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An investigation of the impact of the language used for instruction on high school students' identity formation in Punjab, India.

Jagdeep Gill

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Edinburgh

I certify that the thesis has been written by me and not previously been submitted and approved for any other degree by this or any other University.

Jagdeep Gill
Abstract
Existing research suggests that the force and flow of globalisation and the consequent use of English as the global lingua franca has a significant impact on people's identity formation. Many postcolonial countries use English as a second or foreign language and thus have adopted it as the language for instruction in schools. The use of English as the medium of instruction (EMI) has been widely studied and it has been found that this has an impact on people's identity formation. Although extensive research on EMI and identity formation has been conducted, this remains an under-researched area in many multilingual contexts, for example, in the Punjab in India. Moreover, research that does exist has not focused on high school students' views and experiences.

To begin to address this gap in the existing published literature, this qualitative study set out to investigate whether, and to what extent, the language used as the MOI in Punjab in India affects high school students' perceptions of their identity formation. Two schools were involved: one where English was used as the medium of instruction, and one where Punjabi was used as the medium of instruction. Data were gathered using documentary analysis; four focus group discussions with pupils (two in each of the two schools, involving a total of twenty four students); and semi-structured interviews with two headteachers, four English language teachers (two from each school) and twelve high school students in 9th and 10th grades (six from each school). Participants' views and perceptions concerning the language of instruction and its impact on students' opportunities to access higher education programmes, their future careers, and their social positions in Punjabi society were sought.

The conceptual framing of the study draws on Norton's concept of investment (Norton, 1995; Norton, 2016b) which includes ideology, agency and identity. In addition, significant concepts such as Bourdieu's (1986) forms of capital and Markus and Nurius's (1986) notion of 'possible selves' have also been used. The data were analysed using Charmaz's (1995, 2006, 2014) account of constructivist grounded theory, and a constant comparative analysis approach.
was employed to identify similarities and differences in participants' accounts and to locate dominant themes within and across the data sets. Key findings revealed that the use of English as the medium of instruction was seen by each participant group to have a significant positive impact on students' identity formation and of their perceptions of their future possible selves; on their opportunities to embark on higher education degrees, particularly in areas such as medicine and science; on their future employment opportunities; and on their social positions in Punjab. This research contributes geographically, theoretically, as well as methodologically to the research in the area of EMI and identity and may help to raise awareness about learning and teaching in different languages and its impact on students' identity formation. This study concludes with a discussion of the implications of findings from the study for policymakers in Punjab, for language teachers, for the education and training of teachers, for parents, and above all for the students.
Lay Summary

This study investigates how differences in the way students educated in Punjabi schools learn English affect their perceptions of who they are, i.e. their identity, and considers the implications of the research findings for Punjab’s young people and for Indian education policy in the future.

A person's identity or, in other words, their answer to the question, ‘who are you?’ is influenced by how a person views him/herself and is viewed by others. Although it sounds fairly simple, it is very complex because various factors such as age, gender and physical features come into play. Language is one of these factors and is a particularly important influence on the identities of people living in areas where several languages are spoken. The state of Punjab in India is such a multilingual area. Although Hindi is India’s national language, Punjabi is the regional language. English however, is also, as in other Indian states and other countries, used in particular contexts. Because of its global use, it is one of the most valued languages in the world and has come to be associated in India with good higher education, entry to prestigious professions and good employment prospects. Consequently, as in many countries where English is not the native language, it is used as a language of instruction in some but not all schools in Punjab.

The use of different languages for instruction in schools in multilingual contexts like India is particularly problematic because English is used as the medium of instruction for all subjects mainly in fee paying private schools but not in state funded government schools in Punjab. In these Punjabi is the medium of instruction for all subjects including English. The education system therefore divides the Punjabi school population into two groups one of which learns in English and the other in Punjabi.

The use of English medium of instruction in some schools and the use of regional language medium of instruction in other schools, raises the question of whether getting or not getting an opportunity to learn in English, the global language, could have an impact on students’ identity formation. If so, students
learning in the two types of schools where two different languages are used for instruction may view themselves differently based on the value their society gives to the language in which they are learning.

My interest in this topic came up because after I had taught in an English medium school in Punjab for about five years and I had the chance to interview Punjabi parents in Scotland who had their children learning in Scottish schools. From interviews with these parents and the parents of children I taught in India, I discovered that Punjabi parents in Punjab and in Scotland believe that learning in English is important because it opens doors to success for students.

For this study, I recruited two groups of 9th and 10th grade school students in Punjab, one group from a school where learning was in English and the other from a school where learning was in Punjabi as research participants. I also interviewed the headteachers and English language teachers from both schools.

The interviews with the headteachers and English language teachers, discussions with high school student focus groups and interviews with some of the focus group students from both schools revealed that all the participants believed that learning in English in Punjab is a path that leads to better opportunities in higher education and employment than learning in Punjabi, and provides a person with higher social status. All the participants perceived the lack of opportunity to learn in English as an obstacle to Punjabi medium school students being as successful as English medium school students in their lives after they leave school. This is because differences in the language of learning creates differences between the students which have implications for how they see themselves and how they are seen by others i.e. the identities they are forming. For example, there was a dominant belief among participants that learning in English is necessary to gain the academic qualifications required to access higher education courses and professions such as medicine and engineering. Punjabi medium school students do not therefore see themselves in those highly valued courses in their future. Punjabi medium
school students may therefore feel worthless compared to English medium school students in Punjabi society when it comes to their social position, future higher education and employment.

It is hoped that the research findings from this study will influence parents, teachers and students but have a particular impact on Indian policymakers responsible for the development of the language in school education policy. I believe moving to a policy that gives all students in all schools the opportunity to learn in the same language would bring all students linguistically to the same level. This would bring huge benefit to everybody and, by giving all school students an equal chance to access study and job opportunities after they leave school, would help to reduce differences between people in Indian society which is already divided into different domains based on caste, religion and language.
Acknowledgements
At first, I would like to thank God the Almighty for blessing me with the strength and patience to complete this study. I am truly indebted and owe my sincere thanks to my supervisors, Dr Maria Dasli, Dr Andrew Hancock and Dr Pauline Sangster for their constant supervision and support in completing this study. Their constructive remarks and valuable guidance always encouraged me and made me believe in myself throughout my PhD, which made it easy for me to progress. This thesis would not have been possible without their encouragement and endless support throughout the process. I extend special thanks to my parents who have always encouraged me through my PhD in the same way as they supported me in every other journey of my life and made me a person that I am today. I would like to thank my husband Gurjeet Singh for his unfailing moral support on numerous occasions when I felt low and for creating the time and space for me to focus on my studies. I cannot say enough thanks to my son Abhinoor Singh, who had always been my motivation behind the completion of my PhD journey. Last but not least, I am immensely grateful to the headteachers, teachers, and students who welcomed me to their schools and gave me their valuable time.
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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

1.1. Background

India is a multilingual country where a range of languages including English are used as the medium of instruction in schools. This thesis reports on what high school students in one state in India, Punjab, believe about how the language used for instruction in their schools influences their identity formation and compares the impact of English medium and Punjabi (the regional language of Punjab) medium teaching on high school students' identity formation. In order to gain an in depth understanding of different school contexts, the headteachers and teachers from the two schools selected for this research were, along with the high school students, also involved in the current study.

Over the past two decades, identity has been a major area of interest within the fields of language and education. A considerable amount of literature has been published determining the relationship between language and identity in various geographical contexts (Bekerman, 2005; Bondy, 2015; Bucholtz & Hall, 2007; Day, 2002; Hall, 1992; Kouhpaenejad & Gholaminejad, 2014; Luscombe & Kazdal, 2014; MacPherson, 2005; Norton, 2000; Norton & De Costa, 2018; Sengupta, 2018; Stets & Burke, 2003; Ushioda, 2016). The theme of identity formation has been studied by many researchers using Norton's (1995, 2000) concept of 'investment' (e.g. Darvin & Norton, 2015b; Duff, 2015; Gauthier, 2015; Jeong & Lee, 2014; Norton, 2010b; Toohey, 2007; Ushioda, 2016). Investment is also used as one of the key concepts in this current study. A more detailed account of investment is given in the literature review chapter in Section 3.7.

Identity formation is currently a popular subject of study in the social sciences. Scholars from various disciplines such as psychology, social-psychology and sociology have much in common but also have different perspectives on identity formation. Psychologists using concepts such as 'motivation' (Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 2006; Dörnyei, 1998; Erickson, 1968; Gardner &
Lambert, 1972; Nurra & Oyserman, 2018; Oyserman, Elmore, & Smith, 2012) and ‘possible-selves’ (Hoof, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Rumbaut, 1994; Schwartz & Schwartz, 2017; Stevenson & Clegg, 2011), emphasise intrapsychic and cognitive elements or, in other words, focus mainly on what happens inside individuals.

Later Social psychologists focus on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1981) and highlight the group membership and roles in society that can have an influence on an individual’s identity formation. Sociologists extend this further and emphasise the impact of social structures such as social class and religion on an individual’s identity (Block, 2015; Gorringe, 2016; Hall, 1997; Lareau, 1987; Wong, 2016). Poststructuralist accounts do not reject the psychologists’, social-psychologists’ and sociologists’ conceptualisation of identity formation but extend it further with the result that identity formation, which was once viewed as a fixed phenomenon influenced by an individual’s mindset, is now viewed as a process which is fluidly shaped by the context in which the person lives their life. Identity formation, they argue therefore, is the result of an individual’s conception of the self, which is both highly contingent upon and inextricably bound up with social contexts such as family, school, community, race, ethnicity, power, social class and discourses (Norton, 2016a).

Language is one of the fundamental elements that contribute to a person’s identity formation. Focussing on the significance of language for identity formation, Hall, Cheng and Matthew (2006) state that language is the means ‘by which we bring our worlds into existence, maintain them, and shape them for our purposes’ (p. 2). Identity in relation to English as a second or foreign language for learning has been the focus of a significant amount of research in recent years and it has been emphasised that learning in English can have a significant impact on the learner’s identity (Bhattacharya, 2013; Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Clement et al., 2006; Cummins, 2001; Duff, 2002; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Moore & Moore, 2017; Nunan, 2003; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2006; Ramanathan, 2006a; Skehan, 1991; Taylor, Busse, Gagova, Marsden, & Roosken, 2013; Wang, 2019). Globalisation has led to significant spread of
the use of English worldwide. As it is widely used as an international language, it has been given a prominent position in the educational context in countries where English is not the native language (Bekerman, 2005; Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Lai, 2004). In postcolonial countries, such as Malaysia, Bangladesh and India, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on teaching English as a second or foreign language in schools. Over the last twenty years English has also been extensively used as a medium of instruction (MOI hereafter) in schools in countries where English is not the native language (British Council, 2014). There is now a considerable body of research highlighting the positive impact of learning in English on students’ educational achievements and on their future employment opportunities (Belhiah, 2016; Bhattacharya, 2013; Islam, 2013; Ramanathan, 2016; Roshid & Chowdhury, 2013; Tamim, 2014).

Globalisation of English has certainly unified people but has also been criticised for creating differences among them particularly where students are taught in different languages in schools (Belhiah & Elhami, 2014; Duff, 2002; Hengsadeekul, Koul, & Kaewkuekool, 2014; Manh, 2012; Mohamed, 2013; Rahman, 1997; Ramanathan, 2005a; Sandhu, 2014b; Tamim, 2014). Although extensive research has been carried out on the impact the use of English as a foreign and second language has on people’s identity, there is a scarcity of research concerning the effect of learning in English as opposed to learning in a regional language on students’ identity formation. Most studies in this area have been conducted outside the Indian context. Surprisingly, the impact of learning in English as opposed to the language of the region on high school students’ identity formation has not been paid attention to in the Indian context. The very few studies conducted in India were in states other than Punjab and involved adult participants. The current study, therefore, compares the impact of learning in English and Punjabi (the regional language of Punjab) on the identity formation of high school students in a sample of schools in Punjab.

In a multilingual country like India, English MOI is available to only 6 percent of society and only to the elite (Annamalai, 2004) who can afford to pay for high fee-charging private schools. Studies have revealed that the number of
children enrolled in English medium of instruction schools have dramatically increased by 27.4 percent between 2003 and 2011 alone (Trines, 2018). The limited access to English medium education is however well documented in the Indian government’s *National Knowledge Commission Report* which states that English is ‘beyond the reach’ of the masses in India and that access to English MOI education is characterised as ‘highly unequal’ (Government of India, 2009, p. 27). Moreover, the dominance of English MOI in higher education in India (Bhattacharya, 2013; Kaur, 2015) and its association with power and prestige, its necessity for good employment and inaccessibility for most learners (Annamalai, 2004; British Council, 2014; Hornberger & Vaish, 2009; Ramanathan, 2008; Sandhu, 2014b) has further added to differences between post-school opportunities for students learning in English medium of instruction (henceforth EMI) and those available to the students educated in regional language medium schools. Access to EMI education is therefore also a significant determinant of life time opportunities and thus power differences between EMI students and regional language medium school students. Consequently, users of other (local) languages struggle to maintain their identities in social and cultural domains in India where English is perceived as superior to other local languages (Bhattacharya, 2013; Mohanty, 2010; Sandhu, 2014; Singh, 2015; Vulli, 2014). The language of instruction has therefore been identified as a significant influence on students’ identity formation in India (Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 1999).

It is important to note in this context that higher education in India is generally delivered in English and remains dominated by English (Azam, Chin, & Prakash, 2013; Mohanty, 2006) despite India’s national education policy of encouraging the use of Hindi or other regional languages as the MOI in higher education (Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), 1992, p. 40). Government schools in most Indian states teach in the medium of regional

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1 studies conducted in states other than Punjab.
languages. Students who cannot afford the high fees required for private schools are therefore denied access to opportunities provided to their counterparts studying in English medium schools (Belhiah, 2016; Manh, 2012). The prestigious position and limited availability because of high fees of EMI education in India has led scholars to identify EMI as the cause of further linguistic, social and economic division within an already intensely segregated Indian society (Mohanty, 2010; Ramanathan, 2005; Vulli, 2014). EMI arguably promotes and perpetuates inequality by impacting differently than Punjabi medium education on students’ identity formation.

This study, therefore, aims to explore whether and to what extent the language used as the MOI affects the students’ perceptions of their identity formation.

1.2. My interest in this study

My interest in the topic being studied came about naturally as I was educated in an English MOI (henceforth EM) school in Punjab state in India and, from 2004 to 2009, had the opportunity to work as a teacher in an EM school in Punjab. During the period of my employment, I met several parents to discuss their children’s progress in school. These discussions gave me an insight into the fact that parents consider English as a valuable language and had therefore chosen EMI for their children because of its association with higher social status (Singh & Sarkar, 2015) and good academic and career prospects in India (British Council, 2014).

My decision to explore the topic of this thesis was influenced by interviews I conducted with Sikh parents in Scotland during my master’s research. In that small-scale study, I investigated these parents’ involvement with the Scottish primary schools their children were attending. The participants (parents) in the research for my Masters dissertation were from Punjab and had had their education either in English or in Punjabi. Most of them had learned in EM schools but a few had had a Punjabi medium school educational background. From that small-scale research, I gained an understanding that most of the parents who had experienced their learning in English were more involved in
their children’s school in Scotland. In contrast, the parents who were educated in Punjabi medium schools were not very involved in their children’s school primarily because of their hesitation to speak in English. Therefore, from the experiences reported by the parents, I concluded that people who have had an opportunity to learn in English in Punjab consider themselves to be better placed to obtain future opportunities in comparison to those who had learned in Punjabi. Thus, the opinions of Punjabi parents concerning the significance of English, whether in Punjab or Scotland, made me curious to know more about the relationship between English MOI and an individual’s identity formation, focusing mainly on how this influenced their future goals and social life. Therefore, I decided to pursue a PhD study that would focus on high school students, a cohort that has received scant attention in the research to date, their identity formation and the relationship between this and the language used for learning in their school.

With regard to my role as an insider, having been educated and worked in Punjab, I was myself part of the social context and the phenomenon under investigation. As an insider, I had the advantage of being able more easily to access the research field and to build a rapport with research participants. This, however, had some potential disadvantages. There was a risk that my closeness to the research context and the participants might have impacted my interpretation of the data gathered and thus the research results. However, to ensure that my findings were truly the mutual construction of the researcher and the participants, I reflected throughout the research on two questions: who am I? And, how might my position as an insider and an outsider influence my research? The reflexive approach I took to minimise the risk of my position both as an insider and an outsider having an impact on the research findings is discussed more fully in Chapter 4, Section 4.10.

1.3. The significance of this study

The division of India into units called states was done largely on the basis of the main language spoken in a region. In fact, the majority language spoken in an area has been at the core of most of the movements in which people
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demanded separate states in India. The formation of three states (Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, and Chhattisgarh) in the year 2000 is a prominent example of this. However, even though regional languages were central to the creation of states; English ‘occupies the highest position in the language ladder in India’ (Sengupta, 2018, p. 9). This fact needs to be acknowledged when considering language and identity in the Indian context.

Internationally, there is a plethora of research which has focussed on English and its relation to an individual’s identity formation (Abraham, 2014; Belhiah & Elhami, 2014; Bhatt, 2008; Bucholtz & Hall, 2007; Chan, 2010; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Hall, 1997; Norton, 2010a, 2016a; Toohey, 2000; Vignoles, 2011). However, only a few studies have been conducted in India (Ladousa, 2016; MacPherson, 2005; Ramanathan, 2005a; Sandhu, 2010). These studies have been reviewed in detail in Section 3.11 of the literature review chapter. As none of the studies of the relationship between learning in a particular language and students’ identity formation carried out in India were conducted in the multilingual setting of the state of Punjab with a population of 27.7 million people (Government of India, 2011), there is a significant gap in the literature which the current study is intended to fill.

Moreover, most of the studies that were carried out in other states in India involved adults as the participants. Some had university or college students as the participants but, to my knowledge, no study conducted in India involved high school students. As adolescence is considered to be the stage of human life when an individual begins to understand his/her future possibilities and their identity formation begins (Erikson, 1968; Keripelman & Pittman, 2001; Marcia, 1980; Schwartz et al., 2009; Tikkanen, 2016; A.S. Waterman, 1982), it seems important to investigate the identity formation of young people. The participants in this study are therefore high school students aged 14 to 16 nearing the point of transition from high school to further studies in college. This study, therefore, adds to knowledge and aims to fill a gap in the literature not only by adding a new geographical context but also by focussing on a new
cohort consisting of high school students to explore the issue of how MOI influences identity formation.

The data obtained from high school students is intended to provide valuable insight into the dynamics of identity formation in relation to the languages used for learning in school. It is hoped that this contribution to the research literature in the area of language and identity may help a range of educational stakeholders formulate policies on MOI and raise educators’ awareness about the complexities of learning and teaching in different languages with a view to developing teaching methods and materials to suit the needs of students learning in different languages. This study will draw language policymakers’ attention to the very serious issue of how the language used as the MOI can develop a linguistically embedded sense of identity among students learning in different languages in India and in other geographical contexts worldwide.

1.4. Summary of the study

Considering the possible strengths and weaknesses of various research designs and bearing in mind the exploratory nature of the current study, I decided to adopt a qualitative research design using a constructivist grounded theory (CGT) approach (Charmaz, 2006a) to co-construct knowledge with the participants for an extensive investigation of the topic under study. This approach was chosen because Charmaz provides flexible guidelines rather than rigid methodological rules and requirements for interacting with the participants to facilitate an in-depth understanding of the participants’ assumptions.

This study therefore relies on the following qualitative research methods: documentary analysis, focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. A sample of 2 headteachers, 4 language teachers teaching English to 9th and 10th grade students and 24 high school students learning in 9th and 10th grades was recruited to obtain data to co-construct knowledge regarding the impact of learning in English or Punjabi language on students’ identity formation. Four focus groups (two in each school) were conducted with twenty-four students
with six student participants in each focus group. Twelve of the students who participated in focus groups were further selected for individual semi-structured interviews. The headteachers and English language teachers were interviewed in order to gain knowledge about different school contexts to support the main aim of the study. The exploration of the headteachers and teachers' ideas gave me insights into how teaching professionals make assumptions or construct their beliefs about those learning in EM and PM schools in Punjab. For the data analysis, initial coding and memo writing were carried out from the initial stage of data collection. The whole research process together with the research findings are detailed in relevant chapters of the thesis.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

Following this introduction, the contextualisation of the research is presented in Chapter 2. That chapter outlines in some detail the Indian educational context and describes the language policy in education\(^2\) and the structure of the Indian education system. The purpose of this is to provide the reader with a detailed picture of the educational context in India within which the current study took place.

Chapter 3, the literature review, is divided into two parts: the first part provides the theoretical framework against which the current study is placed and which is subsequently used to analyse the data that were gathered; and the second part provides an analysis of the empirical studies on language and identity formation which have been conducted and are reported in the academic literature. The chapter foregrounds the perspectives of scholars from different disciplines: psychology, social-psychology and sociology and, following on

\(^2\) The language in education policy is the National language policy for languages to be taught in schools in India not the policy on the languages to be used as MOI in schools.
from this, the views about identity formation from a poststructuralist perspective are discussed.

Chapter 4 describes and justifies the methodology adopted for this research and includes an account of decisions made concerning the research design and methodological procedures employed in this study. The chapter addresses issues of trustworthiness, reflexivity and ethical considerations. In particular, the decisions and approaches taken to address the issues associated with my position as an insider are discussed. Following that, the processes of analysis and decisions made concerning the reporting of the findings are discussed in detail.

Chapters 5 and 6 report the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides an account of the head teachers’ and teachers’ perceptions about the language used as a MOI and identity formation together with details of the different school contexts. Chapter 6 presents, in an integrated way, an analysis of the student focus groups and individual interviews. A comparison is drawn between the data from the focus groups and the subsequent interviews in order to identify and report on similarities and dissimilarities in the students’ opinions.

