slow progress in Saudi Arabia Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. *Chronicle Of Higher Education*, 55(43), 11.

Milroy, J. (2001). Language ideologies and the consequences of standardization. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 5(4), 530-555.

Milroy, J., & Milroy, L. (1985). *Authority in Language: Investigating Language Prescription and Standardisation*. London: Routledge.

Milroy, J., & Milroy, L. (1999). *Authority in Language*: *Investigating Standard English*. London: Routledge.

Milroy, L. (1980). *Language and Social Networks*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Milroy, L. (1987). *Observing and Analysing Natural Language*. New York: Basil Blackwell.

Milroy, L. (1999). Standard English and language ideology in Britain and the United States. In T. Bex & R. Watts (Eds.), *Standard English: The Widening Debate* (pp. 173-206). London: Routledge.

Milroy, L., & Milroy, J. (1992). Social network and social class: Towards an integrated sociolinguistic model. *Language in Society*, 21(1), 1–26.

Milroy, L. & Gordon, M. (2003). *Sociolinguistics*: *Method and Interpretation*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2005). *Goals of English Language Teaching*.

Mitchell, B., & Alfuraih, A. (2017). English language teaching in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: past, present and beyond. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 8(2), 317-325.

Moag, R. F. (1992). The life cycle of non-native Englishes: A case study. In B. B. In Kachru (Ed.), *The Other Tongue- English Across Cultures* (pp. 233-252). Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Moore, E. (2004). Sociolinguistic style: a multidimensional resource for shared identity creation. *The Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, 49 (3/4), 375-396.

Mougeon, R., Rehner, K., & Nadasdi, T. (2004). The learning of spoken French variation by immersion students from Toronto, Canada. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 8(3), 408-432.

Mustafa, R. F. (2017) *The Impact of Learning English as a Foreign Language on the Identity and Agency of Saudi Women* (Publication No. E235003E733A68D5) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Exeter]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Niblock, T. (2006). *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy, and Survival*. New York: Routledge.

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*. Singapore: Longman.

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2011). Identity, language learning, and social change. L*anguage Teaching*, 44(4), 412-446.

Nuruzzaman, M., Shafiqul Islam, A. B. M., & Jahan Shuchi, I. (2018). An Analysis of Errors Committed by Saudi Non-English Major Students in the English Paragraph Writing: A Study of Comparisons. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 9(1), 31-39.

Ortega, L. (2013a). Ways forward for a bi/multilingual turn in SLA. In S. May, (Ed.), *The Multilingual Turn*. (pp. 32-53). New York: Routledge.

Ortega, L. (2013b). SLA for the 21st Century: Disciplinary Progress, Transdisciplinary Relevance, and the Bi/multilingual Turn. *Language Learning*, 63, 1-24.

Pavlenko, A., & Norton, B. (2007). Imagined Communities, Identity, and English Language Learning. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 669-680). Boston, MA: Springer US.

Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 9-31.

Pennycook, A. (2003). Beyond homogeny and heterogeny: English as a global and worldly language. In C. Mair (Ed.), *The politics of English as a World Language: New Horizons in Postcolonial Cultural Studies*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Phillipson, R. (2012). English: from British empire to corporate empire. *Sociolinguistic studies*, 5(3), 441-464.

Platt, J. (1977). The 'creoloid' as a special type of interlanguage. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 2, 22–38.

Platt, J., & Weber, H. (1980). *English in Singapore and Malaysia: Status, Features, Functions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Poplack, S. (1993). Variation theory and language contact. In D. Preston (Ed.), *American Dialect Research: An Anthology Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the American Dialect Society* (pp. 251-286). Michigan: John Benjamins.

Poplack, S., & Tagliamonte, S. (1989). There's no tense like the present: Verbal -s inflection in early Black English. *Language Variation and Change*, 1, 47-84.

Quirk, R. (1990). Language varieties and standard language. *English Today*, 21, 3-10.

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & vartvik, J. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. In. London: Longman.

Rahman, M., & Alhaisoni, E. (2013). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: Prospects and challenges. *Academic Research International*, 4(1), 112-118.

Ramanathan, V. (2005). *The English-Vernacular Divide: Postcolonial Language Politics and Practice*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Rana, S., Owaidh, L.A. & Harbi, N.A. (2019). Grammatical Errors in English Writing Made by Senior Students of English Department at Jubail University College: Problem Analysis, Reasons and Solutions. *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 8(5), 23-34.

Rickford, J. R. (1986). The need for new approaches to social class analysis in sociolinguistics. *Language and Communication*, 6(3), 215-221.

Rickford, J. R., Ball, A., Blake, R., Jackson, R., & Martin, N. (1991). Rappin on the copula coffin: Theoretical and methodological issues in the analysis of copula variation in African-American Vernacular English. *Language Variation and Change*, 3, 103–132.

Robertson, D. (2000). Variability in the use of the English article system by Chinese learners of English. *Second Language Research*, 16(2), 135–172.

Romaine, S. (1982). *Socio-historical Linguistics: Its Status and Methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Romaine, S. (2003). Variation in Language and Gender. In J. Holmes & M. Meyerhoff (Eds.), The Handbook of Language and Gender (pp. 98-118). Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Schilling-Estes, N. (2001). Variation study and discourse analysis: The sociolinguistic interview as a situated speech event. In R. Bayley & C. Lucas (Eds.), *Sociolinguistic Variation* (pp. 165-189). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schneider, E. W. (2003). The dynamics of New Englishes: From identity to construction to dialect birth. *Language*, 79(2), 233–281.