Chapter 7 discusses the study’s findings and considers the relationship between these findings and those of empirical studies that had been conducted previously. Following this, a critical appraisal of the research discusses its strengths and limitations. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research and how the findings may influence future language planning and practice in schools in Punjab.
Chapter 2: Contextualisation

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a brief history of English in India is presented. This describes the journey of English from its initial introduction in colonial and post-colonial India to the current position it holds in Indian education and society. Summarising this history allows me to highlight the reasons behind the introduction of English into the Indian education system and to demonstrate how the dominance of English, which has prevailed in India since colonial times, is still impacting on and shaping education in India. This knowledge is vital background information for this study because it provides an overview of the significance of English in India and facilitates a clear understanding of the Indian educational context and, in particular, of the languages used in learning in schools.

The chapter goes on to describe how The Three Language Formula (1968), the current language policy in Indian education, was formulated and to present facts about the types of schools in India and the school governing bodies.

2.2. A brief history of English in India

Recognising the significance of the English language in the historical and sociolinguistic profiles of various countries, Kachru (1976) divided nations into three circles. The inner circle comprises of countries with English as a native language. The outer ring includes countries with English as a second language used at the institutional level. An expanding circle beyond that contains countries where English has not been designated an official status but is taught as a foreign language. In most of the countries contained in the outer and expanding circles the use of English has resulted from immigration, territorial conquests, and colonialism, the ‘accidental processes’ by which different nations have reached the situation of linguistic diversity (Mahapatra, 1990). Linguistic diversity however, is inherited by some nations and India is one example.
India’s linguistic diversity ranks fourth in the world (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Of the 121 languages, 270 mother tongues and a much higher number of dialects listed in India’s national Census of 2011, 22 of the languages have been specified in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian constitution to be used for administrative tasks and as the MOI in schools in different states (Government of India, 2011). The fact that only those 22 languages have constitutional recognition as official languages excludes users of indigenous languages from the domains of power in India (Mohanty, Panda, & Pal, 2010). Linguistic inequalities in India appear therefore to be deeply rooted in the political practices of governance. That India is a multilingual country is therefore one of the reasons that language policy in education in India has been a difficult issue since colonial times.

India is the seventh largest country in the world comprising 29 states and 7 union territories spread over an area of 32,87,2631 Sq. Km. Every state is further divided into districts and blocks. Each state has its language and thus its own ‘linguistic identity’ (Iyer & Ramachandran, 2019). A uniform education structure prevails across India with slight variations between states because school education is largely the responsibility of the state government and thus is shaped by the ideologies of the administrators (Al-Yagon et al., 2013). According to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) report prepared by Dutta and Bala (2012), the 2001 Census revealed that English was the primary language of 2.3 lakh (i.e. 230 hundred thousand) people, the second language of 86 million, and the third language of another 39 million Indians. Although no exact number of English speakers is given in the 2011 census, it is likely, considering the people’s growing aspiration to learn English in India, that the number of English speakers has increased during these ten years (Annamalai, 2004; Berry, 2013; Tully, 1997).

In the past, the incentive to learn English in India was a desire to learn science and technology in the name of modernisation. However, due to globalisation, learning English nowadays seems to be viewed as a means to access opportunities and a ladder to success (Rao, 2014).

In order to understand the current position of English in India and its use in the Indian educational context it is therefore necessary to provide an overview of the journey of English in colonial and postcolonial India till today.

2.2.1. English in colonial India

English was first introduced in India in the 17th century, but did not have much impact on the general lives of people until much later. In 1813 the British parliament made it mandatory for the British government to undertake the responsibility for education in India (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998). Although the local demand for teaching and learning in English in schools in India had begun to grow (Pennycook, 1998b) in the eighteenth century and the British gave a little encouragement to introduce English into education in India, for the most part, the education offered to Indian children at the beginning of the nineteenth century was mostly in local languages.

The formal introduction of English learning in schools in India, dates however from 1835 when Lord Macaulay introduced the Minute of Indian Education (1835), the purpose of which was to teach English to Indians in order to create ‘a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect’ (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b, p. 23). By teaching Indians through English MOI, Lord Macaulay’s intention was to create a group who could be interpreters between the rulers and ruled (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b). The introduction of Macaulay’s Minute however upset national leaders and parents continued to educate their children in their mother tongue (Rao, 2014).

Interestingly, this situation is in contrast to present-day India where there is now a strong preference for English Medium schools over regional language schools. Parents nowadays regard English as a source of upward mobility for
their children (NCERT, 2006b) and are seen protesting against the government’s reluctance to introduce English as a MOI in government schools. An incident in Goa, where parents blocked roads and stoned buses is an example of the transformation of people’s attitude towards learning in English (NDTV, 2015). Parents’ choice of language as the MOI for their children, however, is highly influenced by the ‘hierarchical pecking order of language’ in India (Mohanty, 2006, p.269). For example, English as a foreign language was accepted in most of the states in India because of its power and the emphasis on the cultural capital it embodies (see table: 3). English, therefore, appears to have become a language through which people in India articulate their identities (Mahapatra & Mishra, 2019). These parents cannot of course be condemned for desiring a good future for their children. However, the negative aspect of this is that the elevated position of English, the dominant language, relative to the regional language, in this case Punjabi, may make Punjabi medium school children identify themselves as lower in status or marginalised in comparison to the children learning in English medium schools.

Moving back to Macaulay’s Minute, at the time of its introduction and later, Macaulay’s 1835 Minute of Indian education was criticised by the Orientalists\(^4\) who wanted to preserve local languages such as Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic. Phillipson (1992) states that Macaulay had an instrumental role in the formulation of the Minute of Indian education. According to Phillipson, it ended the long-running dispute between the Orientalists and Anglicists\(^5\), the former opposed to, the latter in favour of the introduction of English language learning and, in particular, of English as the MOI in India. Macaulay supported the Anglicist group and declared in his Minute that educational funding would be provided only to schools delivering education in English. Phillipson (1992) called such schools ‘British model’ schools and condemned this policy stating

\(^4\) Orientalists were those who were in favour of traditional Indian languages such as Sanskrit.  
\(^5\) Anglicists were the supporters of the English language.
that Macaulay’s decision had ‘firmly slammed the door on indigenous tradition of learning’ (p. 110) and made it clear that ‘the job of education was to produce people with mastery of English’ (p. 111).

Macaulay’s Minute of 1835 and the British government’s policy of education in English was also heavily criticised by influential leaders like Mahatma Gandhi during the twentieth century freedom struggle (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b; Dua, 1994). One possible reason for this disapproval could be that English was perceived as a symbol of British colonialism and, therefore, as an obstruction and threat to the development of Indian cultural and national identity as was well documented in the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi, the national leader of post-colonial India:

Parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their country. They deprive them of the spiritual and social heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit for the service of the country.

(Gandhi, 1983, p. 276).

Gandhi wrote about his ‘heated discussion’ on this topic with an English couple Henry and Millie Polak who argued that ‘if children were to learn a universal language like English from their infancy they would easily gain a considerable advantage over others in the race of life’ (Gandhi, 1983, p. 277). However, by that time, the significance of English education was not only the belief of the English couple mentioned above but had become a notion of many other influential people in Indian society. For example, in a written debate with Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, a well-known leader, a literary figure (poet) and above all the proponent of the opposite school of thought argued in a poetic manner that ‘Indians could glory in the illumination of lamps lit in languages and cultures other than their own’ whereas Mahatma Gandhi condemned English for its influence on Indians’ mindset that could result in deprivation of their traditional values and culture (Guha, 2011).
Before long however, the significance of English as a means of modernisation and the technical development of India was acknowledged by some other political and social leaders. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy promoted the learning of English considering that it had economic and social benefits such as being able to communicate with the British rulers and to obtain white collar jobs (Khubchandani, 1978). This resulted in the opening of locally funded government supported institutes to provide English education to children in post-colonial India.

In summary therefore, to some extent, because of Macaulay's Minute on Education but also due to the efforts of the social reformers and political leaders, learning in English began to be established in India, especially, in the elite sections of society (Mohanty, 2010). This led to Christian Missionaries opening English medium schools for children from elite segments of society (Sandhu, 2010). This two tier system still continues in India and divides people into two groups based on the language in which they are learning (Petrovic & Majumdar, 2010). English has therefore become a language through which people in India articulate their identities (Mahapatra & Mishra, 2019). The impact of learning in a particular language and to be considered as belonging to one of the groups, elites or non-elites, is very relevant to exploring students' identity formation.

In order to fully understand how decisions on the language offered as the MOI in schools in the current education system were made however, it is necessary to explain how post-colonial developments influenced educational policy.

2.2.2. English in post-colonial India

After India became independent in 1947, the 1956 State Reorganization Act was passed and Indian states were organised along linguistic lines with each state having a dominant regional language. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India had promoted the use of English as a link language for the Southern non-Hindi speaking states (Sonntag, 2009). Following debates on the issue of introducing or not introducing English in India and after serious consideration by educational advisory bodies, social
reformers, and politicians such as Jawaharlal Nehru representing national and regional academic interests, English was identified as a means of modernisation and technical development in India (Sandhu, 2010).

Despite Mahatma Gandhi’s (the national leader) emphasis on promoting local languages immediately following independence, English was introduced as a compulsory language to be taught in schools and to be used as the associate official language along with Hindi the national language (Rao, 2014). However, according to the Article 343 of the Indian Constitution, the associate official language status of English was limited to a period of 15 years after which it was to be replaced by Hindi (The Government of India, 1950). But when the time came to remove English as the associate official language the non-Hindi speaking states’, anxiety about the imposition of Hindi language on them led to large-scale riots in the country (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b). It was therefore decided that the use of English as an official language parallel to Hindi should be continued until a consensus was reached on Hindi or any other regional language as a replacement for English (Shin, 2013). As a consequence, the Central Indian Government passed the Official Language Act 1963 which was amended in 1967, whereby English was to continue to be the associate official language of India for an indeterminate period together with Hindi as the official language (Official Languages Act., 1963). Consequently, although some southern states – Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh - preferred English over Hindi, the English language was formally adopted as an associate official language in post-independent India and continues to occupy this position to date.

Consequently, special attention was given to the study of English in the National Policy on Education (1968) which stated, under the title ‘development of languages’, that:

Special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English and other international languages. World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology. India must not only keep up this growth but should also make her own significant contribution
to it. For this purpose, the study of English deserves to be specially strengthened.

(Government of India, 1968a)

The enthusiasm among social reformers and other well-known political leaders in colonial and postcolonial India for the introduction of English language learning and English as a MOI in school gives an impression that Macaulay’s role in the elevation of English in education in India has been exaggerated. With regard to this, Frykenberg (1988) argued that looking at the position of English in modern India, where English is viewed as a ladder to success, ‘the historiography of modern India should be freed from the misleading myth of English as a colonialist imposition on a defenceless and hapless India’ (p. 305). The elevated position of English language learning and, in particular, the importance of learning in English in comparison to the regional languages in India, as documented in many studies (Berry, 2013; Canagarajah, 2016; Das, 2007; Kaushik, 2011; Sindkhedkar, 2012; Singh, 2015; Smith & Joshi, 2016), rises a question whether English truly is a colonial language in India. Thus, looking at the present position of English in India it is not unreasonable to say that English in India is not a foreign language anymore.

The discussion about the position of English in colonial and postcolonial India highlights the fact that English has become an essential part of not only academia but also enjoys a prestigious position in many other areas such as good employment, media and business, to name a few (Banerjee, 2016; Omidvar & Ravindranath, 2017). This superiority of English is surely rendering the regional languages powerless and the relationship between the regional languages and English has been labelled as ‘lingualism’ in India (Devi, 2017). Phillipson (2003) defines lingualism as ‘the structural and cultural inequalities that ensure the continued allocation of more material resources to English than to other languages and benefit those who are proficient in English (p. 47). In this context it can be imagined how access to and lack of access to English can have an impact on one’s identity especially in the Indian context where the
imbalance of the use of English as a MOI in schools has channelled linguistic capital, English, unevenly towards the English medium (EM) and Punjabi medium (PM) school students. The root cause of this stratification appears to be the language policy used in the Indian Education system, which unequally distributes English, the most aspired language, between the two types of schools. I believe this needs to be changed to meet the demands of the time in a globalised world.

2.3. Languages taught in schools in different states in India

English and Hindi are the most frequently offered languages in schools in all 29 states and 7 union territories in India (Ramanujam, 2011). However, all states in India vary in terms of the grades in which the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) is introduced in schools. For example, 23 states at the primary level, 27 states offer ESL at the upper primary level, and 21 states at the secondary level of school (Ramanujam, 2011). Before moving on to provide a detailed account of India’s Language in Education Policy, the Three Language Formula (Government of India, 1968), it is important to give a brief demographic overview of the Punjab state concerning the use of English as a second language and EMI in education.

2.4. Punjab state’s educational demography and the position of English in education

Punjab is a modest size state on the north western border of the country with a population of 27.7 million (Government of India, 2011). It is also the most prosperous and developed state with the lowest poverty rate (The World Bank, 2004).
With 76.7 percent total literacy, Punjab ranks 21st among the states of India (Government of India, 2011). In ‘22,924 government schools, 27.05 hundred thousand students are enrolled. In 24,127 Private schools, 28.44 hundred thousand students are enrolled. In 47051 total schools (government and private) of Punjab, 55.49 hundred thousand students are enrolled.’ (Singh, 2015, p. 3). This data shows that the number of private schools and enrolment in these schools in Punjab is more than the government schools. Research also highlights the weak performance of government school students at all levels as compared to their counterparts in private schools in Punjab. For example, a significant difference was found in the English speaking and writing performance of students from English medium and Punjabi medium schools in three different districts in Punjab (Rani & Thakar, 2015). Various factors such as poor quality of education and a high pupil-teacher ratio add to this situation in the government schools (Punjabi medium) in Punjab. For this reason, a great number of Punjabis prefer their children to learn in English medium private schools (Singh, 2006).
In the linguistic context of Punjab, every literate Punjabi becomes trilingual because he/she learns Punjabi as mother language, Hindi as national language and English as foreign language. As has been discussed above, English has attained a significant position in the educational and social life of people in India and this is no different for the people of the state of Punjab. People in Punjab hold a positive attitude towards English because of its instrumental (for purposes like attaining a good occupation) and integrative (for integration with people who speak in English) value particularly in the work place (Rani & Thakar, 2014). There is no doubt that Punjabis like to relate themselves to their culture and language but at the same time they do not want to be left behind when it comes to learning English which can endow them with socioeconomic advantages.

The education system in Punjab follows the national education structure (discussed in detail in Section 2.6) which comprises of 10 years of school education, 2 years of college and 3 years of education in university. After 10th grade some students join Industrial Training Institutes (ITI’s) or Polytechnics for two-year diploma level courses which are equivalent to 10+2 (12th grade). In Punjab, English is taught as a subject in government schools from 1st grade onwards (it used to be taught from 6th grade) and is the MOI in most of the private schools (Chakraborty & Kapur, 2016). At present, English in Punjab is offered as a second language at all the levels of school education: primary, elementary and secondary school (Ramanujam, 2011).

There are mainly three types of school which provide access to education to citizens of the state, i.e. Government, Government aided and private schools (Singh, 2015). However, access to English which is obtained mainly through formal school education is unequally distributed in different types of schools: in some schools English is taught as a foreign language subject and in others it is the MOI. This becomes a matter of concern and adds to the problems of those who cannot access English medium schools for various reasons. Some of the factors that influence students’ access to English MOI schools revealed in the research conducted in Punjab are: the area of residence (most of the
English medium schools are located in and around urban areas; parents’ income and English language skills (English medium schools charge high fee); and people’s attitude towards English which can have an impact on their motivation to learn English (Gill, 2017; Singh, 2015; Singh, 2006). English in Punjab is considered as a language of science and technology and therefore, parallel to many other states English has become the most preferred language in Punjab in higher education. This attitude of the people in Punjab is evident in the research conducted by Singh (2006). He revealed that the participants of his study (university students) wanted to graduate in English because it was the language of opportunities and above all ‘it was liked in the society’ (p. 34).

Having discussed the position that the English language has held for more than two centuries in India and the importance it has been given in the education in India and in society in Punjab, attention now turns to language policy in education in India.

2.5. Three Language Formula (TLF) and its implementation in India

From a policy perspective, too many languages can be a burden for language planning and education (Mohanty, 2010). This seems to be true in the case of the multilingual Indian context. The great significance of English, the foreign language, and a wide range of local languages in independent India has increased difficulties in accomplishment of the challenging task of framing a language policy in education (Chakraborty & Kapur, 2016; Evans, 2002; Groff, 2016; Mohanty, 2010; Ramanujam, 2011). The language in education policy in India, Three Language Formula (Government of India, 1968b) did not happen overnight but was the result of many debates in colonial and post-colonial India between two groups, the Orientalists and Anglicists. According to Spolsky (2009), language policy construction is one of the most significant approaches through which societal ideologies regarding a particular language turn into practice. Similarly, scholars such as Lo Bianco (1990) and Lambert (1999) emphasised that no language could simply attain a prominent status of being chosen as a language for education or MOI but is often the result of conscious decision and intervention on the societal level. This notion is
evidenced in the formation of Three Language Formula (TLF) policy in India. Although English language teaching in colonial India was deeply interwoven with the discourses of colonialism (Pennycook, 1998a) used by social reformers and the political leaders, the significance of English as a global language was not overlooked after independence.

After serious discussions and the debates on languages to be included in the national language policy, Three Language Formula (TLF henceforth) was devised by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) 1957, approved by chief ministers of all states at a conference held in 1961 and was incorporated into the National Policy on Education in 1968 (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). TLF, as the name suggests, aimed at three languages being used in schools. Under it, pupils must learn the mother tongue AND/OR state/regional language; the official language, Hindi; and the associate official language, English (Government of India, 1968b). Language education in most of the states in India is based on the principle of the Three Language Formula.

Tollefson (1991) defines language policy as a ‘mechanism by which dominant groups establish hegemony in language use’ (p.16). All 29 states and 7 union territories in India have authority over their education policy. Therefore, influenced by the hegemonic regional and political ideologies of the state administrators and the beliefs of local people of the state, all the states in India interpret and implement TLF in different ways (Chakrabarty & Kapur, 2016). In practice, TLF language policy has been adopted by the school administrators in two different ways: most of the government schools teach English as a foreign language subject and the majority of the private schools have adopted English as the MOI. Additionally, the grade at which English is taught as a foreign language in schools varies across states and schools (Chakrabarty & Kapur, 2016).

### 2.5.1. Impracticability of the Three Language Formula

As discussed earlier in Section 2.2.2., according to the Article 343 of the Indian Constitution, the English language in education was to be replaced with Hindi after 15 years of its implementation (The Government of India, 1950).
However, the provision for the development of languages using the TLF, which includes the English language, was found by the Indian government to be so effective that after more than 15 years of its implementation, no changes were made to it (Government of India, 1986, p. 27). The TLF, however, did not escape controversy perhaps because of multilingualism in India. Adding to this problem is the trend of English, the global language, being considered as a language of power in India. Some Indian scholars criticised TLF by describing it not as an official language policy but as a strategy used across India to support Indians in becoming multilingual to socialise and communicate at three different levels: regional, national and international (Devi, 2017; Pattanayak, 1990). Furthermore, Rao (2014) criticized the TLF by saying that it was introduced at the time when, along with several other vernacular languages, the ‘systematic decline of the classical languages of the day: Sanskrit and Arabic’ commenced (p. 65).

With regard to the introduction of the TLF policy in India, NCERT\(^6\) (2000) pointed out that ‘even about four decades after the formulation of ‘Three Language Formula’, it is yet to be effectively implemented in true spirit’ (p. 31). This is due to the fact that, since the TLF is viewed as a strategy not an official policy, every state has interpreted it differently to meet their social, cultural and political needs (Devi, 2017). The TLF, therefore, is not evenly implemented in all Indian states. There are some states where mother tongue is different to the regional language of the state. Therefore, the students there have to learn their mother tongue as well as the state language when this is other than Hindi, the national language and English, the foreign language. Thus, in those states, the TLF becomes a four-language formula while in some other states such as Tamil Nadu (a non-Hindi speaking state) only two languages are taught: the state language and English the foreign language.

\(^6\)An organisation to assist the government in matters associated with school education.
Additionally, individual states in India are authorised to decide at what stage of school English language will be introduced (Ministry of Education, 1957). Thus, variations in terms of the grades or age when students get to learn English exist both at the state level and school level in every state (Tickoo, 1996). More recently, most states have introduced English as a foreign language from 1st grade onwards, i.e. in the earliest year of schooling (Dutta & Bala, 2012). Thus, in schools in those states, students get a much longer period of exposure to English in comparison to the students in schools in some other states where English is taught from 6th grade onwards. Furthermore, influenced by local people’s and political leaders’ ideologies in some states in India, English is used as a medium of instruction in government schools, for example in Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland (Modi, 2015). In many other states, however, EMI is accessible only in private schools (Asadullah & Yalonetzky, 2012). The TLF thus seems to exist only in policy documents but not completely in practice. With regard to English teaching as a foreign language or English as MOI in Punjab, the Punjab government has recently introduced English teaching from 1st grade in government schools which had previously introduced it from 6th grade onwards and EMI predominates in private schools. It is important to note that the government high school student participants in this study started learning English from 6th grade.

Furthermore, Mallikarjun (2001) states that the TLF requirement for English to be taught as a foreign language seems to be honoured as an ‘ideal but its implementation is always half-hearted’ (Mallikarjun, 2001, p. 5). Stressing the significance of EMI, Mallikarjun (2001) questions whether mother tongue or state language, in which most of the school education is delivered, is the best medium of instruction. Mallikarjun (2001, p.6) calls the use of mother tongue or state language as a medium of instruction as the ‘parroting’ of this (the use of mother tongues as MOI) notion, which, according to him, does not reflect the aspirations of people but the ideologies of the politicians. Emphasising the use of EMI, Mallikarjun (2001) asserts that for students to acquire competence in English, the language most aspired to by people in India, English must be
used as a language of instruction. Reporting the parents’ perception, he states that ‘English sells’ because of its market value as the global language. This is why, according to Mallikarjun (2001) most adults and especially parents want children to get their education from English medium schools. This seems to be relevant, considering that English, the language which was initially accepted to be used as MOI in higher education, has made its way into the Indian sociocultural context as it is widely spoken there and looked on as the lingua franca in multilingual India (Ramanathan, 2008).

Further detailed information about the structure of the education system in India is given in the section below.

2.6. Structure of the education system in India (public/private)

NCERT (2006a) has segmented the Indian school education system on three different levels:

1. by means of level of education. School education is organised into three stages: primary (1st to 5th grade); elementary/upper primary (6th to 8th grade); and secondary/high (9th to 10th grade);
2. by means of ownership of schools. Schools are owned by the government or are privately-owned; and
3. by means of education board’s affiliation. Schools are governed and organised by different boards, for example, Central boards: ICSE (Indian Certificate of School Education) and CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education). Further to that, every state has its own education board, for example, PSEB (Punjab School Education Board) in Punjab. This is discussed in detail in the following paragraphs. Figure 2 below illustrates the education structure in India.

___________________________

7 School governing bodies.
In order to strengthen the Indian education system, the Indian government adopted an education policy in 1986 which marked a significant step in the history of education in post-independence India (Cheney et al., 2005). It involved the reconstruction of the education system and an expansion of educational facilities to provide all levels of education to urban and rural parts of the country. The acceptance of a common structure of education throughout the country and the introduction of a 10+2+3 system in all states were perhaps the most notable developments in the educational context (Government of India, 1992). The numbers 10, 2 and 3 denote the number of years at different stages in education. In the first stage, 10 years is the minimum number of years required to complete general school education. These 10 years are broken up into 5 years of primary school, 3 years of elementary/upper primary school and 2 years of high/secondary school. At the end of 10 years a child takes a
secondary school certificate examination (Vyas, 2012). In the second stage, 2 more years are completed to get a Senior Secondary Certificate from school/college. The third stage involves 3 years of undergraduate university courses to obtain a degree (Vyas, 2012). The higher education system consists of Central Universities, State Universities and Open Universities established by the State Legislature.

With regard to the 10+2+3 structure of education, Vyas (2005) affirms that for the first-time a uniform pattern of education as set out in Figure 3 below was introduced nationally, instead of different states following different systems. It is important to note however that, although the same pattern of education is followed by all states, the quality of instruction varies widely from school to school and state to state, depending on the language used as a MOI and also whether the school is the government school or a fee-based private school (Cheney et al., 2005).

*Figure 3: Segmentation of Indian school system by means of level of education (adapted from British Council 2014).*
2.7. Types of schools in India

Schools in India are categorised into four main groups based on the ownership and administrative bodies of schools: government, local body, private aided and private unaided schools as follows:

- **A Government School** is one which is run by the State Government or Central Government or Public Sector Undertaking or an Autonomous Organisation completely financed by the Government.

- **A Local Body School** is one which is run by a Panchayati Raj and a local body institution such as Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporation, Municipal Committee, Notified Area Committee or a Cantonment Board.

- **A Private Aided School** is one which is run by an individual or a private organisation and receives a grant from the government or a local body.

- **A Private Unaided School** is one which is managed by an individual or a private organisation and does not receive any grant either from the government or a local body.

(NCERT, 2006a).

All the government schools are officially recognised by either the state government or central government and all the other three types of school are not required to be recognised by any such official body. These schools vary not only in respect to whether they are officially recognised by the government but also in terms of the type of school management, the language used as a medium of instruction, the quality of education and their affiliation to the education boards.
2.8. General differences between government and private schools

Having different education boards\(^8\) operating with diverse systems of education, which vary from state to state and school to school in terms of language teaching and learning, has given rise to a complex education system in India comprising regional language medium (government) and English medium (private) schools, (Mohanty, 2010). As English is used as a medium of instruction in private schools, in comparison to government schools, these schools offer more instruction in English. Based on the difference in the distribution of English language: English taught as a subject in government school and English used for instruction in private school, people tend to make assumptions about the quality of education children receive in both types of schools. With regard to the differences between private and government schools Summiya Yasmeen, a reporter for India Together cited in Cheney, Ruzzi and Muralidharan (2005), calls the English medium private schools ‘five star’ schools and the government schools ‘shabby’ and ‘poorly managed’ schools providing dubious quality language education to the majority of children from poorer socio-economic classes.

There is also a huge difference between the tuition fees charged by different types of schools. High fees are charged by private schools and in the government schools the tuition fees are either low or not required at all (Mohanty 2006). The privileged social class therefore educates its children in private schools while the financially disadvantaged people opt for government schools, as is the case in similar post-colonial contexts (McKay, 2002). In this way, English medium private schools are certainly associated with cultural and linguistic capital in Bourdieu’s terms (1977, 1991), and are valued much more than the state-run regional language medium schools. Further, the positive attitude and home-based support for English has given the English-medium

\(^8\) school governing bodies.
students added advantages that perpetuate the class-based bias of being an English-medium school student (Dua, 1994). The existing social inequality which is embedded in the Indian context has consequently been widened by the unequal access to English.

2.9. Problematising English and EMI in India

Recognising the significance of English as a global language, it has been given a privileged position in the Indian education language policy, TLF, (discussed earlier), and is therefore taught as a foreign language in most of the government schools in different states in India. Moreover, it is noteworthy that in the National Policy on Education English was given a privileged position over regional languages and it was recommended that English should be used as a compulsory language and as a medium of instruction at university stage:

English will continue to enjoy a high status so long as it remains the principal medium of education at the university stage, and the language of administration at the Central Government and in many of the states. Even after the regional languages become media of higher education in the universities, a working knowledge of English will be a valuable asset for all students and a reasonable proficiency in the language will be necessary for those who proceed to the university.

(Government of India, 1986)

Notwithstanding the Ministry of Education’s expectation that regional languages would take the place of English in higher education, English has become well established in the Indian education system to the extent that it is undermining the position of Hindi, the national language and other regional languages (Mohanty, 2010), and it continues to occupy this position (Berry, 2013; Das, 2007; Faust & Nagar, 2001; Kaur & Bhangu, 2015; Sindkhedkar, 2012). The evidence of hegemonic ideologies about the significance of English can be found in the Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu, a non-Hindi state, as they strongly opposed the imposition of Hindi language in the state (Vulli,
Therefore, this particular state and Andhra Pradesh, another state in India, did not adopt the TLF and only two languages, the state language and English, are taught in schools. Thus, to deny Hindi, the national language, which should be the natural choice, and to accept English, the foreign language indicates the self-imposed hegemony of English in some states in India. With regard to this, Agnihotri & Khanna (1997b) emphasised that ‘English was more acceptable anywhere in India than Hindi’ (p. 118) because of its significance as a language of wider opportunities rather than its association with the colonial rule.

In postcolonial India in the 1970s, English was closely associated with prestige together with its instrumental value as it was thought to be the key not only to better jobs and social mobility but also to power and prestige in society (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b, p. 118). One possible reason for this could be that English was the language of the rulers (British) even after they left India, so their language was linked to their power as rulers and thus considered to be superior. However, it is important to note that English nowadays is not viewed as a language of power because it is the colonial legacy in India. Rather, English is viewed as an influential language in comparison to other languages in India and even more than Hindi the national language because English is a global language and is valued for its ability to extend communicative power (Crystal, 2005). This insight is based on the fact that learning in English in India is perceived as a pathway to success.

To be more precise, the knowledge of English in India is obligatory to access higher education in prestigious colleges and universities (Banerjee, 2016; Berry, 2013); to study abroad (Akram & Ghani, 2013; Bhattacharya, 2016; Dearden, 2014); for jobs in multinational companies (Canagarajah, 2016; Cowie, 2007; Kumari, 2016a; Sandhu, 2010); for socioeconomic development (Banerjee, 2016; Evans, 2002; Ramanathan, 2006b; Vaish, 2008); and, last but not the least, for higher social status in India (Banerjee, 2016; LaDousa, 2006; Pennycook, 1999a; Sandhu, 2010; Tully, 1997b). English as lingua franca has helped to unite the country and played a great role in bringing unity
in diversity in multilingual India. Thus, English in present day India is not perceived as the cause of insecurity to national, cultural and ethnic identity of Indians but is enjoying a prestigious position in the country, in comparison to other Indian languages (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). English as the language of power and prestige continues to work as a gatekeeper to social and economic progress in present-day India (Butler, 2013).

Another significant reason for the preference of English over the regional languages in India is its association with a person’s social identity. Nowadays, English is much more than a certificate for good employment and higher education in India as it has become ‘a major category of identity in North India’ (LaDousa, 2006, p. 36), and in many other postcolonial contexts (Gu, 2010; Jeong & Lee, 2014; MacPherson, 2005; Tsui & Ngo, 2017). Language used as the MOI is not confined to schooling in India but has become an important discursive aspect in society that denotes people’s identity. For example, English used as the MOI in India is employed in societal discourses as a medium to divide people into two groups: people educated in English and those who are not. This classification is what people (students) use to construct their and others’ identity by imagining their future possible selves (Hegde, 2016; Stevenson & Clegg, 2011). The empirical studies discussed in the literature review given in the next chapter highlight the widespread prominence of English as a symbol of social prestige that can lead to the development of ‘complexes’ among the students who lack learning in English in school (see Ramanathan, 2005). Learning in English which leads to wealthy and elite lifestyles in India and thus English viewed as the language of Indian elites (Annamalai, 2004; Sandhu, 2015), is further associated with higher social status and elitism in India and has re-formed English as almost another Indian language (Pennycook, 2004).

Mohanty (2009) assert that in India children aged 7 to 9 years are aware of the higher social status of English vis a vis the regional language or their mother tongue. The higher social status associated with EMI in India (Kingdon, 1996) thus has serious implications for those who get or those who do not get an
opportunity to learn in English (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b). Since many advantages are conferred upon those who learn in English, English is today the most desired language of every child and parent in India (Evans, Jones, Rusmin, & Cheung, 1998; Mohanty, 2010; Ramanujam, 2011).

This perceived superiority of English and the advantages offered by learning in English, such as more opportunities for employment, have increased people’s aspirations to educate their children in private schools (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1997b; NDTV, 2015). School is the only place where children get a chance to learn English as they do not have access or have little access to English outside the school (Gupta, 1997). This is the reason that, despite soaring costs, many parents in India enrol their children in private English medium schools (Cheney et al., 2005; Gill, 2017). Although English MOI in schools in India is considered to have been introduced under Macaulay’s minute of education (1957) to generate a class of clerks who could work for the British empire, the increase in the number of English medium schools in present day India is far more than it was during the British rule. The necessity to learn English in India has augmented the opening of a number of private schools where English is used as a medium of instruction, hence, private schools in India is a growing phenomenon (Singh, 2015; Vulli, 2014). This, however, has not happened under the pressure of political leaders or government but because of the societal discourses and ideologies in favour of the advantages of learning in English. Due to the globalisation of many sectors of employment where knowledge of English is necessary, there is a huge demand by parents and current political leaders to introduce English as a medium of instruction in all the schools (Harma, 2011; Hengsadeekul et al., 2014; NDTV, 2015). Parental preference for English over Punjabi, and societal discourses about the superiority of English in Punjab, as echoed in numerous studies (Ghuman, 2006; Rani et al., 2014; Singh, 2006; The World Bank, 2004), seems to have had a great influence on the Punjab Education Board which is on its way to introducing English MOI in 400 government schools in Punjab (Singh, 2017).
Looking at the increasing significance of English in India, Graddol's (1999) claim that the changing international status of English will, in the future, make it ‘a language used mainly in multilingual contexts as a second language and for communication between non-native speakers’ seems to have proved true in the contemporary Indian context. According to the 2001 census, 125 million Indians spoke English. The details of the total number of people speaking different languages, at that time, Hindi and English is given in Section 2.2.

Despite the high number of Indian people speaking English, only ‘a fraction of the Indian population has high fluency in English’ (Sandhu, 2010). The widespread use of English is mainly found in urban centres in India. Bangalore City, for example, has been extremely successful in producing proficient English speakers (Canagarajah, 2016). Nonetheless, in some areas in India, access to English medium education is limited (Ramanathan, 2005a). Although demand for it is high, access to quality English language instruction is out of reach for many children (Canagarajah, 2007; Ramanathan, 2005b). Knowledge of the English language, therefore, on the one hand, opens doors to social mobility and economic progress, whilst on the other hand, it makes various domains more inaccessible to the linguistically disadvantaged (Manh, 2012) because access to these fields is tightly bound to English. These people, especially the students, will subsequently be unable to compete for jobs on an equal level with their counterparts who are fluent in English. Therefore, in the absence of a uniform school system, and with the significant increase and dominance of English medium private schools, the language scenario in the Indian education system is chaotic. This has also had a negative effect on mother tongues and pushed learning in schools in English, the dominant language (Mohanty, 2010).

The sociolinguistic heterogeneity in India language (Mohanty, 2010), and the language-based differences in private and government schools result in varying levels of proficiency in the language used by the students in educational and social contexts (Dearden, 2014). Therefore, the differences in the language used as a medium of instruction in schools lead to inequality of
status, power and opportunities for the language users as well as the languages themselves. Such disparities can also be the cause of social disintegration and divisiveness (Ramanathan, 2005a) that can impact the linguistic identities of children. Consequently, lack of knowledge of the English language creates significant differences between the children who study in the regional language schools and their counterparts who have the chance to learn in English medium schools in India (Ramanathan, 2003; Sandhu, 2010, 2014a; Vulli, 2014). This is how power relations come into play and power relations, as illustrated by Peirce (1995) play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners (PM school students) and the speakers of the target language (in this case EM school students). This, in turn, may have negative impact on PM school students’ identity formation when they think about themselves and their future possible selves in comparison to the EM school students in Punjab.

Despite the adoption of EMI for the purpose of the educational and social development of countries, it remains a fact that EMI has also led to various issues, especially in contexts like India where not everyone has access to EMI due to its provision through private schools that are not affordable to all. Although the governments of a few states in India have addressed EMI implementation problems in schools by introducing EMI in government schools (which charge low fees), this remains an issue in many states, such as Punjab, Himachal and Haryana. In these states, efforts have been made to start teaching English as a second language by grade 1, in practice however the implementation of this varies across different states in India (Cheney et al., 2005).

Due to globalisation, English plays a dominant role as an international language and it has been accepted as a language of instruction in educational settings in most countries, including postcolonial countries such as India, Hongkong and Bangladesh. This is why most studies investigating language used as MOI focus on EMI, which is now a global phenomenon in educational settings (Dearden, 2014). English has been adopted as the language of higher
education in various countries for many context-dependent reasons: the higher social status of English as an international language; English providing access to good occupations; and the widespread use of English in science and technology (Dearden, 2014). This trend of EMI has now become common in school education in many countries, including India. The multilingual context of India, where only a few languages have official recognition and the limited access to English, the dominant language, creates a divisive educational and social environment, provides a rich field to investigate problems associated with language and identity.

2.10. Summary

This chapter has presented the Indian educational context and has highlighted the significance of English as a MOI in schools in India. A brief history of English from colonial India to date is presented followed by a detailed description of language in education policy, TLF, in India together with the structure of the education system and the types of schools has been given. In the last section of the chapter, the use of EMI in India is problematized to indicate the impact of getting or not getting a chance to learn in EMI on students.

My aim in this chapter was to provide a reader with the detailed information about the context in which the present study was carried out. Before explaining the significance of my study with regards to filling the gap in research and explaining how this study contributes to knowledge, it is necessary to review the empirical studies conducted in the field of language as a MOI in relation to identity.

The next chapter, the literature review, has been divided into two parts. The first part will present the theoretical framework I applied in this study followed in the second part by the critical analysis of the empirical studies conducted in different geographical contexts including India.
Chapter 3: Theoretical framework and Literature review

3.1. Introduction

It was explained in the previous chapter that India is a post-colonial country which has designated English as a second language and that, in the Indian Constitution, English has been given the same status as Hindi (the national language). Given the advantages of English in education, employment, and social status in India, the English MOI which has been introduced in particular into private schools in India, has created discrepancies between those who get the opportunity to learn in these high fee private schools and those who do not (Annamalai, 2004; Bhattacharya, 2013; Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 2005a; Ramanujam, 2011; Rao, 2014; Sandhu, 2010; Tickoo, 1993; Tully, 1997b; Vulli, 2014). It is against this background that I reviewed the literature, keeping in mind English as a foreign language and the language used as the medium of instruction in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts.

The literature review chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, a thorough discussion is presented of varied perspectives on identity in different disciplines and, in particular, in the poststructuralist movement that principally informed this study. Along with this, other factors that influence an individual's identity formation which have been reviewed in the literature on identity are discussed. In the second section, the empirical studies on English as a MOI in relation to identity formation are discussed. Beginning with a general conceptualisation of identity, I go on to discuss perspectives on identity formation from the different disciplines of psychology, social psychology and sociology. Before introducing key concepts from the poststructuralist approach to identity and empirical studies on language, in particular, those concerned with English medium of instruction (EMI) and identity formation. This enables me to review the key characteristics of identity formation as it is understood and applied to the data analysis in this study.
3.2. What is identity?

Identity in everyday discourse is often given as the spontaneous answer to the question ‘who am I?’, or ‘who am I as a member of a group?’ An individual considers the answer to the question ‘who am I?’ to relate to his/her personal identity, and when a person answers this question in relation to others in a society or group this is viewed as an individual's social identity. However, the answer to the second question i.e. ‘who am I as a member of a group?’, can vary depending on the context the person is in; therefore, a person can have multiple identities contingent on the specific context (McKay & Wong, 1996). In general, therefore, identity refers to the characteristics that define who a person is (Oyserman et al., 2012) and this is an individualistic perspective to differentiate self from other, and vice versa, depending on the given context. In the social sciences, contemporary scholars’ conceptualisation of identity formation has shifted away from individual identity to social identity embedded in a context (see Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2006; Block, 2007; Norton, 2000). Thus, identity formation, which was considered as a static phenomenon for decades, is now viewed as a fluid process (Howard, 2000; Norton, 2016b).

Identity is a topic of interest among scholars across the social sciences. Publications on identity have been reported to begin with Erikson’s work on identity in 1950 and the number of scholarly works has dramatically increased since 2000 (see Vignoles, 2011). In the last few decades, there has been a plethora of research on identity and language learning (Block, 2007; Côté, 1996; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Duff, 2002; Eliason, 1996; Gorringe, 2016; Hall, 1997; MacPherson, 2005; Norton, 2010b; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Stets & Burke, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 2005; Ushioda, 2016). According to Norton (2011), ‘identity now features in most encyclopaedias and handbooks of language learning and teaching’ (p. 413). Most of the research on language and identity formation largely focuses on second language learning (SLL) (Block, 2007; Hennig, 2010; Krashen & Gingras, 1978; Ricento, 2005) and identity in diasporic contexts (Abraham, 2014; Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2006; Hennig, 2010). This orientation, however, ignores the learning of a foreign
language in the learner’s home country and the impact of this on one’s identity formation. Recognising this, in the last two decades, a number of scholars from applied linguistics have drawn on a poststructuralist perspective of identity which depicts identity as a site of struggle and fluidity, in opposition to the structuralist view that identity is static. They have carried out research in particular in contexts where English is a colonial legacy and is now taught as a foreign or second language in educational settings (McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Ricento, 2005).

Despite the intense scholarly interest in the concept of identity formation, the definition of identity remains unclear. Identity is ‘not a finished product’ (Bhabha 1994, p. 51); it is multifaceted and always in process (Hall, 1990) and therefore it is difficult to provide a definition of identity that reflects the range of its context based present meanings. Due to the vast range of individual and social characteristics that can be ascribed to determine a person’s identity, identity formation is a complex process. These characteristics range from biological features, such as ‘race and colour’, to other social and cultural aspects such as the gender, ethnicity, culture, nationality and language of a person (Block, 2015). In the research on language learning in the 1970s and 1980s, the identities of language learners were conceptualised as their ‘fixed personalities’ (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 419). In stark contrast, the poststructuralist approach to identity formation sees it as a product of the social conditions under which it has developed. Identities, therefore, are conceived by post-structuralists as ‘fluid, context-dependent and context-producing’ (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 419). Nevertheless, the joint association of all other previously mentioned multiple categories of identity – race, gender, class, ethnicity etc., often referred to as intersectionality – are implicated in the negotiation of a language learner’s identity. As per the concept of intersectionality, all individual and social categories such as class, race, language are difficult to separate as they are often experienced simultaneously, and therefore jointly shape human experiences and identity (Crenshaw, 1994).
Recognising the broad range of factors (gender, race, language etc) shaping identities, scholars from various corners of the globe with backgrounds in diverse disciplines (psychology, social psychology and sociology), have put forward a variety of perspectives on individual’s identity formation. Consequently, the term identity has been used to refer to different things: an individual’s personal understanding of their development (Erikson, 1950; Marcia, 1966; Schwartz & Schwartz, 2017); the components of identity negotiated through group membership (Tajfel, 1978); discursive perspectives of identity constituted by social processes (Bourdieu, 1992); and identity formation through second language learning (SLL) and discourses about language (Bakhtin, 1981; Gee, 2008; Norton, 2016c; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2006). Many researchers into SLL using applied linguistics (Gee, 2008; Norton, 2011; Pavlenko, 2002a; Pennycook, 2004) have adopted a poststructuralist view of identity formation, highlighting relations of power in discourse and conceptualising identity as fluid and multiple in nature (Norton, 2011; Pavlenko, 2002b). This particular perspective has become popular among many social scientists today.

In short, the complex concept of identity and/or identity formation has been studied from a psychologist’s standpoint (Erikson, 1950; Marcia, 1980); from a social psychologist’s perspective (Cote & Levine, 2014; Howard, 2000; Stets & Burke, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000); from a sociologist’s point of view (Bourdieu, 1992; Hall, 1990, 1997); and in applied linguistics (Bucholtz & Hall, 2007; Canagarajah, 1999a; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2006; Pennycook, 1998b). The idea of identity formation has thus evolved over the years through different disciplines.

These researchers from different disciplines have developed different understandings of the concept of identity. Identity, therefore, has many meanings contingent upon the particular analytical lens used to explore it (Gee, 2008). Thus, in order to understand the contemporary view that identity is not a fixed attribute, but rather an ongoing process in the way a person views him/herself and/or is viewed depending on the context the person is in, we
must examine the process of identity formation from these different perspectives.