Schneider, E. W. (2007). *Postcolonial English: Varieties Around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24(1), 209–239.

Seilhamer, M. (2013). English L2 personas and the imagined global community of English users. *English Today*, 29 (3), 8-14.

Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 10(3), 209-231.

Sharma, D. (2005). Dialect stabilization and speaker awareness in non-native varieties of English. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 9(2), 194-224.

Shea, N., Marshall, P., & Haring, M. (2006). *Saudi Arabia's curriculum of intolerance*. In. Washington, DC: Centre for Religious Freedom.

Silverstein, M. (1979). Language structure and linguistic ideology. In P. Clyne, W. Hanks, & C. Hofbauer (Eds.), *The Elements: a Parasession on Linguistic Units and Levels* (pp. 193-247). Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.

Simon, E. (2010). Phonological transfer of voicing and devoicing rules: evidence from L1 Dutch and L2 English conversational speech. *Language sciences*, 32, 63-86.

Sridhar, K. K., & Sridhar, S. N. (1986). Bridging the paradigm gap: Second language acquisition theory and indigenized varieties of English. *World Englishes*, 5(1),3-14.

Stanlaw, J. (2004*). Japanese English: Language and Culture Contact.* Hong Kong SAR, China: Hong Kong University Press.

Stets, J. & Burke, P. (2000). Identity theory and social Identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 36 (3), 224-237.

Stryker, S. (2000). Identity Competition: Key to Differential Social Movement Involvement. In S. Stryker, T. Owens, & R. White, (Eds.), *Identity, Self, and Social Movements*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Subiabre Ubilla, P. B. (2015). *A phonetic variationist study on Chilean speakers of English as a foreign Language* (Publication No. 8D8F6B369FCD199F) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow]. EBSCO Information Services and the Congregational Library and Archives.

Szyliowicz, J. S. (1973). *Education and Modernization in the Middle East*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Tagliamonte, S. (2006). *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tagliamonte, S. (2012). *Variationist Sociolinguistics: Change, Observation, Interpretation*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Tagliamonte, S. A., & Baayen, R. H. (2012). Models, forests and trees of York English: was/were variation as a case study for statistical practice. *Language Variation and Change*, 24(2), 135-178.

Takam, A. F. (2011). Article use in Cameroon English and in non-standard British English. *World Englishes*, 30(2), 269-279.

Taleb, S. A. (2005, September 6). Changing the national curriculum of Saudi Arabia. *Islam Daily*. https://bit.ly/3fSbqTg.

Taylor, C., & Albasri, W. (2014). The impact of Saudi Arabia king Abdullah's scholarship program in the U.S. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(10), 109-118.

Thomas, L., Wareing, S., Singh, I., Peccei, J. S., Thornborrow, J., & Jones, J. (2004). *Language, Society and Power* (I. Singh & J. S. Peccei Eds. 2 ed.). London: Routledge.

Thompson, E. P. (1963). *The Making of the English Working Class*. London: Gollantz.

Trudgill, P. (1972). Sex, covert prestige and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich. *Language in Society*, 1(2), 179-195.

Trudgill, P. (1974). *The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Trudgill, P. (1988). Norwich Revisited: Recent Linguistic Changes in an English Urban Dialect. English World-Wide, 9(1), 33–49.

Trudgill (1999). Standard English: What it isn't. In T. Bex & R. Watts (Eds.), Standard English: The Widening Debate (pp. 117-128). London: Routledge.

Trudgill, P. (2002). *Sociolinguistic Variation and Change*: Edinburgh University Press.

Turner, J., Hogg, M., Oakes, P., Reicher, S., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. New York: Basil Blackwell.

Ushioda, E. (2011). Language learning motivation, self and identity: current theoretical perspectives. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 24(3), 199–210.

Vaillancourt, F. (1983). The economics of language and language planning. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 7 (2), 162-178.

Van Herk, G., & Walker, J. (2005). S marks the spot? Regional variation and early African American correspondence. *Language Variation and Change*, 17(2), 113–131.

Verhoeven, J., Hirson, H., & Basavaraj, K. (2011). The devoicing of fricatives in southern British English. Paper presented at the ICPhS, Hong Kong, 17-21.

Wahid, R. (2013). Definite article usage across varieties of English. *World Englishes*, 32(2), 23–41.

Walker, J. A. (2001). Using the past to explain the present: Tense and temporal reference in Early African American English. *Language Variation and Change*, 13, 1–35.

Wallace, C. (2003). *Critical Reading in Language Education*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Weinreich, U., Labov, W., & I., H. M. (1968). Empirical foundations for a theory of language change. In W. P. Lehmann & Y. Malkiel (Eds.), *Directions for Historical Linguistics* (pp. 95-188). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Williams, R. (1973). Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory. *New Left Review*, (82), 1-14.

Wolfram, W. (1969). *A Sociolinguistic Description of Detroit Negro Speech*. Washington, DC: Center of Applied Linguistics.

Woolard, K. A. (1998). Introduction: Language ideology as a field of inquiry. In B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, & P. V. Kroskrity (Eds.), *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zuhur, S. (2011). *Saudi Arabia*. California: ABC-CLIO, LLC.

Xu, Zichang. (2010). Chinese English: A future power? In A. Kirkpatrick (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of World Englishes* (pp. 282–298). Abingdon: Routledge.