In seeking to gain a clear understanding of the impact of language on an individual’s identity, the following section therefore elucidates the process of identity formation from the perspective of scholars in the main disciplines in the social sciences (psychology, social psychology and sociology) and across theoretical traditions such as structuralism and post-structuralism which have informed much of the literature on the concept of identity in language education. Although these disciplines vary in historical origins and in their fundamental ideas about the nature of identity, they overlap. Considering the multiple definitions of identity that currently exist in the literature, it is difficult to develop a full understanding of the term identity and the process of identity formation. Hence, it is necessary to consider the development of the concept of identity formation across a broad spectrum of disciplines.

3.3. Overview of identity theories in different disciplines and related concepts

3.3.1. Psychological perspective
To begin with the psychological approach to identity formation, Erikson (1950), one of the pioneer thinkers on identity in the 20th century, conceptualised identity as a developmental process. Erikson classified the human lifespan into eight stages. According to him, adolescence (13-19 years), the sixth stage, is a time of great change for an individual. At this stage, with the transition to middle or high school, new expectations concerning social and academic adjustment arise and individuals recognise their individuality and focus on self-development. They begin to pay attention to future goals and career prospects and start making choices (Erikson, 1950) and, as a result, the process of identity formation begins. The self-consciousness that arises at this stage of life initiates questions like ‘who am I?’ and ‘how am I viewed by the larger society?’ which can have profound implications for the individual and gives rise to various conflicts in a person’s identity, which Erikson refers to as ‘identity
crises’ (Erikson, 1968). In this regard therefore, Erikson conceptualises identity formation as a developmental process that involves the sense of who we are and how we are viewed by others.

Discussing the development of identity at different stages of life, Erikson does not discount the social and cultural influences on an individual and his/her identity formation (Cote & Levine, 1988). Erikson does, however, distinguish between the intrapsychic (internal) and environmental (external) focus on individual identity formation. An intrapsychic approach is a psychological approach that focuses on how a person thinks about him/herself. The environmental focus, however, is a sociological approach that concentrates on understanding the part played by the surroundings that could impact an individual’s identity. In short, according to Erikson, an individual’s identity is embedded in self as well as in his/her social context. Identity from the psychological perspective is therefore viewed in terms of an individual’s personal reflections on him/herself and the external influence on the process of identity formation. Following Erikson (1950), numerous other thinkers (e.g. Hoof, 1999; Kroger, 2007; Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1982) have focused on the developmental aspects of identity formation in adolescence.

Although Erikson’s theory of identity development has been drawn upon extensively in research in the area of language and identity formation in several disciplines of social science, namely psychology, social psychology and sociology, it has also been critiqued for several reasons. Whitbourne, Sneed, & Sayer (2009) argue that life decisions are influenced significantly by racial concerns and that, because of this, race and ethnic identities are equally important to whites and non-whites and should be taken into account both theoretically and empirically. Erikson, in his classification of the stages of life, focuses mainly on psychoanalysis and fails to represent ethnic and cultural identities and therefore excludes the non-white population. Hence, bearing in mind the US Census’ (2009) projections of the increasing number of minorities in the US, and considering that in 2050 most of the US population will not be white people, Whitbourne, Sneed, & Sayer (2009) question the degree to
which Erikson’s identity theory will be useful as the 21st century progresses. Several initial steps towards integrating ethnic developmental theories with Erikson’s identity theory began in the twentieth century. In many empirical studies, ethnic identification has been included as a component of identity development to explore ethnic identity formation and development in adolescents and young adults (see Block, 2007; Howard, 2000; Norton, 2000; Rumbaut, 1994).

Erikson is further criticised for focussing mainly on the adolescent stage of life and an individual’s identity formation, and for paying little attention to identity development in person’s childhood, the stage which leads to adolescent age, and adulthood, the stage followed by adolescent age (Alan S. Waterman, 1988). Childhood is the period during which the development of an individual’s identity begins, therefore an individual’s identity development process is a synthesis of their childhood skills and beliefs which provides direction to the future stages of life and enables the individual’s identity to evolve throughout adolescence and into adulthood (Whitbourne et al., 2009). Waterman (1988) argues that Erikson’s identity theory emphasises vocational identity at the adolescent stage of life, that is at the college-going age, and when Erikson wrote about identity development at that time attending college was not as common as it is today. These criticisms therefore have implications for how Erikson’s theory of identity development is applied to research today.

Although it has been argued that Erikson’s theory of identity development is not very clear regarding the process of identity development at different stages of life, we are indebted to Erikson for his work which has stimulated research on this intriguing topic. Erikson will no doubt be remembered as an original thinker on identity who provided a valuable conceptual framework for understanding the development of an individual’s personal identity. Contemporary scholars, however, doubt that Erikson’s ideas, which focus mainly on the psychological domain of an individual’s development and do not include discussion of social psychological and sociological perspectives, will continue to influence research in years to come (Fleming, 2004).
Borrowing from Erikson’s identity theory, many psychologists understand identity formation as a process of exploring one’s own thoughts, and identities are thus cognitively constructed. Scholars such as Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012) refer to these developmental thoughts as mental constructs that begin at the early stage of an individual’s life, as early as 12 to 18 months. They cite instances of infants removing smudges of paint from their foreheads after seeing their mirror image. This reflects their image-based self-recognition, which occurs due to the visual image stored in their memory. Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012) looked at the role played by individual cognition – the individual’s thoughts and imagination – in the process of identity formation. In fact, much of the literature on identity formation in educational psychology focuses on cognitive theories and concepts such as attitude (Bekerman, 2005; Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Howard, 2000), self-competence (Jeong & Lee, 2014; McElhinney, 2008), self-esteem (Hancock, 2006; Rumbaut, 1994; Stets & Burke, 2003) and evaluative judgements (Jaspal, 2009; Varela, 1997). For example, some researchers relate the lack of English language competence among migrants to their negative self-image (McElhinney, 2008; Oyserman et al., 2002, 2012; Rumbaut, 1994; Ryan, 2006; Varghese et al., 2016). In a study conducted in the Netherlands on Turkish and Moroccan migrants, it was found that in early adolescents, peer discrimination and intergenerational discrepancies in attitude towards immigrants lowered their self-esteem (Verkuyten, 2003). Thus, in psychology, identity is associated with the individual’s cognition and capacity to address emotional issues, such as how they are similar to or different from others. The inter-relationship between cognition and emotions in identity formation has given rise to the concepts such as ‘motivation’ (Weiner, 1972) and ‘possible selves’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986)

3.3.1.1. Motivation
In the social sciences, the concept of motivation is of particular interest, with relatively long and distinguished accounts in psychology, social psychology, and applied linguistics. Importantly, researchers believe that motivation is
imperative to individuals and it has implications for the desire to achieve possible selves. Although in general psychology the concept of motivation has been used by a number of psychologists in relation to identity formation (Cinoglu & Arikan, 2012; Goffman, 1959; Oyserman et al., 2012; Vignoles, 2011), in recent years psycholinguists have tended to be more concerned about motivation in identity formation, in particular, in Second Language Learning (SLL) (Clement et al., 2006; Csizer & Dornyei, 2005; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Ushioda, 2016). According to Dornyei (2009a), an individual with remarkable abilities to learn languages cannot achieve the desired possible selves (see below) if they lack the motivation to do so. Motivation in language learning is a psychological construct that reflects the relationship between the individual's desire to learn a language, either to gain economic benefits and materialistic things (instrumental motivation), or to integrate with members of a given language community (integrative motivation) (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

While these motivational approaches to identity formation in language learning laid the groundwork for research on motivation in SLL, they were fairly static and limited in terms of acknowledging the wider perspectives on the role of context, in which relationships between persons emerge and thus shape their attitudes and identities (Ushioda, 2016). For instance, Gardner’s theory of integrative motivation is not applicable to learning contexts where the learners do not have access to native speakers in circumstances such as, for example, learning a foreign language in a classroom (Dornyei, 2009). Dornyei (2009) states that motivation is a static attribute that is the same as the concept of ‘language aptitude’, which refers to a person’s cognitive abilities.

3.3.1.2. Possible Selves

Amidst the many theories of identity, Markus’ concept of possible selves, another psychological perspective on identity formation, reflects the relationship between a person’s cognitive future image and motivation. Possible selves reflect the individual’s thoughts, where individuals consider ‘what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are
afraid of becoming’ (p. 954). Accordingly, the first type of possible self – ‘what they might become’ – refers to expected or likely selves. The second category – ‘what they would like to become’ – represents ‘hoped-for selves’ that may represent ‘the successful self, the creative self or the rich self.’ The third type – ‘what they are afraid of becoming’ – indicates the ‘feared selves’, the person they do not want to become, which may include ‘the alone self, the depressed self’ (Markus and Nurius, 1986, p. 954). Thus, possible selves include the cognitive elements of fear, hope, threat and goals, which reflect individuals’ thoughts and establish a connection between cognition and motivation. Exploration of possible selves motivates learners in decision making and enables them to shape their identities (Stevenson & Clegg, 2011).

Markus and Nurius’ (1986) possible selves influenced Dornyei’s (2009) theory of the L2 motivational self, which has three components: the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self has been widely engaged in studies on identity in SLL and foreign language learning (Dornyei, 2005; Islam, 2013; Komiyama, 2013; Moskovsky, Assulaimani, Racheva, & Harkins, 2016) and it is recognised, as characterised by the author, as: ‘a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves.’ (Dornyei 2009, p. 29).

Another motivational theory that is worth mentioning is Covington’s (1984)self-worth theory of achievement motivation, which focuses on both emotions and cognition, elements considered significant for learner achievement. According to this theory, low ability, which causes failure, can lead to low self-esteem, whilst high ability, which results in success, gives an individual a sense of self-worth. Thus, confidence in one’s ability to achieve success and to avoid failure is a vital element which increases a person’s self-worth. According to Covington (1984) the lack of confidence in one’s ability or self-worth causes feelings of worthlessness and social disapproval and can also impact how an individual articulates his/her identity, especially amongst college students. This feeling of high or low self-worth therefore is central to the students’ identity formation. There are many studies showing how low self-worth can have a
negative impact on an individual’s identity formation (Jaspal, 2009; Jeong & Lee, 2014; Rumbaut, 1994; Vignoles, 2011).

Most of the motivational theories in psychology noted above, however, are perceived as relatively static, focusing on the individual’s fixed targets that he/she wants to achieve. Thus they do not comply with the current trend of dynamic approaches to identity formation (Ushioda, 2016). To reflect the complex relationship between language learners, their target language, and ambivalent desire to speak this language, Norton (2000) in a more recent work, proposed a complementary notion, ‘investment’, which is more sociological than psychological. Investment is one of the key concepts I have drawn on for the data analysis in this study and this will be discussed in detail under the post-structuralist approach to identity in Section 3.4.

While the psychological perspective on identity strongly relates an individual’s cognitive aspects to their individual self-image, which is highly relevant to identity formation, it does not pay attention to contextual factors that can influence an individual’s identity formation. In social psychology, in order to study identity, scholars integrated the psychological components given by Erikson and other psychologists with environmental factors, emphasising the role of identities. Social psychologists thus have emphasised that, in addition to personal identity, we have a social identity that is formed by our interaction with the world around us (Cote & Levine, 2014; Hoof, 1999; Schwartz et al., 2005). Thus, from the social psychological perspective, identity is viewed as the product of an individual’s interaction in the social and cultural context and is multidimensional. While identity from the psychological perspective focuses on the answer to the question ‘who am I?’, the socio-psychological perspective aims to find out the answer to ‘who am I in relation to other groups?’

3.3.2. Social psychological perspective
While psychologists focus more on what happens inside individuals, social psychologists are orientated towards what happens in society that can have implications for an individual’s identity. Social psychologists, following Erikson’s understanding of identity formation, have focussed on roles that
people possess in society. Thus, social psychologists define identity not as an ‘autonomous psychological entity but as a multifaceted social construct that emerges from people’s roles in a society’ (Hogg et al., 1995). Instances of combining social and psychological aspects began in 1968 with Stryker, who defines identity both as a psychological entity and a social construct that arises from an individual’s multiple roles in society. The multiple roles of an individual might include, for example, wife, mother, teacher, etc. (Burke & Reitzes, 1981). He furthered this definition by crediting its development to negotiation processes resulting from social interactions, such as interpersonal interactions with family and friends.

During the same period, (Tajfel, 1978) associated the concept with society and social groups. Tajfel defines identity as ‘that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and the emotional significance attached to that membership’ (p. 63). Identity in social identity theory refers to the idea that identities cannot be constructed by individuals on their own, but instead consist of individual social group memberships as well as the ‘emotional significance’ of that membership (Tajfel, 1981). Identity is thus the result of how an individual interprets his/her relations with others. These scholars argue that the psychological implications of the immediate context in which a person operates can have a significant impact on their identity formation (Oyserman et al., 2002). It is supposed that an individual feels more secure and emotionally safe in familiar environments (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001). Thus, to overcome the vulnerability and insecurity of being in an unfamiliar environment or group, the individual strives to be part of the group. In this approach, if the individual is not satisfied with their social identity they attempt to change their group membership in order to develop the desired positive self-image or satisfactory identity (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001).

The concept of identity formation is further associated with ethnicity or ethnic groups. Arroyo and Zigler (1995) suggest ‘within’ and ‘without’ ethnic and race group attachments. Explaining the case of African American students and
maintenance of their racial identity, these scholars assert that it is the students’ desire for identity maintenance and feeling of cultural solidarity that leads to academic failure against the backdrop of their experience of discrimination and prejudice. Devaluation of one’s culture or language, which can be associated with a person’s identity, may create a psychologically threatening situation that can have negative repercussions for the person’s identity formation (Breakwell, 1986).

Social psychologists (e.g. Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Stryker, 1968) connect the intrapsychic focus adopted by psychologists and the environmental focus embraced by sociologists to extend the notion of individual identity to social identity (Hogg et al., 1995) by adding more contextually oriented elements to the identity theory that Erikson first proposed. As stated by Cote and Levine (1988), social psychologists managed to break down the wall between the intrapsychic focus adopted by psychologists and the environmental focus embraced by sociologists, thereby extending the notion of personal identity to social identity.

The social psychological approach to identity, however, has been criticised for adopting a reductionist and homogenous view of culture or language by viewing the language learners on the basis of their language, ethnicity and culture (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001). In relation to this, McDonald (1994) suggests that, while some people adhere to their own language and culture group, others may attempt to learn the outgroup language to show their resistance and to fight against the social inequality caused by the differences between the two groups.

3.3.3. The sociological perspective

Scholars adopting a sociological perspective of identity formation consider it a dynamic phenomenon with a mutual relationship between the self and the social context, whereby each one creates and forms the other (Oyserman et al., 2012). Their attention is on how groups of people function as communities and different cultures. Hence, from the sociological perspective, an individual’s identity is determined by their participation in social structures, such as social
class, religion, educational institutions, family and so on (Block, 2007). These social structures are believed to influence the individual and as well as being influenced by the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Thus, considering the socialisation process, sociologists perceive identity as the product of the social conditions under which it is developed and with which it is tightly bound up.

Sociologists not only treat the concept of identity beyond individual selves as part of a social entity, but they have further linked it to a desire for recognition and material acquisition (West, 1992). Since participation in social structures is ‘constitutive of and constituted by the social environment’ (Block, 2007, p.866), social environment may impose constraints on an individual’s desire to achieve material artefacts which is often the result of the power relations between and among individuals (Abraham, 2014; Bourdieu, 1992; Jun & Park, 2003; Sergiu, 2010). Hence, sociologists consider identity to be the product of the social conditions under which it develops and are more concerned with the distribution of resources or different kinds of capital in the negotiation of worthwhile identities (i.e. powerful identities in society) (Lin, 2008). The concept of power relations and capital has been extensively used by applied linguists taking a post-structuralist approach to identity. This approach will be discussed at length in Section 3.4.

Considering language as one of the primary means of identity formation applied linguists have in recent years drawn on other philosophical traditions such as post-structuralism to view identity, not as a fixed psychologically predetermined attribute, but as constantly shifting through interactions with others in the surroundings. Post-structuralism, a current approach to identity formation, does not reject psychologists, social psychologists, and sociologists’ understanding of identity. It does, however, extend the conceptualisation of identity and stresses that an individual’s identity is always in a process as it is influenced by the context in which an individual exists, such as his/her social, cultural and linguistic surroundings (Block, 2015; Norton, 1977; Pavlenko, 2002b). With regard to this, Cote and Levine (1987) state that, while identity formation is essentially considered as a psychological concern,
it can only be fully understood by adopting social psychological and sociological perspectives. Due to the fact that, in this study, I primarily drew on the post-structuralist perspective on identity, at this point, it is important to consider how identity formation is perceived by applied linguists in terms of post-structuralism.

3.4. The post-structuralist approach to identity

The above-mentioned diverse scholarly perspectives, which take account of personal and social characteristics such as age, cognition, social groups and language, among a host of other elements, contribute to building the perception of identity from a post-structuralist perspective. The post-structuralist understanding of identity acknowledges the cognitive aspect and social influence on an individual’s identity formation as well as emphasising the part played by discursive practices and power-relations (Block, 2007; Norton, 2000; Radford & Radford, 2005). Viewed from this perspective, identities under the influence of power relations are considered as always contested and renegotiated (Norton, 2016b). Thus, according to post-structuralists, identity is ‘socially organized, reorganized, constructed, co-constructed, and continually reconstructed through language and discourse’ (Kouhpaeenejad & Gholaminejad, 2014a, p. 200).

In the social sciences, particularly in applied linguistics, post-structuralist thinkers do not regard identity as static; rather, it is perceived as a continual process that is regularly re-moulded, for instance, through interaction with others in a given context (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001). Power relations in the social, political and cultural environment influence individuals, and therefore their identities and sense of self are not static but ‘multiple, changing, and a site of struggle’ (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

The post-structuralist perspective differs from structuralist theories of language, originating with the work of the structural linguist Saussure (1916). Focusing on language structures and patterns, Saussure (1916) depicts language as a structured system of signs, which consists of the signifier and
the signified. The signifier is the sound image and the signified is the concept
to which the signifier refers. Saussure argues that the language we use to
express ourselves already exists in society, but each sign acquires its meaning
from another sign. Thus, structuralism tends to focus on fixed language
systems and the explanations that can be attributed to signs within a given
language. Post-structuralist scholars move beyond the structuralist view and
assert that different people can have distinct understandings of signs in
language, so this is not just a system, but a social practice in which identities
are constructed or resisted (Norton & Duff, 2013).

While in structuralism language is seen as a semiotic system, it (language) is,
in fact, more complex because of its social meaning (Bucholtz & Hall, 2003).
Post-structuralism, therefore, suggests that language is highly contextual; it
emphasises the way in which language works in society (Bucholtz & Hall,
2005, 2007) and understands identity as discursively constructed and
assigned to a learner’s participation in day-to-day discourses (Block, 2007;
Fairclough, 1992; Norton & Gao, 2008). Following the post-structuralist notion
of identity, Bamberg and Fina, (2011) suggest studying identity ‘as constructed
in discourse, as negotiated among speaking subjects in social contexts, and
as emerging in the form of subjectivity and a sense of self’ (p. 178). In this way,
identity in post-structuralism reflects a shift away from viewing a person ‘as
self-contained, having identity, and generating his/her individuality’ towards the
‘construction of identity in and through discourse’ (Bamberg & Fina, 2011, p.
178).

In the early twentieth century, scholars from different disciplines began to
challenge the notion that identity is self-determining, that it can be constructed
through an individual’s introspection and is completely free from the influences
of social structures. For example, scholars such as Marx and Freud,
recognising that individuals are part of social and cultural systems, argued that
a person’s sense of self develops from their social situation, which is brought
about by the dominant ideologies of the dominant classes in society (Elliot,
2020). With regard to this, Marx (quoted in Dang & Dang, 2018), stated that:
'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness' (Marx, 1859, p. 2). Marx and Freud viewed individuals as embedded in social and cultural systems and argued that these systems might influence an individual’s beliefs and morals. The significance of language in the formation of social and cultural groups, and its impact on an individual’s identity formation has received a great deal of attention from applied linguists and other scholars such as Derrida (1973) and Foucault (1972).

In his work on ‘deconstruction’, which is an approach to understanding the relationship between text and meaning, Derrida provided a method of close reading and interrogating the text and stated that there are sets of binary oppositions within the text, for example, words such as public/private, masculine /feminine etc. In these sets the first term is viewed as privileged. Derrida argued that the identity of the privileged term depends on its other or subordinate term. In his theory of deconstruction, Derrida questioned the self-identity of Saussure’s signifier (the sound image) and signified (the concept to which the signifier refers) and challenged the notion of a fixed and unitary self, arguing for the fluid construction of the self (Sarup, 1993). Focusing on power, Foucault argued that power and power structures, such as education, the media and government, generate dominant discourses, which in turn influence people’s position and status, and which serve as a basis for constructing particular identities (see Foucault, 1994). For example, a powerful person in society, such as a politician, may deploy a dominant discourse about an immigrant that marginalises immigrants from the mainstream people.

The period towards the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century is often referred to as a postmodern period or postmodernity. Postmodernists believe that everything that one does is some kind of social construction and that social and cultural structures are constantly changing, as is an individual’s identity (Ott, 2003). From a postmodern perspective, identity is believed to be fluid.
Additionally, postmodernists believe that, because of the economic shifts and globalisation, people now have many different choices and are less likely to locate their identities in pre-given roles/categories such as class, gender and ethnicity etc. (Shah, 2000). Postmodernists focus on people’s choices, which affirm their identities, and they talk about the transient nature of identity (Sarup, 1993). In postmodernism, an individual’s self is believed to be formed out of the possibilities present in a particular social and cultural context and identity is viewed as fragmented, multiple, partial and dispersed. Postmodernists believe that, as a result of the impact of globalisation, transnational migration, advanced technological innovation and commodification, people now experience confusion and dispersal, as well as excitement and the possibility of development (Elliot, 2020). Therefore, fragmentation, dislocation and contradiction are believed to be key characteristics of an individual’s identity in postmodernity. In short, identity in postmodernism is a product of a person’s experiences, personal standpoint and decision making in a fragmented postmodern world.

Postmodernism is generally defined as a variant of poststructuralism (Shah, 2000). Sarup (1993) states that the terms postmodernism and poststructuralism have been used interchangeably in literature, which adds to the confusion on this. Moreover, literature tends to categorise scholars based on their writings. For example, Derrida and Foucault did not define themselves as theorists of postmodernism and they rarely used the term ‘postmodern’ in their writings, yet they are viewed as postmodernists and poststructuralists (Sarup, 1993). Derrida (1973) and Foucault (1977) rejected Saussure’s structuralist view of language and viewed language as a fluid meaning-making system. Saussure regarded language as a system of rules that is independent of the impact of language users and the particular context in which it is used (Saussure, 1916). Although poststructuralism derives from the philosophical tradition of structuralism, there are differences and contradictions between the two as poststructuralists resist structural constraints. This is where poststructuralism moves away from structuralism and overlaps with
postmodernism. One fundamental idea shared by poststructuralism and postmodernism is that of the individual's shifting position through discourses and the construction and reconstruction of their identities (Shah, 2000).

In their writings, poststructuralists emphasise the role of language and discourse which mediate psychological (internal) and social (external) aspects of identity formation (see Block, 2013; Norton, 1997; Pavlenko, 2002). Poststructuralists, specifically those who are applied linguists, believe that an individual's identity is not determined by their social structure, but that they have the potential to be active agents in their identity formation (Darvin & Norton, 2015a; Alastair Pennycook, 1998a). Poststructuralists question the fixed notion of identity based on larger groups, such as ethnicity, culture and nation. They emphasise that an individual's identity is not determined by their position in a particular group, but rather individuals are viewed as active agents with the potential to change and construct/reconstruct their identities. Therefore, poststructuralists view identity formation as an ongoing process in which language, power and discourse are seen as crucial aspects (Shah, 2000).

As discussed by Sarup (1993), poststructuralism and postmodernism are relatively similar concepts. Poststructuralism is in part a new term for postmodernism and the terms are at times used synonymously. Both poststructuralists and postmodernists argue about the relationship between the individual and society and they offer similar perspectives on the influence of social and cultural context on an individual's identity formation. Scholars from both traditions condemn of structures such as class, ethnicity etc., emphasising the blurring of the boundaries between different groups. Poststructuralists point to the role of human agency or action in the process of individual identity formation. The poststructuralist’s view of identity emphasises resistance to the prevailing ideology and the re-construction of identity (Shah, 2000).

From the above discussion, it is clear that the similarity between the two schools of thought is how they view the self in relation to the world. In
postmodernism and poststructuralism, there is no belief in a stable or core identity. Identity in postmodernism and poststructuralism is a combination of an individual's different social roles, such as a person's role as a son, father, professor etc., and the influence of social situations (Ott, 2003). Both postmodernists and poststructuralists adopt a middle position, between psychological and sociological approaches to identity formation; and both call for a major rethinking of pre-given categories and argue for the need to question fixed structures such as ethnicity, gender, education, media and government.

To understand the post-structuralist notion of the complex relationship between identity and language, and the construction of identity through power relations, it is essential to investigate discourse, power relations and positioning, as well as the many other constructs involved in identity formation.

**3.4.1. Identity in discourse**

Discourse in general means talk. In the literature on identity, the two opposing views of discourse can be summed up as discourse with a capital D – social discourses and sense of self – and discourse with a small d – discursive practices and sense of self as emerging in interaction (Gee, 1999). From the capital D discourse perspective, identity is assumed to be constructed in and through discourse, whilst in the small d discourse, the person agentively constructs their identity in the discursive practice by positioning themselves. Foucault (1972) asserts that no single or correct definition of discourse can be given as its meaning rests on how and in what context it is used. In applied linguistics, discourse has been defined as an aspect of spoken and written language (e.g. use of fillers), while in the social sciences, the definition of discourse has been extended beyond written and spoken text. Gee (2008, p. 3) explains that ‘Discourses are ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing, that are accepted as instantiations of particular identities (or ‘types of people’) by specific groups.’ Fairclough’s (2003) understanding of discourses runs parallel with Gee’s conceptualisation of the term; Fairclough (2003) emphasises that
discourses are a way of expressing ‘the mental world of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world’ (Fairclough 2003, p. 124).

Gee (2008) offers further insight into identity through the perspective of discourse identity i.e. the parts of identity that are developed and recognised through the discourse of and discourse with others. Gee (2008) expands on the notion of discourse by stressing that discourses comprise everyday ideas and are often associated with ‘the distribution of ‘social goods’ like status, worth, and material goods in society (who should and shouldn’t have them)’ (p. 4). For example, a person is recognised as rich and well-educated because this quality has been ascribed to him/her through discourse with other people in the society. Such stereotypes voiced through everyday discourses reproduce power and dominance (Dijk, 1989), which can, in turn, impact an individual’s identity formation. As language is inextricably linked to such discourse (Fairclough, 1992; Matsuda, Canagarajah, Harklau, Hyland, & Warschauer, 2003; Pennycook, 1998a; Dijk, 1989), it is necessary to consider discourse in a particular context (in the current study that of Punjab), to understand identity formation in relation to the medium of instruction (MOI) in schools. It is therefore relevant to consider the extent to which identity is constructed through power relations in language and discourse.

3.4.2. Power in discourse

Over the last few years, post-structuralist researchers in the field of SLL have emphasised the relationship between language, power, and discourse, arguing that power/power relations in discourses have repercussions for learners’ identities (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2006; Block, 2013; Kanno & Stuart, 2016; Kouhpaeenejad & Gholaminejad, 2014; MacPherson, 2005; Norton, 2016c; Norton & Gao, 2008; Trofimovich & Turuseva, 2015). Bakhtin (1981) recognises language learning as a struggle that can affect an individual’s speaking privilege and social position. Weedon (1987) outlines the importance of power and individual positioning in language practices and argues that it is in language that an individual constructs his/her subjectivity. Subjectivity, as defined by Weedon, ‘is the conscious and unconscious
thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world’ (1987, p. 32). Focussing on the part played by power relations in identity formation, Weedon (1987) states that an individual’s life chances can be influenced by the prevailing power relations. An individual can either be the subject of power relations (in an authoritative position), or subject to power relations (in a position of reduced power). Similarly, when discussing power in discourse, Dijk (1989) stresses the cognitive dimension of control/power that affects the minds of people. Such power in discourse can be manoeuvred ‘through special access to, and control over the means of public discourse and communication’ (Dijk 1989, p. 85). For example, unequal access to learning in English and social discourses about the significance of English may influence the discourse, either directly or indirectly, in favour of the dominant group which, in the current study, are the EMI students.

Thus, identity constructed discursively and under the influence of power relations is not static and is constantly reconstructed in discourse each time a person speaks or thinks. At this point, it is important to note that, although English has been acknowledged as a global language, it still adheres to colonial discourses (Pennycook, 1998b). In relation to this, Pennycook states that English is still bound up with colonialism and ‘the discourses of colonialism still echo through its theories and practices’ (1998, p. 28). Considering that English is the language of colonisers in India, it may be worth suggesting that it is still perceived as the language of power. Hence, people who lack access to English might be oppressed by the powerful group consisting of those who have access to English. Thus, English, the postcolonial language, which is considered the language of power and prestige (Annamalai, 2004; Mohanty, 2010), can be a cause of the formation of ‘Self and Other’ constructed through societal discourses related to the privileged position of English. In this regard, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) define identity as ‘the social positioning of self and other’ (586). Such positioning in relation to knowledge of English can be easily exemplified in contemporary discourses in the Indian context (Pennycook,
In relation to this, Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) concepts of capital and symbolic struggle, which he argues are mandatory to effectively participate in certain groups or discourses, are relevant to this study and these theories are considered below.

3.5. Bourdieu's classification of capital

Bourdieu’s (1991) notion of symbolic power also highlights the connection between power relations and identity formation. For Bourdieu (1991), symbolic capital (e.g. prestige, reputation) is a significant source of power and people with symbolic capital use this power to dominate those in a subordinate position or, in other words, the subaltern. Bourdieu believes that an individual’s environment imposes constraints on their identity formation and that these limitations are wrapped up in different power relations between and among individuals. Bourdieu talks about the importance of power in structuring discourse, or the ‘power to impose reception’ (1977, p. 648), which, according to him, has significant implications for how language learners are positioned and whether or not they get the opportunity to speak or be heard. For instance, in classroom settings, if a student says something noteworthy, he/she may be ignored because of his/her position of reduced power. On the other hand, if the teacher says the same thing, he/she may be appreciated for his/her contribution due to his/her position of increased power. Thus, in his approach to power relations and identity formation, Bourdieu (1992) associates power in discourse with the individual’s struggle for recognition.

Bourdieu’s categorisation of different forms of capital further helps to determine the process of an individual’s identity formation. In Bourdieu’s work (1991), the capital operating in society is classified into economic, social, cultural and linguistic types and the concept of identity formation is associated with the struggle for recognition. None of these types of capital can be appreciated unless they achieve the status of symbolic capital, i.e. wider social recognition and acceptance. Moreover, some forms of capital have more exchange value than others in a given social context. According to Bourdieu (1991), language is a significant mechanism of power that tends to position an
individual in society and therefore, expertise in a particular language that is valuable in a particular sociocultural context is defined as accumulated linguistic capital. Bourdieu considers linguistic capital as the determinant of social and political power since it can be traded for an accumulation of other types of capital. For example, the accumulation of linguistic capital increases a person’s cultural capital (resources like academic degrees), which can be used to obtain a high-salaried job thus converting cultural capital into economic capital (financial assets). The economic capital obtained brings further social capital in the form of social relationships and networks of influence that enhance the symbolic capital (prestige and honour). On the other hand, Bourdieu (1992) states that the inequity of linguistic capital engenders the division of the social world. Thus, it appears that the value attached to linguistic capital, in fact, leads to social discrepancies and can have a significant impact on an individual’s identity formation. In regard to this, it is important to note that most societal discourses in the Indian context perceive ‘English as the language of power and opportunity’ (Kachru 1986, p.90) which could have an impact on how students learning in English or Punjabi construct their identities. Some positive and negative effects of learning in English or regional languages, particularly on students’ academic achievements and self-efficacy, have also been reported in many current studies conducted in India (Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 1999; Sandhu, 2010).

Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) concepts of cultural capital and symbolic struggle have gained a significant amount of attention around the world, especially in relation to education. Bourdieu (1991) considers power to be culturally created. His notion of cultural capital presents the education sector, such as schools, as sites that create unequal power relations and cultural hegemony. For example, unequal power relations based on the language used as the medium of instruction (MOI) in different schools can be argued to encourage the struggle for recognition among students. Cultural capital, according to Bourdieu (1991), exists in various forms: cultural goods such as books,
pictures, instruments and dictionaries, and, in the institutionalised form, educational qualifications.

Bourdieu’s concept of the linguistic market helps to develop an understanding of English as a commodity which has an exchange value and which provides a learner with linguistic capital, which in turn provides access to opportunities in the neoliberal world. The concept of the linguistic market is well documented in the literature on language and identity formation in neoliberalism (Block et al., 2013). A linguistic market, according to Bourdieu, is a field or space of linguistic exchange, and in this space people trade their linguistic capital in the form of language proficiency which brings them profit in the shape of linguistic, cultural social and symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu’s concept of space, people everywhere tend to have spatial segregation, with ‘people who are close together in social spaces tending to find themselves, [there] by choice or by necessity, close to one another in geographic space’ (Bourdieu, 1989, p.16). People in different spaces or groups position themselves based on the distribution of resources between different groups. Most of these are economic resources which Bourdieu calls ‘fundamental powers’ in the form of economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital (Pierre Bourdieu, 1986).

A large part of this fundamental power seems to derive from their linguistic capital which further provides them with cultural and economic capital and they automatically settle in the top of the hierarchy of job and education markets. The possession of different types of capital, which are the instruments of power, defines the distribution of power and people’s position which further determines their identity.

The association of English with economic development in the globalised world has played a significant part in English being treated as a commercial commodity and spread the use of English as a medium of instruction in many non-anglophone countries. English in the form of linguistic capital can be converted into economic capital and has a great monetary value (Hamid, 2016). Phillipson (2017) condemns the idea of English being marketed as a language that everyone needs and should learn, because to him this has
echoes of colonial discourses. However, it is hardly surprising that English, which is marketed as if it is a universal basic skill which makes an individual saleable in the job market, is viewed as a highly-desirable commodity. The real and perceived economic benefits of English have many consequences for those who have, or who do not have, access to this highly-valuable commodity in contexts such as India, where those who have an opportunity to learn in EMI acquire this valuable commodity and stay ahead of those who lack expertise in English.

English is conceived of as a commodity to be traded for economic prosperity. Heller (2010) argues that linguistic capital, which is most readily convertible into economic capital, is favoured more and English is preeminent among them. The commodification of English has led many countries to propose and even decide to use English as their official or co-official language. Japan and France are examples of this. India afforded English the status of their official language decades ago. Looking at English as a commodity, Heller (2010) states that the goals of the Indian education policy are to increase the population that is proficient in English. Piller (2010) has also discussed the commodification of English and draws our attention to another serious issue which is human trafficking, whereby people from poorer countries who speak English, especially women, are sent to work in rich countries as domestic labour. Another example of the commodification of the English language is the emphasis placed on acquiring an American or British accent to work in call centres in India and Pakistan (Cowie, 2007; Rahman, 2015). Moreover, discourses surrounding the commodification of English in workplaces such as in the area of tourism draws our attention to the value of English in globalised economic markets. Different ways of commodifying English discussed in the literature enhance our understanding of the ways in which English occupies a special place in the global world and how access to this commodity can have an impact on people’s identity formation.

In the educational sector of multilingual contexts such as India, public and private schools can be viewed as the linguistic markets which determine
linguistic capital and its advantages for an individual. In India, similar to other countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan, English appears to serve a gatekeeping purpose to provide access to jobs rather than any practical purpose in using English at a job (Hamid, 2016). Students learning in EMI are therefore the members of the class who have more cultural and economic capital and have better opportunities to use such capital to earn social and economic capital which can, in turn, bring them symbolic capital in educational, occupational and social markets. EMI in India, therefore, is a form of the market which seems to be flourishing because of the fear of the elite that lack of this linguistic capital will restrict their access to the neoliberal world. In this way, English plays a critical role not only in an individual’s educational achievements but also in their identity formation.

In her study on EMI in higher education in Gujarat in India, Ramanathan (2005) finds the English language to be perceived as cultural capital in an Indian context and she suggests it is always connected to other material and symbolic markers, such as a good occupation and social status. Hence, mastery of English is considered as an important determinant of social power in the post-colonial context of India and it works as a key to positions of power and prestige (Pennycook, 1995, p. 40). In relation to this, Kachru (1986) stresses ‘English is the language of power and opportunity’ in most societal discourses in the Indian context (p. 90). Although scholars like Pennycook view the use and spread of English as beneficial, the association of English with power is perceived as a major source of inequality within many countries.

### 3.6. Social inequality

People from powerful groups in a society based on their wealth, occupation, education and position of their language fix identities for themselves and others based on differences between and among them. Consequently, the concept of social class seems quite significant in developing an understanding of an individual’s identity (Block, 2015). India is a large country stratified on the basis of castes, religions, peoples’ socio-economic status and, above all, different languages and the cultures of the different states. The discrepancies
based on the provision of different languages as the MOI, and in particular English, the global language, as a MOI in some, but not in all the schools in India, has magnified the social class differences among people in India. This categorisation of people in relation to their access to a particular language has been viewed as an additional means of social class division in India (Hegde, 2016; Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 2005b; Singh, 2015; Vaish, 2008). While social class is generally judged based on the individual’s socio-economic condition, Bourdieu conceptualises social class as a difference in power, which can be economic, social, cultural or linguistic. Accordingly, social class division contingent upon the language in which a person is learning (English or Punjabi in this study) is an important aspect of assigning particular identities to people. Noting the importance of English in the Indian context, Faust and Nagar (2001) recognise learning in English as a bridge across the social class division in India.

Furthermore, Fraser (1995) states that gender, race, class, work, education and economic inequality on the basis of which the people in society are marginalised, are all axes which intersect one another and affect people’s identities. In order to promote social justice, Fraser demands both recognition of cultural difference and social equality, and a redistribution of materials to abolish economic arrangements which tend to promote group-based marginalisation. Redistribution to achieve a just distribution of wealth in the political-economic structure of society, can, according to Fraser, aid in checking: ‘exploitation (having the fruits of one’s labour appropriated for the benefit of others); economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work or being denied access to income-generating labour altogether); and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living)’ (Fraser, 1995, p. 70). Through recognition, Fraser (2000) projected the recognition of peoples’ peculiar needs because the misrecognition triggers the problem of making negative or positive sense of one’s identity. As recognition and redistribution enable equal participation in society or social life so the needs of all must be recognised and the resources should be redistributed to
control socio-economic and cultural injustice (Fraser 1995). Fraser’s concept of recognition and redistribution provides an analytic lens to look at the Indian educational context, in particular the operation of EMI policy in schools in India. Learning in English, which prepares pupils for their productive participation in future within education and the employment market, seems to work as an agent to reinforce marginalisation of students from different schools and socio-economic backgrounds in the Indian context and therefore may have an impact on their views about themselves.

In the literature on language and identity, social inequality grounded in the differences in learning in a particular language – especially the language with higher value in a given context – has been discussed as one of the important factors that can have an impact on an individual’s positioning in society, and ultimately on their identity formation (Gu, 2010; Lueg & Lueg, 2015; Ramanathan, 2016; Sandhu, 2014b; Tamim, 2014). This again raises our awareness of the potential impact of access to English, a language of power, on the students learning in English and Punjabi medium schools in Punjab. Perceiving the spread of English as linguistic imperialism, Phillipson (1992) argues that discrimination is exercised via the English language as a source of power. In this context, Phillipson (2019) asserts that English plays a significant role in creating conflict in the linguistic and social integrity of nations where English is not the native language. A similar effect could be found in the relationships between students learning in English or Punjabi medium schools, in the context of Punjab where English is perceived as a language of power that offers students many educational and social opportunities. For instance, English is considered a determinant of individual’s progress in formal education in India, a ladder to success that may lead to positions of prestige in society (Berry, 2013; Bhattacharya, 2013; Mohanty, 2010; Ramanujam, 2011).

We now move on to one of the most significant concepts adopted by many scholars using a post-structuralist approach to investigate identity in language learning: that of investment (Norton, 2000).
3.7. Investment

Norton’s idea of investment, the sociological construct, as opposed to motivation, the psychological construct, in the field of SLL, has been particularly influential and is dominant in the research on identity in language learning (e.g. Bucholtz & Hall, 2003; Duff, 2002; Kerpelman & Pittman, 2001; Kim, 2003). Norton’s conception of investment was informed by her readings in social theory, particularly inspired by Weedon’s (1987) construct of ‘subjectivity’ and Bourdieu’s work (1991, 1997). According to Norton, motivation primarily focuses on a learner’s commitment to learn a particular language, but it fails to capture the complex relationship between ‘power, identity, and language learning’ (Norton, 2016). Investment, on the other hand, draws attention to the role of power relations in a given context, which can have an impact on a learner’s investment in language learning (Norton, 2011). Thus, Norton argues that an individual’s identity does not remain the same; instead, it is multiple, changing and context-specific, contingent upon the existing power relations in that particular setting. Norton (2009) discusses the concept of identity from a post-structuralist perspective and considers it as a site of struggle that is prone to change. Therefore, instead of motivation, the researcher places emphasis on investment in capturing the complex relationship between language learners, the target language and their ambivalent desire to speak it.

In her conceptualisation of investment in relation to identity in language learning, Norton emphasises the learner’s choice and desire in terms of what they want to be. Norton ‘recognises that learners often have variable desires to engage in the range of social interactions and community practices in which they are situated’ (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 420). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) concept of communities of practice is closely related to the sociological perspective of identity. Communities of practice are defined as ‘groups of people who share a concern or a set of problems’ (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4). Wenger (1998) considers that ‘building an identity consists of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social
communities’ (p. 145). He further argues that identity formation occurs in the understanding of acceptance and rejection within communities of practice. Hence, it can be argued that while engaging in particular communities of practice, because of group distinctions, a person may significantly identify with some communities of practice, but not others (Fearon, 1999).

Returning to Norton’s construct of investment in language learning, some learners may invest in learning English with the understanding that they will gain a significant return (Jeong & Lee, 2014). As revealed by Klassen (1987), Spanish-speaking immigrants in Toronto invested in learning English as they believed it to be essential for survival in Canada. Others may feel that English is imposed on them and learning it will result in the deprivation of their linguistic and cultural identity and so they resist investing in learning English (Rampton, 1996). Some might feel that although the English language misrepresents their identity, it is also linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1977) that can change power dynamics. The language learner is therefore not viewed as passively accepting the identities or images that those in power provide him/her with. Learners exercise agency in claiming their right, and in that way, they articulate their identities as they want themselves to be (Norton & Duff, 2013). Kramsch (2013) states that ‘investment carries connotations of hopes of returns and benefits; it accentuates the role of human agency and identity in engaging with the task at hand, in accumulating economic and symbolic capital…’. Thus, the theory of investment considers learners as the owners of complex identities that change over time and, based on where the person is, reproduced through social interactions (Norton & Gao, 2008). Norton puts emphasis on the sociological construct associated with the individual and identity over the psychological construct, emphasising the role of human agency in accumulating economic and symbolic capital (Darvin & Norton, 2015b).

From much of the discussion in the sections above, power relations in discursive practices and in discourse appear to play a vital role in assigning people particular identities. However, there is also a view known as the concept of ‘resistance’ that contradicts this (Canagarajah, 1999b). In order to
combat oppressive power and prevent its passive acceptance, learners can resist the identities assigned to them and establish new identities for themselves by using the resources available. This has also been reported in the literature as exercising agency to show resistance (Bhabha, 1994; Brown, 2014; Bucholtz & Hall, 2003; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Lier, 2008; Varghese et al., 2016). These concepts, and in particular the concepts of ‘agency’ and ‘ideology’, which are the key components of investment (Norton, 2000), are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.8. Resistance and agency

Many of the concepts discussed above, such as Bourdieu’s account of symbolic capital and the idea of power in discourse, emphasise that the dominant discourses are the product of the dominant ideologies. These ideas are consistent with Gramsci’s idea of hegemony, which stresses that the dominant groups establish their dominance over subjugated group by legitimating the differences between themselves and the others (the subjugated). A dominant group gains the consent of subalterns over time by forcing them to view themselves according to the differences imposed on them, that is through hegemony (Philips, 1998). Gramsci refers to the less powerful person/group as subalterns. As cited in Louai (2012, p. 5), the term ‘subaltern’ in Gramsci’s (1971) words refers to:

any low rank person or group of people in a particular society suffering under hegemonic domination of a ruling elite class that denies them the basic rights of participation in the making of local history and culture as active individuals of the same nation.

The subjugated groups or subalterns, however, are not obligated to accept this notion of stereotyping and the symbolic power of the dominant groups and may counter or resist that power or dominant discourse. Hegemony, therefore, shifts because of the opposing ideologies and discourses of the subjugated groups. Hence, there is always a possibility of resistance and counterhegemonies (Blommaert, 1999; Gal, 1998). Post-colonials such as
Said (1978) and Bhabha (2004) also emphasised the impact of power differences on people’s relationships. For instance, Said's (1978) *Orientalism* refers to the powerful person/group perceiving the less powerful person/group as oppressed. The fact that identities are discursively formed under the influence of societal power relations has also been stressed by many other scholars who have studied the notion of identity in relation to existing power hierarchies (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Canagarajah, 1999b; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2016a).

How much room to resist or counter hegemonic ideologies the subjugated individual or group has, however, is contingent on the difference in the level of power between them and the dominant groups. There may be extreme differences between their power relations which can result in a lack of resistance and their positionings as two different groups, Self or Other, which they may use to construct their own and others’ identities. Agency plays a crucial role in this process of positioning oneself and others which can be used as a tool to empower oneself and to resist the identity/ies imposed on the subjugated group by the dominant group. The notions of resistance and agency, therefore have important implications for identity formation.

The idea that no discourse is too powerful to be changed can also be found in the post-colonial context in Bhabha’s work (1994). Bhabha (1994) stresses that identities are constructed in social contexts; however, no structure or community is too powerful to be changed. According to Bhabha, people who are excluded from ‘authorised power’ construct their identities based on the very sites of their exclusion (p. 3). Bhabha’s (1994) theory of cultural difference portrays identity from the perspective of hybridity, developing the notion of the ‘third space’. Acquiring a central position in post-colonial discourse, hybridity refers to the cultural identity of the individual stuck between the powerful and the subjugated. This in-between space posited by hybridity, termed the ‘third space’ by Bhabha (1996, p.1), is a place where individuals develop their hybrid identity. The third space is an ambivalent, in-between position, ‘something new
and substantially different than just conglomerates of new and old elements’ in which identities are negotiated (Fahlander, 2007, p. 22).

In his ethnographic study of classroom discourse, Canagarajah (1999) highlights the identities adopted by students to resist power; they codeswitch in order to achieve communicative efficiency and distance themselves from the lessons and teachers that treat them as passive learners. Codeswitching is the alternate use of two or more languages in which the speaker may switch from one language to another sometimes to achieve discursive empowerment and reinforce their identities as fluent speakers (see Sandhu, 2010). Thus, learners can resist the identities assigned to them to establish new identities for themselves by using the resources available. The notion of agency emphasises how learners exert power to modify the social world according to their desires by means of self-regulation and self-efficacy. Thus, people may accept or reject the way they are positioned by others and subsequently, this rejection or acceptance becomes the new identity imposed on them.

3.8.1. Agency

Agency can be defined as an individual’s capacity for self-determination, which results in them making the decision to accept or resist change (Carson, 2012). With regard to the significance of the concept of agency in identity formation, Block (2013) asserts that in the research on language and identity, social structures such as ethnicity and culture have been given much importance as the determiners of individual identity. However, Block (2013) claims that following the post-structuralist tradition, the researchers ‘grant much more weight to agency than to structure’ to understand how learners construct their identities according to their desires. In analysing how identities can be negotiated, shaped and reshaped by exerting agency, it is important to discuss the concept of positioning proposed by Davies and Harre (1990). According to Davies and Harre (1990), positioning is the process in which individuals position themselves differently from others. Positioning is classified into interactive and reflective positioning. Interactive positioning refers to the process of one individual positioning the other. Reflective positioning, on the
other hand, is the process of positioning oneself. In relation to this, Pavlenko (2002a) argues that in discursive practices these positions keep on changing as people are continuously involved in the process of positioning themselves and others. People are sometimes provided with subjugated positions; however, by using human agency they can resist the imposed power and position themselves as the powerful rather than the marginalised. According to Duff, agency refers to ‘people’s ability to make choices, take control, self-regulate, and thereby pursue their goals as individuals leading, potentially, to personal or social transformation’ (Duff 2012, p. 414). An example of exercising agency can be seen in a study by Sandhu (2014) in Dehradun, India, where a participant named Aditi exerted agency to enact ‘resistance to discourses and privileged English speakers over Hindi speakers’.

3.9. Ideology

Ideology refers to the shared beliefs of a group of people, which are rigidly maintained despite a substantial degree of denial or ‘false consciousness’ (Kang, 2018). Marxist views of ideology, which characterise it as false consciousness, see ideology as a system of false beliefs that justify the structures practising those beliefs (Brookfield, 2001). False consciousness is an individual’s particular state of mind that makes them hold false beliefs that are not in their social interest and prevents them from recognising hidden inequality and oppression (Rosen, 2016).

The critical theory tradition points to the understanding that ideology is related to oppression and domination and is used to subjugate people to accept the ideas as normal and justifiable. Thus, ideologies are broadly accepted as they appear to be true and in favour of the majority. However, they create an unjust social order (Brookfield, 2001). Ideologies shape the way we view the world and play a significant role in convincing people that social structures are making social arrangements that work for the good of all.

Marx believe that people’s consciousness is determined by the material conditions of society and by the ideologies of those who dominate and control
societal systems (Marx, 1973). Marx argues that a person’s material situation, such as their wages or their place of work etc., determines the extent to which they possess power. Moreover, Bourdieu (1986) asserts that sets of ideas or ideologies are constructed by power and that power is further determined by ideological structures in society. Dominant ideologies refer to the beliefs of dominant groups in society, which extend advantages to the already dominant group and disadvantages to the subjugated group (Morrison & Lui, 2000). Therefore, individuals who are members of the subjugated group are often undervalued and may hold negative ideologies about themselves, whilst those in the powerful group may construct empowering ideologies about themselves. Thus, power determines our thinking about the person’s membership of the bourgeoisie or proletariat class (Cohen, 2009).

In The German Ideology (Marx & Engels, 1970), Marx discussed two social classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie refers to capitalists or those who own the wealth, and the proletariat are defined as labourers who engage in labour to survive and who have nothing to lose (Cohen, 2009). Positioned between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the social class which comprises those who further the interests of the bourgeoisie and generate false consciousness against which the proletariat do not rebel (Cohen, 2009). The proletariat, therefore, remain the labour class because, as a result of the influence of dominant ideologies, they are never convinced that they are being exploited and dominated (Cohen, 2009). Similarly, when discussing what she terms the dilemmas of ‘social justice’ in her accounts of the concepts of redistribution and recognition, Fraser (1995, p.76) states that, ‘the proletariat receives an unjustly large share of the burdens and an unjustly small share of the rewards...and also suffer serious cultural injustices, the “hidden (and not so hidden) injuries of class”.

However, Marx’s deterministic outlook on ideology – that it is predetermined and based on people’s economic conditions – has been criticised. For example, Eagleton (1991) argued that ideologies are not false beliefs as defined by Marxists, but instead they contain elements that are broadly seen
as true and therefore are accepted without much resistance. According to Eagleton (1991, p. 30), ideology ‘signifies ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the interests of a ruling group or class specifically by distortion and dissimulation’. A similar point was made by Gramsci (1971) in his discussion of the concept of hegemony, which is explored below. These definitions suggest that ideologies are the beliefs of dominant groups in society, which rationalise social structures and mainly operate to the advantage of dominant groups (Eagleton, 1991). Ideologies are ‘institutionalized thought systems and discourses of a given society’ and therefore language plays an important role in constructing ideologies (Therborn, 1980, p. 2).

Ideologies are often referred to in discussion of language and identity formation (e.g. Block, 2013; Norton, 2010; Pennycook, 1999; Sah, 2020). Language and ideology overlap, as ideology operates in various ways through language or words, and both develop in social situations and affect social consciousness (De Costa, 2016). The way an individual thinks about something is a matter of language. We make up our minds through the words we and others use in a social context; it is the language in which the structure of ideology is both produced and reproduced (Benabou, 2008). In this way, ideologies are produced, reproduced and altered through language. For example, a language in the form of social and political slogans influences people’s mentalities or ideologies and consequently their social-economic worlds. The recently-popularised slogan ‘Black lives matter’, which was influenced by people’s ideologies, is an example that has further influenced people’s ideologies and disseminated the idea of democracy.

Ideologies are not only produced and reproduced through language, but are also about languages. Blommaert (2005, p. 164) argued that ideology is a ‘materially mediated ideational phenomenon’ which becomes visible when materialised in social practices, especially in language. The concept of language ideology highlights the links between social structures, language and ideology. Language ideology is a set of beliefs about language with an emphasis on the ideas a group has about the roles of a particular language in
a society, which contributes to the social experiences of members of the group (Kang, 2018). Applied linguists have focused on ideology and belief systems pertaining to the language shared by members of particular groups and the subsequent impact on their identity formation (Block, 2013; Norton, 1997). Ideology in relation to language has been recognised as one of the critical components of investment and identity formation (Darvin & Norton, 2015b). Althusser noted that ‘ideology was an organic part of every social totality’ and argued that human societies cannot exist without ideologies (Althusser, 1970, p. 232). In his definition of ideology, Althusser (1970) recognised both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects and thus did not confine ideology to language; rather, he conceptualised ideology from a broader perspective that included gestures, feelings, modes of behaviour and so on.

Ideologies about the significance of particular linguistic features play an important role in dividing people into different social groups. These groups range from micro – between individuals – to a macropolitical social level. Several studies have investigated how language, particularly English, operates as a power in social structures and shapes people’s ideologies, particularly in the context of English as a second language (ESL) (e.g. Blommaert, 1999; Heller, 2010; Toohey, 2000).

The neoliberal view of language as a commodity articulates a neoliberal ideology that emphasises that linguistic skills are converted into a commodity which operates as human capital (Block, Gray & Holborow, 2013). This ideology further develops the view or, in Marx’s words, false consciousness that investment in language bestows greater power and this reinforces the neoliberal notion or ideology. The neoliberal ideological force that supports the expansion of EMI is that linguistic capital, in the form of English, provides access to the global economy and therefore it is believed to be a powerful liberating tool for socioeconomically marginalised groups (see Block, Gray & Holborow, 2013; Ladousa, 2016; Norton, 2011; Ramanathan, 2006). Identity formation, as has been discussed above, is how a person comes to view
him/herself and others; this cannot be separated from their ideas and beliefs and is thus inextricably interwoven with language and ideology.

In this study, the concept of ideology is examined in order to gain a better understanding of how the students enact and develop their competence and identity formation in discursive practices that are influenced by the prevailing societal ideologies. The concept of ideology needs to be carefully considered by looking at ‘more complex and layered space in which ideational, behavioural and institutional aspects interact along lines of consent and coercion’ (Blommaert, 2005, p. 169). The focus on the concepts of consent and coercion in ideology is reflected in Gramsci’s (1971) account of hegemony.

3.10. Hegemony

In his theory of hegemony, discussed largely in his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci (1971) talks about the supremacy of the power of one group or country over another through ‘coercion’ or ‘consent’. Hegemony is the balanced combination of coercion and consent in which coercion does not overpower the consent ‘but rather appears to be backed by the consent of the majority’ (Gramsci, 1992, p. 156). Thus, hegemony is the dominance of one person or group over another to gain their consent, which ultimately legitimises the ideas of the dominant group to the point that those ideas are accepted without coercion and become a norm in people’s everyday lives. Power relations are embedded in hegemony. The dominant group establishes its dominance by legitimising differences between them and other groups and forces the latter to view themselves in terms of these differences (Tang, 2005). This ideological control is the process by which people are made to accept that certain changes are in their best interests. Hegemony plays an important role in constructing dominant ideologies which are built and imposed by dominant social structures and reproduced through hegemonic practices and consent (Gramsci, 1971a). Gramsci argues that ideological control is the highest form of hegemony and that ideology contributes to the maintenance of social structures and people themselves become enslaved to those power structures.
However, Blackledge and Pavlenko (2006) argue that domination through hegemony is usually only partially achieved as there is always the possibility of alternatives to the dominant ideology. An individual or group can resist ideological hegemony by positioning themselves as powerful rather than marginalised. However, a wider perspective has been adopted by Darvin and Norton (2015, p. 44), who recognise ideology as a site of struggle and argue that ‘agents act within a spectrum of consent and dissent, and what appears to be consent sometimes may be a matter of hegemonic practices’. Hence, ideological hegemony prevents resistance and agency because people do not view themselves as victims of negative ideologies, but instead give their consent because of the perceived benefits of becoming part of the dominant group.

Language plays an important role in establishing hegemony. This has been referred to as linguistic hegemony. Linguistic hegemony is the process of presenting the dominant language as the language of success and prestige which devalues other minority languages (Eriksen, 1992). All languages and discourses are not assigned equal power in societies and this is why some languages become legitimised and others are devalued (Pavlenko, 2002a). For example, the emphasis on English proficiency, because of its power and prestige across the globe, promotes English as ‘natural, neutral and beneficial’ (Pennycook, 1994, p. 9). In his concept of linguistic imperialism, Phillipson (1998, p. 104) views the English language as a ‘weapon for cultural and economic domination’. Despite the worldwide popularity of EMI, the impact of the hegemony of the English language in EMI on bilingual students’ education, and in turn on their identity formation, needs to be taken into account (Garcia et al., 2017).

The English language, which is believed to endow social, cultural and symbolic capital, has emerged as the most desired language for progress in Indian society (Azam et al., 2013; Berry, 2013; Kaushik, 2011). Hence, the use of English or EMI in India is not simply an imposition but is negotiated through the subtle processes of consent building. Linguistic hegemonic practices,
therefore, determine the modes of inclusion and exclusion, and privilege and marginalise people and they may form their identities accordingly (Norton, 2010). In the current study which has investigated the relationship between EMI and identity formation, the concept of ideological hegemony cannot be ignored. The hegemonic ideology that English is a prestigious language which serves as a language of oppression for those who do not speak this particular language makes people subordinate themselves to the influence of English without coercion.

In heterogeneous communities such as India, the language used is one of the signs of identity around which people build boundaries, excluding those who do not speak the same language as them, and in turn being excluded by different language speakers (Mohanty, 2010). Influenced by social and political ideologies, the recognition of English, the global language, as one of the three main languages to be used in education in schools in India, confirms the acceptance of English and its hegemony in the Indian education system. Furthermore, the spread of EMI in India because of the overwhelming demand for it by parents who consider it to be the linguistic capital required for their children’s success is the manifestation of linguistic hegemony and to some extent self-imposed linguistic imperialism (Gupta, 1977). The prevailing ideological hegemony of the significance of learning in English for the educational, occupational and social development of an individual in the Indian context can have a significant impact on students’ social development and identity formation (see Kaur & Sharma, 2015; Mohanty, 2010; Ramanathan, 2016; Vulli, 2014).

Thus, recognition of English as symbolic capital in the Indian context highlights the value conferred on children learning in EM schools over their counterparts in the regional language medium schools. When students consider these ideologies in relation to future opportunities in their imagined communities, they could have an impact on their identity formation. Gramsci’s theory of hegemony is useful in conceptualising how and why people in multilingual states like Punjab in India give consent to EMI in educational policy and
institutional arrangements that emphasise the significance of English for ensuring a better future for some students.

3.11. Imagined communities


I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because 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.

In his conceptualisation of the nation as an imagined community, Anderson focuses on two key concepts that are first, the nation as an imagined community is limited and second, the nation is sovereign. Its limits are finite and based on the geographical and political boundaries of the nation which divide people from different territories who identify themselves with the people of their homogenous group. Focussing on the nation as a sovereign community, Anderson states that people identify themselves with the people from their community because they are members of the same sovereign state. Anderson further argues that people from even the smallest nations do not know most of the people in their nation, yet they perceive themselves to be part of that group or nation (B. Anderson, 1991). Therefore, they feel a sense of community even with people they have never seen or met. In short, imagined communities refer to a group of people with whom we connect through our imagination and are not directly accessible (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Some examples of imagined communities are: people from
neighbouring states and communities: people from other religious groups; people who use other languages etc.

Anderson notes that religion is not the only factor which raises national consciousness among people. Language is also central to Anderson’s theory of imagined communities. Anderson emphasises the role of communication technology in formalizing language and influencing peoples’ imaginations to create their shared new imagined communities (B. Anderson, 1983). People may be from geographically separated communities, but sharing the same language plays an important role in imagining their connections with others and thus increases connections between distant populations. Language, therefore, is one of the causal factors for dividing people into groups and further uniting people with their imagined language communities through imagination.

Furthermore, in their conceptualisation of the notion of imagined communities, applied linguists have extended the notion of imagined communities from geographic and political bounds to linguistic constructs and membership. For example, they have demonstrated in their research how people engage in language learning to connect with communities which are not directly accessible to them and investigated the influence of such learning on their identity formation (see Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2006; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Pavlenko, 2002). Norton introduced the idea of ‘imagined identities’ in the field of SLA and argued that there was a relationship between imagined communities and imagined identities (Norton, 2011). Norton, particularly focussing on English as a lingua franca, discusses the future imagined identities where a person imagines ‘who they might be, and who their communities might be, when they learn a language’ (Norton, 2011, p. 22). Norton’s study, discussed in Section 3.13.1., demonstrates how some of her participants invested in learning English to access their imagined communities. For example Katrina, a Polish teacher, started learning English to access the teachers’ community of practice in Canada (Norton, 1995). In their study based on educational practices in classrooms, Kanno & Norton (2003) emphasise
that a learner’s investment in language and engagement in educational practices can be influenced by their imagined identities. Markus and Nurius (1986) refer to these future identities as future possible selves.

Norton (2001) argues that "[a] learner’s imagined community invite[s] an imagined identity, and a learner’s investment in the target language must be understood within this context" (p. 166). Norton’s concept of imagined identities contributed usefully to my understanding of students’ investment in English and Punjabi. In the context of the current study, for students, the imagined communities are universities and future occupations or workplaces. Students’ imagined identities are central to their struggle for recognition and are integral to their future identities. Imagination is related to ideologies and hegemonies – the concepts discussed earlier. It is precisely because of the hegemonic ideology that English provides better educational and occupational opportunities, that parents of the children learning in EMI in Punjab imagine their children’s future identities as ‘doctors’ and ‘engineers’ (see chapter four).

Investment in the English language is not limited to educational and occupational opportunities which may enhance their children’s economic capital but is further associated with their acquiring symbolic capital such as increased social status. So, parents of EMI schools in Punjab imagine their children as part of the highly educationally, professionally and socially distinguished class. Thus, in this study, how the individuals belonging to the two different groups – EM and PM schools – respond to the hegemonic ideologies of the importance of learning in English, and how they imagine their future identities, needs to be taken into account.

To summarise the way in which identity formation has been conceptualised by the post-structuralists and scholars from other major disciplines – psychology, social psychology and sociology – I will use Hall’s (1990) three different conceptions of identity: a) enlightenment subject; b) sociological subject; and c) post-modern subject. The enlightenment subject refers to the core self of a person, the capacity for consciousness and reason with which the
subject/person is born. This core self gradually unfolds when a person comes into contact with the social world and the individual's capacity for reasoning influences his/her thinking which is how a person evaluates him/herself in relation to his/her social context. The core self remains static or essentially the same all the way through the individual's life. Hall (1990) calls this an individualist conception of a person's identity. The awareness that the individual's core self is not independent and self-sufficient, but is formed in relation to significant others, is referred to as the sociological subject. In this, individuals categorise themselves and they still have an inner core, but this is continually modified by the external world. Thus, in the earlier conceptualisation the individual was believed to have a static identity, but in this conception, identity is influenced by the external world. Developing this idea further produces the post-modern subject, which addresses the identity as contradictory, shifting and continuously developing and identities are said to be shifting and in constant change. Under this third conception, the subject's identity is considered to be formed by the interaction between self and society. Thus, in general, identity can be defined as an integrative concept that connects the self and aspects of the world around us. Hall's (1990) conceptualisation of identity from social subject and post-modern subject is closely related and oriented towards the post-structuralist notion of identity discussed above. The concept of enlightenment, however, is in contrast with the other two concepts given by Hall, as well as the post-structuralist understanding of identity.

The various theoretical perspectives on identity discussed above, ranging from psychological approaches such as cognitivism, to sociological approaches considering identities as socially constructed in relation to others, in addition to post-structural tradition highlighting the significance of power relations in identity formation, have enriched the field of identity formation studies. In conceptualising identity, scholars from all the major disciplines have provided interesting ideas but have not gone as far as the post-structuralist understanding of identity. Since identity formation is a complex and
multifaceted phenomenon, it appears therefore that no single theoretical perspective is sufficient to provide a multidimensional understanding of identity formation in the multilingual Indian context.

Taking this into consideration, I have used an integrated theoretical framework to explore the impact of learning in a particular language on students’ identity formation. Adopting the post-structuralists’ understanding of identity in language learning – that language is a social practice in which identities are negotiated, and relations of power affect these interactions – I use Norton’s (2013, p. 4) theory of investment and definition of identity, that is ‘the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future’. For Norton, language, identity and context interact equally; she states that the various settings in which learning takes place influence a learner’s identity. A post-structuralist approach, in particular, the notion of investment (Norton, 2000), enables me to examine the ways in which power relations between the two groups (EM and PM school students) and in the larger society, influence the students’ identity formation.

For this study, the psychological theory of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) has also been drawn on. The idea of possible selves is based on the factors of hope, fear, goals and threats, which provide an individual with an evaluative view of their current and future selves. People construct or imagine their identities based on the skills and abilities they think are required to obtain their desired future selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The theory of possible selves thus provides a conceptual link between individuals’ perceptions of their future identity and the language they speak or learn in. The theory of possible selves applies to the population of this study as students at adolescent age begin thinking about their future goals and careers. At this age, students are in the transition phase from school to college and are cognitively capable of conceptualising possible selves (Oyserman et al., 2002). In this way, students might link the language being used as a MOI to their possible future selves. This echoes many psychologists’ observations that people, and especially
adolescents, need to feel their self-worth in society or in groups significant to them, the lack of which can bring about an identity crisis (Erikson, 1950).

Another significant theory that I use to analyse the data in this study is Bourdieu’s (1991) idea of capital because of my understanding that Bourdieu has adapted and talks about Bhabha’s idea of third space and hybridity, ideas that are most talked about by the poststructuralist scholars. Bourdieu’s concept of capital, as discussed above under Section 3.5, is clearly about social class and society as he states that capital is internalised through society and social structures such as schools (Bourdieu, 1992).

While I have focussed on the post-structuralist perspective as this is the contemporary view of identity which believes that identity is in flux, always in process, can be constructed and co-constructed and that it is context dependent, I believe that there is an overlap in how post-structuralists and scholars from other major traditions understand identity. In my study, I am investigating the identity formation of students learning in different languages in different educational contexts so the post-structuralist view of identity provides me with a bigger picture of the concept of identity formation that also includes ideas from the psychological, social psychological and sociological perspectives. The figure given below incorporates the key concepts of investment and other theoretical concepts related to investment and identity formation.

Figure 4: The interrelationship between the key concepts of investment and other theoretical concepts and elements.
Before moving on to empirical studies on the language used as the MOI and the impact this has on identity formation, it is important to discuss the links between language and identity presented in the literature.

### 3.12. Language and identity

In the earlier discussion of post-structuralist theories of identity formation, how identity in language learning is conceptualised by various applied linguists was explored. Most of the concepts discussed above – subjectivity, investment, discourse, Bourdieu’s capital – have been used by post-structuralist scholars to theorise identity in relation to language learning. Indeed, in the social sciences, among the many factors that are considered to have an impact on individual identity formation, language remains an important component. This is unsurprising given that language is the means of communication and thus of expressing oneself, which determines a person’s identity by differentiating...
them from others (Jaspal, 2009). Hall, Cheng and Matthew (2006) argue that language is the means ‘by which we bring our worlds into existence, maintain them, and shape them for our purposes’ (p. 2). People learn languages for various purposes, for example for social interaction, in academia and for employment. Every language has its own significance. Some languages, however, carry more weight in comparison to others because of the advantages associated with them. For example, English, as the global language, is viewed as a powerful language in terms of the educational, employment and social benefits it confers (Crystal, 2005; Graddol, 2006; Tinsley & Board, 2017).

The power of English, a *lingua franca* in the current globalised world (Butler, 2013), cannot be ignored. The relationship between language and power has been well documented in the literature (Bhattacharya, 2016; Butler, 2013; Cheney et al., 2005; Mansoor, 2003; Sonntag, 2009). Kachru and Smith (2009) argue that the power of the English language can be measured by its demographic distribution, its native and non-native users across cultures. Kachru (1976) further illustrates the power of the English language by noting that English carries the ‘vehicular load’ of science and technology of the 20th century (p. 2). Moreover, English works as a gatekeeper to wealthy and prestigious positions both within and between nations (Pennycook, 1995). The dominance of English in India can be seen in the fact that English is perceived to be more influential than the official national language, Hindi (Mohanty, 2006). Academically, the English language serves as a gatekeeper to higher education and prestigious fields of study (Berry, 2013).

Hence, as a result of globalisation and English being considered a *lingua franca*, those who do not have a secure command of English consider this lack of knowledge as a threat to their identities (Belhiah, 2016; Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins & Leung, 2013; Shiang, 2013). This has caught the attention of many scholars and therefore a large number of studies have been carried out which examined the influence of English as a second language on people’s identity formation (Hennig, 2010; Javdan, 2014; Norton, 2010b; Ricento, 2005; Wright
& Taylor, 1995); as a foreign language (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Dornyei, 2005; Norton, 2009; Taylor et al., 2013); and as a language of learning (MOI) (Belhiah, 2016; Chan, 2010; Dash & Senapati, 2014; Soren, 2013; Ladousa, 2016; Luscombe & Kazdal, 2014; Sandhu, 2015).

3.13. Review of relevant studies

A particular language being used as a medium of instruction (MOI) in the educational context suggests that students are being taught curriculum content in a language other than their mother tongue or home language. This phenomenon has been given different names in various geographical contexts. For example, it is referred to as ‘immersion’ or ‘content-based language learning’ in North America and ‘English-taught programmes’ and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in Europe. EMI (English medium of instruction), however, is a term universally used in different geographical contexts and for different educational stages, such as primary, secondary (high school) or higher education. In the Indian context, EMI is generally referred to as English medium (EM) and so this term is used in the current study; the term PM is used to refer to Punjabi (regional language) medium of instruction.

Much of the literature since the 1970s has investigated English as a second language (Macaro et al., 2018). Scholars have focused on different aspects of SLL and foreign language learning, such as learners’ attitude towards SLL (Gajalakshmi, 2013; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Krashen, 1981; Mojca, 2015); learners’ difficulties in learning English (Bowl, 2001; Chand, 2005; Hiew, 2012; Kannan, 2009; Santos, Black, & Sandelowski, 2014); and learners’ motivation in choosing SLL (Akram & Ghani, 2013; Dornyei, 2009a; Geoghegan, 2016; Ushioda, 2016). The central thread that runs through these studies is the significance of English as a global language. Researchers and educators in the field of SLL have realised that as a result of globalisation, many people need to learn new language skills, particularly in English, in order to meet the demands of the international labour market (Manh, 2012). Tsui and Tollefson (2007) call these technological and English skills ‘global literacy skills’ and
argue that ‘to respond to the rapid changes brought about by globalization, all countries have been trying to ensure that they are adequately equipped with these two skills’ (p. 1). This may be the reason why most countries in the world are becoming aware of the importance of introducing EMI in educational settings. The introduction of EMI, however, has both positive and negative implications for economics, culture and the identities of people in particular contexts (Coleman, 2006).

In the last 20 years, the field of applied linguistics and foreign/second language learning and the area of EMI have seen an increase in the literature on language and identities of the learners. The literature covers various geographical contexts and types of participants; for example, migrant women in Canada (Norton, 1995); kindergarten and primary school students in Canada (Day, 2002; Toohey, 2000); migrant students from Hong Kong studying abroad (Jackson, 2008); Chinese migrant students in the United States (McKay & Wong, 1996); and Chinese pupils learning in complementary schools in England (Francis et al., 2009). Another strand of research in this area investigated how learners negotiate differences in their identities in the L2 writing process (e.g. Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Majchrzak, 2018; Ramanathan, 2003). This is however by no means a complete list of the work in the area of language and identity formation in different parts of the world. Given the vast number of empirical studies conducted in relation to language and identity formation, in the following section I only present studies that are directly relevant to my work: Norton’s study on language and identity and other empirical studies on SLL, EMI and identity formation which mainly draw on post-structuralist perspectives, in particular the construct of ‘investment’ (Norton, 1995). The review of these studies will thus present relevant work that has previously contributed to research in the area of language and identity formation.

A great deal of research in second language learning (SLL) in the 1970s and 1980s was conducted to investigate the personalities, learning styles and motivations of individual learners (Brown, 1973; Greenfield, 1972; Schumann,
1976; Taylor, Guiora, Catford, & Lane, 1969). However, Norton (2016) argues that ‘SLA (Second Language Acquisition) theorists have not developed a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context’ (p. 12). In relation to this, Block (2007) suggests that ‘before the 1990s, there was little or no research examining identity as a site of struggle, the negotiation of difference, ambivalence, structure and agency, communities of practice, symbolic capital, or any other constructs associated with poststructuralist identity’ (p. 866-867). Norton (1997) further aimed to develop a more dynamic view of identity formation by using the term identity to refer to ‘how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space and how the person understands possibilities for the future’ (p. 410). For Norton, language, identity and context interact; she considers that the various settings in which learning takes place influence and are in turn influenced by a learner’s identity. Perhaps Norton’s (2000) study in which she explored the issues of identity, power, and access to English in classroom and workplace of five migrant women in Canada was the most influential study in the field of language and identity.

3.13.1. Norton’s study on language and identity
Norton’s earlier ethnographic study (1995) explored changes in participants’ social identities over time and, in particular, their struggle to achieve the right to speak in second language settings. In her study of five migrant women in Canada, Norton however investigated ‘how the learners make sense of their experiences and to what extent their particular historical memories intersected with their investment in language learning’ (Norton & Toohey, 2002, p. 22). Norton used various methods to collect data including individual diaries, interviews, questionnaires and observations. In her study, one young worker, Eva, transformed her self-concept over time, from an unskilled immigrant with no right to speak to that of a multicultural citizen possessing ‘the power to impose reception’ (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). Another participant in this study, Martina, also claimed her right to speak. Norton argued that as Martina’s
identity changed from submissive immigrant to caregiver, so did her opportunities to speak and learn English. For Norton therefore, identity is influencing and being influenced by the various settings in which learning takes place. Following the post-structuralist tradition of identity formation, Norton perceived identity as multiple, dynamic and fluid. The multidimensional nature of identity is illustrated in this work through the figure of Martina, an immigrant, mother, language-learner and wife.

Norton’s (1995) work also drew our attention to the role of power relations, which can further influence language learners’ identity formation. In her study, Norton focused on the participants’ investment in the target language learning; for example, she (1995) pointed out that Eva had more exposure to English because of her full-time employment and that she was invested in learning English because of her understanding that she needed English ‘to work where she wanted to work...and to rid herself from an immigrant identity’ (p. 98). In this study, Norton (1995b) also drew our attention to resistance to learning the target language. For example, Katrina, another participant, stopped participating in English classes after her ESL teacher told her not to take computer classes because her English was not good enough. Katrina’s aim was to enter the teachers’ community of practice which she was a member of in her native country Poland before moving to Canada. The example of Katrina indicates how becoming a member of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) can influence language learners’ investment and identities. Grounded in a post-structuralist view of identity formation, Norton’s (1995, 2000) studies influenced much of the later research on language learning and identity formation of migrant students (Cummins, 2001; Jeong & Lee, 2014; McKay & Wong, 1996; Rumbaut, 1994); students (Cummins, 2009; Tse, 2000); and women participants (MacPherson, 2005; Sandhu, 2010). Many of these studies were conducted in a context where English was the dominant language of education and society, and thus they revealed the struggles of the participants (mostly migrants) to construct their identities in a new environment.
3.13.2. Other empirical studies on SLL, EMI and identity formation

3.13.2.1. Studies with adult participants

In an ethnographic action research study carried out over a period of seven years, MacPherson involved women participants to explore identity issues among Tibetan refugee women training to become nuns in the Dolma Ling institute in the Indian Himalayas. Macpherson (2005) investigated the identity conflict faced by Tibetan refugee women by undertaking a case study with five participants by using interviews and observation as research methods. She found that their struggle for identity led to frustration and a desire to liberate themselves from the fixed identity of ‘refugee’. Macpherson illustrated the way in which curricular reforms and the introduction of a bilingual Tibetan-English programme had transformed the identity dynamics for these women in the developing world. As refugee women in India, Macpherson’s participants were from an under-represented group. For these Tibetan women, English was an asset that enabled them to negotiate with international communities, and thus learning English was related to their political freedom, as well as to their economic prosperity. Macpherson (2005) noted that one of the participants, Duchen, rejected English language learning because the teacher addressed her as a woman, not a nun. According to Macpherson, for ‘these [Tibetan] women becoming a nun was a gesture of liberation... [which] provided them with an important lifestyle option outside of marriage and child-rearing’ (p. 594). Another participant in Macpherson’s (2005) study, Thupten, on the other hand, embraced the bilingual Tibetan-English language programme in an assimilative manner. She was passionate about the modernisation of Tibetan society and was imprisoned several times as a result of campaigning for freedom. Macpherson (2005) pointed out that Thupten was aware that officials educated in the Tibetan-English language dominated the Tibetan government. Macpherson also noted that Thupten was not very good at English, but nonetheless, she was highly motivated to assimilate into an English-speaking culture and global modernity. Thus, according to Macpherson (2005), the Tibetan women’s decisions to join the Dolma Ling institute and become nuns...
was based on several different choices: ‘(a) to commit to a life of renunciation for liberation (traditional), (b) to serve the Tibetan nationalist freedom struggle (modern), or (c) to have a socially acceptable life outside of marriage and child-rearing (alternative)’ (p. 595). This reflects how Tibetan women similar to Norton’s (2005) participants (women) discussed earlier invested in different ways in their identity formation.

As discussed in the previous section, different theories related to identity formation, discourse and discursive practices play a vital role in understanding an individual’s identity formation. Focussing on identity formation in discourse, Piller and Takahashi (2006) emphasise the discursive construction of the ‘desire’ to learn English which was influenced by Japanese media discourses in particular in promotional materials for English language schools and study abroad programmes. In their ethnographic study, Piller and Takahashi (2006) employed formal and informal interviews, fieldnotes and observation to explore the identities of Japanese women who expressed a desire to learn English as a second language in Australia as a result of being influenced by media discourses. They believed that their lack of knowledge of English could have a considerable impact on their identities and, consequently, on their emotional and love lives, given that they wanted partners who were native speakers. According to Piller and Takahashi (2006) the lives the participants aspired to were entirely associated with English. Their aspirations to learn English, however, were a result of the influence of media discourses – ‘... be it the language school or on a broader level, the consumption of branded goods’ (p. 80). In order to fulfil a desire to be part of ‘Sydney’s fashionable society’ and to have a ‘handsome boyfriend’, they sacrificed their careers in Japan and invested in English learning so as to become fluent in English. The researchers also documented that some of the participants silenced themselves because they felt that it was ‘impossible to become a white native speaker’ (p. 80). The researchers concluded that the women in their study told contradictory stories; some wanted Western men as boyfriends but also ridiculed Western men as ‘losers’. For example, Yoko, one of the participants who wanted to become a
white native speaker, also noted that she had rejected many romantic proposals by many white native-speaking men. The researchers concluded that this is how these women challenge the hegemonic discourses that ‘white native speakers are desired and powerful and non-native speakers are desiring and powerless’ (p. 78). This study revealed how individual’s desires are formed by the discourses circulating in a given social context and also how the participants engaged their agency to either acquire the desired object.

Similarly, in a narrative analysis of 19 women participants, Sandhu (2010) conducted interviews to investigate how Indian women constructed their identities in relation to their language of learning, and found that EMI in India was deeply associated with social and cultural capital. Sandhu (2010) highlights how ideologies and prejudices related to EMI and regional language medium education sustained and perpetuated negative stereotypes about people learning in languages other than English. For instance, women participants who had been educated in Hindi (regional language) talked about the way this developed their negative self-perceptions and discouraged them from considering themselves worthy of marrying an EMI-educated man. Sandhu’s (2010) study reported the ideological hegemony of such discriminatory beliefs. The studies discussed above highlight how women in different geographical contexts constructed their identities based on English learned as a second language or as a MOI. In the studies reviewed above in this section, the participants involved were adults, mainly women.

Surprisingly, despite a thorough search of the literature not many studies engaging men as participants were found. Indeed, there is a lack of research that explicitly addresses men’s identity formation in relation to language in any context worldwide. There are a few studies involving men and women in the area related to health and social issues related to gender such as HIV, homosexuality and the impact of these on their identities (see Johal, Shelupanov, & Norman, 2012). This raises the question of how investment in language learning impacts men’s identity formation. Although this is not the topic of the current study it is worth noting that there is a huge gap in the
literature in respect of the type of participants involved in studies on language and identity formation.

3.13.2.2. Studies with immigrant student participants

As a result of the increased international migration of students to study abroad, researchers have also paid significant attention to the ways in which immigrant students construct their identities in foreign language contexts (Cummins, 2001; Rumbaut, 1994). Many of these researchers drew on Norton’s (1995) concept of investment. McKay and Wong (1996) for example, unlike Norton (1995b) who mainly focused on the speaking skills of the participants in her study, investigated students’ investment in reading, writing, listening and speaking. They argue that investment in each of these skills can have a different impact on students’ identity in terms of how they view themselves and are viewed by others (Norton & Toohey, 2002). McKay and Wong (1996) employed observations and used the concepts of discourse and investment in their study with Chinese immigrant school students from seventh and eighth grades in California in the United States and asserted that classrooms are a site of social discourse. It is there that the students construct their multiple identities which shift according to their interactions with others and are based on the multiple discourses in which they become involved. The multiple identities of the students are then found to have varying impacts on their investment in language learning. For example, Michael, one of the participants, was also very good at athletics and thus very popular among the students. His identity as an athlete in school discourse encouraged him to invest in English speaking. McKay and Wong (1996) noted that due to this investment his English speaking skills were far better than his writing skills.

Focussing on the students transiting from high school to college and with the purpose of comparing the ‘representation of ESL students’ in the two educational institutes, Harklau (2000) presented ethnographic case studies using interviews, observations and written documents with three US immigrant students with English as their second language. The way in which the two institutions represented the students had significant consequences for
students’ identities and their attitudes towards learning. As reported by Harklau (2000), in their high schools these students were represented as ‘hardworking, highly motivated students who had triumphed over adversity’ (p. 46). However, in college, the three participants were enrolled in the ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) program to test their English language competence. The researcher stated that in the college their previous experience and knowledge of English were overlooked and they were simply labelled ‘ESOL students’, which they found very unwelcoming as compared to the high school where they were represented as ‘hardworking’ and ‘well behaved’ students. The students resisted going to ESOL classes because there they were represented as newly-arrived immigrants which ignored the fact that they had been living in the United States for many years by this time. This is an example of how, because of the fear of losing their identities, the students resisted the norms of the new context. Consequently, Harklau (2000) concluded that the students’ investment in English learning was affected by the labels applied to them by the institutions.

In her study, Jackson (2008) drew on post-structuralist and sociocultural ideas ‘to address the nature of language learning, identity (re)construction and the development of intercultural communicative competence and intercultural personhood in L2 sojourners’ (p. 11). Secondly, she attempted ‘to test contemporary sociocultural perspectives by investigating the actual experiences of L2 sojourners following them from their home environment [Hong Kong] to their host [United Kingdom] culture and back again’ (p. 11). In this ethnographic study with four Hong Kong university students studying abroad, Jackson carried out interviews with the participants and documented their experiences in their home country and host culture. Jackson focused on the complex issue of identity construction when people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds come together. In her findings, Jackson documented that Ada and Cori, two of the participants, struggled to maintain their identities as HongKongers in their host country. They were often mislabelled as Japanese or Chinese Mainlanders by their host families. As a result, these
young women viewed themselves as ‘foreigners and outsiders’ in their host country. This led them to develop a negative attitude towards the host culture; they resisted spending time with their host families and other locals and were unwilling to use English. In contrast, Elsa and Niki, the other two participants, were more open to the host language and culture. Rather than taking their hosts’ attitude towards them negatively they reflected on the possible reasons, such as their ‘behaviour’ and ‘communication style’ that might have resulted in the poor outcomes. In this way, they fully embraced the host language and culture and were more inclined to reconstruct their identities in a new linguistic and cultural environment. Jackson (2008) concluded that all the participants were influenced to various degrees by the social linguistic and cultural environment of their own and the host country. She noted that their identities were ‘contradictory, relational, and dynamic...and [their] sense of self-shifted over historical time and space’ (p. 198).

3.13.2.3. Studies with student participants in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts

In this section, I review studies conducted in some of the countries like Korea, Japan, China and India where English is not the native language but is the dominant language used as a MOI in schools and/or in higher education. Dearden’s (2014) study using questionnaires distributed in 55 countries (where English is not a first language) in association with the British Council, is the ‘only study attempting to map the growth of EMI on a global scale’ (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 47). According to Dearden (2014) the report of their study provides ‘a birds eye view’ of EMI in 55 countries which highlights the global phenomenon of EMI (p. 4). Dearden’s findings revealed that EMI was rejected in some countries like Indonesia for reasons such as teachers’ lack of proficiency in English, expenditure in terms of resources required for EMI, and students’ lack of proficiency in English. Despite these barriers, in most of the countries surveyed EMI was in high demand by the parents. India was one of the countries that fell into this category. Therefore, as a result of EMI being recognised as a source of instrumental (related to economic benefits such as
employment) and integrative (associated with desire to integrate successfully with the target language speakers’ community) opportunities, English has been embraced as a MOI in education by many countries.

As a result of the fast EMI growth rate across developing countries where English is not the first language, researchers have paid significant attention to the effect of EMI on the social, cultural, educational and professional aspects of people’s lives. For example, there are studies conducted in Hong Kong (Lin & Morrison, 2010; Yip, Tsang, & Cheung, 2003); Bangladesh (Hamid & Jahan, 2015); and India (Ramanathan, 2005b; Sandhu, 2010). In most of these studies, the scholars have focused on the positive and negative effects of EMI on students in their higher education in universities (Belhiah, 2016; Bhattacharya, 2013; Coleman, 2006; Lueg & Lueg, 2015; Manh, 2012).

A considerable number of studies have focused on the impact of EMI on students’ academic achievements in EFL contexts. For example, an ethnographic study conducted with college student participants by Ramanathan (2005) in Gujarat, India, using observations and field notes, revealed the literacy (reading and writing) struggles faced by the regional language medium students in higher education when compared to their counterparts who studied at EMI schools. In the literature various reasons have been given for such discrepancies in students’ competence which are mainly based on their learning in English or regional language. For example, Bhattacharya (2016) presented a case study with five young learners which investigated literacy practices such as rote memorisation and textual translation in EMI schools. Employing observations, structured and semi-structured interviews and informal conversations, Bhattacharya found that such practices hindered students’ critical thinking, thereby at times leading to poor language skills. Moreover, regarding the impact of EMI on students’ academic achievements, Piller (2016) asserted that, in EFL contexts, students focussed simultaneously on complex academic content and improving their language proficiency which put them at a disadvantage. Piller calls it a ‘sink-or-swim’ approach in which the linguistic minority students are at disadvantage.
and confront a twofold challenge that jeopardizes their academic performance (p. 170). Rani et al. (2014) undertook a comparative analysis of English-speaking skills among EM and PM school students of 10th grade from ten schools in the district of Barnala in Punjab, India. These researchers found that there was a significant difference between the proficiency levels of students from Punjabi medium and English medium schools. Several other studies have been carried out which report on the impact of EMI on the academic achievements of students (Kingdon, 1996; Kumari, 2016a; Singh & Sarkar, 2015).

Unlike such studies which highlighted that students who do not get chance to learn in English are at disadvantage, there are also a few studies (e.g. Patra & Babu, 1999) carried out in India that concluded that the regional language medium school students who had high IQ levels and they performed better than their counterparts in EM schools. As a multilingual country however, the Three Language Formula language policy discussed in the previous chapter is not applied consistently in all states in India. Hence, the few studies that highlight the advantages of the regional language medium over EMI cannot be generalised to the entire Indian context.

Although some of the studies presented above involved school student participants, they mainly focused on the cognitive and academic outcomes of students learning English as a foreign language but not on the impact that it had on their identities. However, there have been studies conducted in Punjab and several other contexts, both inside and outside India, which found that there is a close association between English-speaking and an individual having higher social and economic status (Bhattacharya, 2013; Kaur, 2015; Malik & Mohamed, 2014; Singh, 2006). These researchers found that learning in English conferred students with educational, economical, and social benefits and, consequently, EMI is the most sought-after method of school education. However, there are relatively very few studies of learning in EMI and students’ identity formation in the EFL contexts.
3.13.2.4. Studies related to EMI and students’ identity in EFL contexts

Alongside the researchers’ significant attention to EMI because of its instrumental advantages, and their consideration of the negative impact of not learning in English on students’ academic achievements, very few researchers in their investigations engaged with the students’ identity formation in relation to the language used as the MOI. Studies conducted in this particular field in different EFL contexts are reviewed in this section.

Hamid and Jahan (2015) explored the effect of EMI on student identity formation. Drawing on the identity theory of positioning, and Bourdieu’s concept of capital and symbolic struggle, they investigated the role played by MOI in shaping students’ identities in a globalising world. They used an analytical framework comprising content analysis to analyse letters written by students who completed their 10th grade of school at either an EMI or a Bangladeshi language medium school. They analysed 33 EM (English medium) and 28 BM (Bangladeshi medium) letters published in the Daily Star newspaper from 2002 to 2011. The BM students identified themselves as more patriotic i.e. as true Bangladeshis which represents their national identity in contrast to the EM students who they (the BM students) considered did not have much to contribute to nation building and identified as unpatriotic. However, the EM students highlighted their identities as a strong group who were ‘able to exert their social elitism, social capital (i.e. connections with political power), and linguistic capital’ (Hamid & Jahan 2015, p. 87). The researchers thus argued that EMI triggered social divisions that are rooted in the discursive space in society.

Similarly, Ladousa (2016), in his fieldnotes from a study in Banaras in North India focussing on the impact of social discourses concerning EMI on students’ identities, noted that the use of Hindi (the national language) and English as the MOI ‘construct centre/periphery distinction in talk about schools’ (p. 214). Ladousa emphasised how, in spoken discourse in Banaras, Hindi medium and English medium schools are viewed as polar opposites. According to Ladousa (2016), the linguistic difference between the two types of school is clearly
reflected in their advertisements using two different scripts: Devnagri (Hindi) and English. The researcher stated that for the people in Banaras, the language of instruction, Hindi or English, becomes ‘a compelling aspect of schools’ identity’ (p. 217). Exploring the people’s beliefs, Ladousa found that English medium schools are preferred because of the social and economic opportunities that English provides. By contrast, Hindi medium schools are not considered as valuable due to the insecurities for the future that learning in Hindi might bring. There have been some similar studies conducted in India which highlight the positive impact of English speaking on one’s social status and positioning (Banerjee, 2016; Ramanathan, 2008; Sekar, 2013).

Khan, Sultana, Bughio, and Naz (2014) in their mixed methods study using questionnaires and interviews with university students revealed that students from Bangladeshi medium schools faced problems in their higher education studies when they entered English medium universities. These students were not only at an academic disadvantage because they had little or no command of English, but this also had a negative impact on their self-image and identity. The students in this study were also found to be overlooked by the teachers and it was difficult for them to engage in discussions in English and to interact with other English-speaking students. Khan et al. (2014) reported that, in this way, students became ‘marginalised’ as a result of their limited proficiency in English.

From the studies discussed in this section, it is clear that the impact of learning in EMI on students’ identity has been investigated in some countries where English is not a native language although several researchers noted the scarcity of research in this area (e.g. Belhiah, 2016; Chan, 2010; Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Lai, 2004; Luscombe & Kazdal, 2014). Contemporary researchers, therefore, suggest exploring how EMI affects students’ identity formation, in particular in contexts where English is not the first language (Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Sandhu, 2010). It is important to note that most of the studies conducted in India discussed above have investigated how learning in English or regional languages can have an impact on students’ cognition and
academic achievement. A few studies conducted in states in India other than Punjab have helped in identifying the gulf between the college students who had their school education in EM and regional language medium (e.g. Ramanathan, 2005).

Competence in English in India is viewed as a ladder to success and has become a goal for all from primary school onwards (Erling et al., 2016). Many educational, occupational, and even social advantages associated with learning in English have been discussed in the literature (see Mohanty, 2006; Ramanathan, 2005b; Sah, 2020; Sandhu, 2014b), but scholars have also highlighted unintended adverse effects of EMI. These include the potential loss of indigenous languages (Manh, 2012; Mohanty, 2010); the shift away from and deterioration of national languages (Garcia et al., 2017; Hanewald, 2016); and, specifically, unequal access to the English language (Arshad & Malik, 2016; Bhattacharya, 2013; Jaspal, 2009; Kainth & Kaur, 2015), that can have a negative impact on students’ self-image. Many of the studies discussed in the sections above indicate that unequal access to EMI may harm people’s perceptions of themselves based on whether or not they have had the opportunity to learn in English. Therefore, to investigate high school students’ identity formation we must consider both the advantages of learning in the mother tongue and the complexities associated with attempting to introduce EMI into all schools in India. These are discussed in the following paragraphs. This discussion will further help to identify the impact of EMI on an individual’s identity formation.

3.13.2.5. Advantages of learning in the mother tongue

There is a plethora of research highlighting the advantages of learning in the mother tongue, for example students’ better academic performance (Cummins, 2001); students’ better communicative skills (Cummins, 2008; Jayalaksmi & Hussaini, 2020; Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976); reduced language loss among students (Mohanty, 2010; Phillipson, 2017; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009); and a lower communicative gap between parents and children (Cummins, 2001; Luz & Cruz, 2013). Furthermore, some contend that mother
tongue education results in increased self-confidence in learners and helps students with learning a new or second language (Dutcher, 2003). Some researchers argue that children can understand concepts and content more easily in their mother tongue and can retain them for longer (Cummins, 2009; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2006; Piller, 2016). In contrast, using the dominant language, instead of the children's mother tongue in the educational system, prevents children's access to education because of the linguistic and pedagogical barriers this creates (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). Research supporting bilingualism also stresses that learning a second language enhances children's linguistic and cognitive development, and has a significant influence on an individual's academic, social and cultural identity formation (Coleman, 2006; Cummins, Bismilla, Chow, & Cohen, 2005; Norton, 2016).

Despite the number of advantages of learning in mother tongue, as a result of the impact of EMI, children are required to leave their mother tongues at the school gate, which is the case in many private schools in India (Jayalaksmi & Hussaini, 2020). Since language is an integral part of one’s identity it is noteworthy that asking children not to speak their mother tongue in school, but rather in the dominant language, is like asking them to leave their identities at the school gate and they, therefore, can feel rejected and become less involved in school activities (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Block, 2007; Norton, 2009). Many applied linguists view this forced language shift as one of the causes of the rapid loss of the mother tongue because it is not being reinforced within the school context (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Groff, 2016; Pavlenko, 2002). This language loss has been viewed as a crime against humanity and referred to as linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Using a bilingual educational approach, (i.e. using both the mother tongue and the dominant language), may perhaps communicate to students that their achievements in terms of their mother tongue proficiency are acknowledged and appreciated within the classrooms. This affirmation of students’ home languages within classrooms, in this case in the Punjabi context, can encourage high school students to view their competence in Punjabi (their
mother tongue) as a valued component of their identities. Therefore, the use of bilingual instruction, or the additive bilingual approach proposed by Cummins (2005), may not only enable students to use their mother tongue more productively to learn the second language and the school curriculum content (Cummins, 2005), but also may prevent language loss. However, in light of the top-down Indian education policy, the implementation of a bilingual/dual language of instruction programme in Indian schools would not be a straightforward task. The following section provides a discussion of the complexities of EMI in the Indian educational context.
3.13.2.6. Complexities of EMI

There are a number of complexities in implementing EMI in all schools in India. English is not a mother tongue but is the dominant language used in education in India. EMI, therefore, is believed to be the cause of some of the problems in the multilingual Indian context. This section discusses both the complexities of implementing EMI and the complexities caused by EMI in India, as debated in the literature.

3.13.2.6.1. Complexities to implement EMI

There is a plethora of research based on EMI and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) which highlights the complexities of teaching in a language other than the mother tongue (Bruton, 2011; Coyle, 2007; Nikula, Dalton-Puffer, Llinares, & Lorenzo, 2016). CLIL is the policy adopted in the European educational system which focuses on teaching content in a foreign language and which has dual aims: to teach the content and simultaneously to teach a foreign language (Nikula et al., 2016).

Various factors, such as teachers’ lack of training in teaching English as a second language (S. Mahapatra & Mishra, 2019; Walia, 2010); high pupil-teacher ratios (Muralidharan & Kremer, 2006; Tooley et al., 2007); and lack of resources or materials for supporting and creating the English language teaching environment (Mohanty, 2010; Muralidharan, 2013; Sah, 2020), have been discussed as the factors contributing to the complexities with implementing EMI in all the schools in India. English is not used extensively in families and in the social lives of children in India. EMI students in India are often taught by teachers who have English as their second language and they share the same linguistic and social environments as their students (Bhatnagar & Das, 2014; Ramanathan, 2005, 2014). Therefore, researchers argue that teachers have insufficient English skills to deliver the content in English, and that pupils are unable to understand what they are being taught (Sah, 2020). Hence, implementing EMI in all schools in India would add to the burden of teachers were they required to teach the content in English, and would
increase the burden for students who do not receive a great deal of support with their learning at home.

Moreover, the average pupil-teacher ratio in EM private schools is less than the ratio in public schools in India (Government of India, 2019). This is one of the main problems affecting the quality of English teaching and learning and EMI in India. Small class size in general, and small language class size in particular, are believed to enhance educational quality in EMI (Nguyen et al., 2014). In a survey conducted in elementary schools in the eight states of India, Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2006) found that some of the schools in rural areas were single teacher schools where one teacher teaches all the subjects and in the majority of cases were untrained. This situation reflects the widespread shortage of trained teachers in India. Large class sizes have also been noted as one of the factors that may affect the quality of teaching as teachers may have to be more attentive to behaviour management, class control, and discipline such as students’ taking turns in answering etc. It has also been revealed in some studies that, because of the restrictions in physical movement resulting from large class sizes, group project work in the classrooms is not possible (see Nguyen, Warren, & Heather, 2014). Large class size, therefore, may influence the teacher’s choice of pedagogical methods that can be used in the class.

Large class size becomes a cause of insufficient communicative activities in classrooms which is also one of the complexities of EMI. English is a foreign language to students in India and teachers use the grammar-translation method to teach English because their main aim is to cover the topics for the examination so students do not receive many opportunities to communicate in English (Martin, Krishnamurthy, Bhardwaj, & Charles, 2003).

As has been discussed in a previous section of the thesis, the main objective for implementing EMI in India was to develop students’ competence in English to enable them to access higher education and employment, both domestically and abroad. The success of EMI in developing countries like India, however, is contingent upon material resources (i.e. facilities which promote language
learning such as libraries to promote reading, and Information and Communication Technologies) as well as human resources (e.g. well-trained teachers). Lack of material and human resources is the case in many multilingual contexts, including India. For example, Sah and Li’s (2018) study in Nepal, Park’s (2011) study in South Korea and Kaur & Bhangu’s (2015) study in Punjab, in India, reported that teachers’ lack of training in teaching English as a second language, and a lack of other material resources which are required to teach ESL efficiently, were important factors which prevented successful EMI instruction. There are pedagogical methods such as codeswitching (the alternate use of two languages) and translanguaging (use of two or more languages to prevent barriers between bilingual speakers and to facilitate communication in multilingual contexts) which can be used to enhance students’ understanding of the content (Garcia et al., 2017; Heller, 1992). However, because of a lack of training in using these strategies in teaching and in classrooms, most interactions in classrooms are carried out in the local language/s. There can be little expectation that teachers, who lack appropriate training, could employ teaching techniques which would help their students to become competent in English. In order to implement EMI in all the schools, the government in India needs to consider appointing more teachers and, most importantly, well-trained teachers.

Policymakers often justify the implementation of EMI because it maximizes students’ exposure to English. There is a common belief that in non-anglophone multilingual countries proficiency in English, which people aspire to achieve to enter the global world, can be better accomplished by learning in EMI. Despite the stakeholders’ (parents, students) aspirations for EMI, which is believed to increase students’ proficiency in English, the lack of explicit policy on medium of instruction (MOI) in India seems to be one of the reasons why EMI is not implemented in all the schools in India. The Three Language Formula (TLF), the language in education policy, guides the use of language/s in education. TLF encourages the use of regional languages at least in primary education so it appears to support the use of Indian languages in education.
For example, following the TLF, the Government of India (2019) recommends that:

When possible, the medium of instruction – at least until Grade 5 but preferably till at least Grade 8 – will be the home languages/mother tongue/local languages. Therefore, the home/local language shall continue to be taught as a language whereas possible (p. 80).

Further on in the report, it states that:

The school education system will make its best effort to use the regionally preponderant home language as the medium of instruction. However, the system should also make full efforts to establish an adequate number of schools having a medium of instruction catering to significant linguistic minorities in that region (p. 80).

It has been discussed earlier in Section 2.9 in the thesis that the decision to implement EMI in 400 government schools in Punjab was influenced by the stakeholders’ (e.g. parents, teachers, students and local leaders) ideologies that EMI provides students with more educational and occupational opportunities. Such ideologies appear to have been shaped by the hegemonic position of English in India (NDTV, 2015; Sandhu, 2014b). In addition, in the multilingual Indian context, English is viewed as an ‘alternate hegemony’ to ‘challenge traditional linguistic hierarchies’. EMI is perceived as ‘an egalitarian policy of redistributing linguistic capital of English more evenly across the diverse social classes’ with the hope that it will enable students to access equal opportunities in the future (Vaish, 2008, p. 199).

3.13.2.6.2. Complexities arising from EMI

Moving on to the complexities caused by the implementation of EMI, there are not only academic concerns but also social justice issues triggered by the use of EMI. One of the important issues is the division of people into different classes. EMI leads to unequal access to English in South-Asian countries (Sah, 2020). Sah argues that the provision of EMI in some
schools, but not in all, reproduces educational and social discrepancies among students. It divides students into two categories: those who have access, and those who have no access, to EMI. This further marginalizes students who are deficient in the language which operates as a form of valued linguistic capital in India and abroad.

Therefore, by perceiving competence in English as valued linguistic capital in a neoliberal world, people may look down upon their native language/s. This may impact adversely on their attitudes towards their local languages and can affect their sense of linguistic identity. This could cause a serious threat to the survival of local languages and may lead to linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Despite the negative implications of the introduction of EMI noted in many studies, positive effects of learning in English were also found (Macaro et al., 2018). One of the important positive constituents of the introduction of EMI is the fact that English is a global language and so it provides various linguistic, economic and social advantages.

Most of the studies reviewed and presented above in the literature review highlighted both the negative and positive effects of EMI mostly from an adult perspective i.e. women, teachers etc. Some of the studies also engaged university students. Very few studies have however involved high school students as the participants. The limited number of studies that do involve student participants in an Indian context also tend to focus on the impact of EMI on students' academic achievements (Kaur, 2015; Mohamed, 2013; Ramanathan, 2003).

Surprisingly, there have been relatively few studies carried out exploring how EMI in schools in India, can have an impact on high school students' identity formation. Despite an extensive search, no study carried out in the state of Punjab, in India investigating the impact of learning in English on high school students' identity formation by involving high school students, has been found. There is a wealth of literature on EMI and adults' identity formation. However,
EMI does not pose adolescents the same challenges as adults. Therefore, to explore several issues related to the language used for instruction and students’ identity formation, high school students are one of the groups which need to be involved in the research on such a sensitive topic. Indeed, the obvious gap of studies involving high school students in this significant area of research is one of the compelling reasons to carry out this study to contribute some context and age-appropriate research into the field of language and identity formation.

Importantly, in a recent systematic review of literature on EMI in higher education in many EFL countries, Macaro et al. (2018) assert that none of the works they reviewed report whether the institution, faculty or the students were engaged in discussions about or voiced their opinion on what subjects to introduce EMI in. In fact, in most of the studies, the reasons given for the introduction of EMI were the need to match the language of exams (Belhiah, 2016) and to learn the language of science and technology (Mojca, 2015; Sindkhedkar, 2012; Yip et al., 2003). Thus, it is important to engage high school students in this field of research and to gather their views on language and identity. As discussed earlier and as recommended in Erikson’s (1950) groundbreaking work on identity, that adolescent stage of life is when a person may go through an identity crisis and may become stressed especially at the earlier stage of transition from middle to high school or high school to college. It is relevant therefore to explore high school students’ perceptions about their identity formation in relation to the language in which they are learning.

Although some studies have generated valuable insights into identity in relation to EMI and learning in a regional language, not much light has been thrown on the contested nature of identity in contexts like Punjab in India where the great tensions between global, national and local languages to be used as the MOI in schools are basically caused by the politics of language in multilingual India. To my knowledge, no empirical research related to the MOI and its impact on either students’ academic achievements or their identity formation has been conducted in Punjab state, India and, in particular, in the
district of Gurdaspur, which is the site of the current study. This site is therefore considered new ground for an exploratory study of this kind.

I believe that identity in relation to MOI is an important issue to investigate at this time given that the Punjab government is introducing EMI in 400 government schools in Punjab. It was reported in a newspaper article by Singh (2017) in a well-known newspaper, The Tribune, that the education minister of Punjab, Aruna Chaudhary, had stated that ‘Back-to-back meetings are being held to implement the proposal [introduction of EMI in government schools]. Parents prefer private schools only because these have English as the medium of instruction’.

The current study therefore builds on and extends research on the language chosen as a MOI and the effect of that on the identity formation of students as a result of the challenges they face related to unequal access to the English language.

3.14. Summary

This chapter has presented the shift that has occurred in the conceptualisation of identity formation in relation to language learning. Several identity theories of scholars from the main disciplines of psychology, social psychology and sociology, together with the poststructuralist theories of identity, were explored. Empirical studies, from a variety of geographical contexts but of direct relevance to how learning in English or any other language can have an impact on the individual’s identity formation have also been discussed.
Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. Introduction

When selecting an appropriate methodology for any research study, careful planning to ensure coherence and integration between different parts and stages of the research, such as the aims, research question(s), data-gathering methods and the process of data analysis, is referred to as ‘methodological congruence’ (Morse & Richards, 2002). To ensure methodological congruence, which has been described as the hallmark of good qualitative research (Richards & Morse, 2007), I interwove all the above-mentioned components into a coherent and systematic framework throughout the current study. This methodological congruence allowed me to determine the most appropriate research approach and design. This chapter outlines the methodological decisions made and the steps taken to achieve methodological congruence.

First, this chapter presents the philosophical underpinnings of the current research. Second, it considers the research aims and the research question, as well as explaining the rationale underpinning the choices made about adopting a qualitative research approach and constructivist grounded theory in this study. Third, the chapter focuses on the sampling approaches and selection of the methods employed to recruit the participants in this study. Fourth, the data analysis approaches are outlined, followed by clarification of other research considerations, such as trustworthiness, reflexivity, generalizability and the ethical considerations with which this study complied.

4.2. Philosophical underpinnings

Philosophical or theoretical assumptions refer to the knowledge claims with which a researcher begins a research project. These assumptions are important to understand as they remain largely ‘hidden’ but play a vital role in providing direction when designing a research study (Creswell, 2014a). According to Creswell (2003), ‘researchers start a project with certain assumptions [knowledge claims] about how they will learn and what they will
learn during their inquiry’ (p. 6). These philosophical assumptions are referred to by different names in the literature on methodology, such as paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 1995), epistemologies and ontologies (Crotty, 2007). In my research, the theoretical perspective that the reality of the world is established by people’s beliefs and understandings, and that each individual constructs his/her reality, provides a philosophical basis. Specifically, I wanted to co-construct knowledge with the participants by obtaining their perspectives on high school students’ investment in the language in which they were learning and its impact on their identity formation, by using in-depth and highly-interactive interviews (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). New knowledge was then created based on the interpretive understanding of the knowledge shared by the participants. Thus, in executing this study, I drew on a constructivist paradigm which supports the idea that reality is constructed in individuals’ minds, and knowledge is created based on interpretations made about the subjects’ lived experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). In such research, the researcher is a participant and the results of the study are believed to be co-constructed by the shared understanding of the researcher and the participants. Before continuing the detailed discussion of the research methodology used for the current study, I will demonstrate the process of methodological congruence in the current study with the help of a diagram given below.
Figure 5: The research process demonstrating methodological congruence

- Research Problem and preliminary literature review
- Research Question
- Constructivist/interpretivist philosophical perspective
- Qualitative research design
- Purposive sampling

Semi-structured Interviews
Focus Groups
Documentary Analysis

Initial, focussed and selective coding
Translation and transcription

Constructivist Grounded Theory
Simultaneous data collection and analysis

The process of induction, deduction and abduction.

INDUCTION
DEDUCTION
ABDUCTION

TOP DOWN: Themes emerging from literature
BOTTOM UP: Themes emerging from the data

Discussion of the emerging findings

Constant Comparative Analysis
4.3. Research aims and research question
This study is exploratory, naturalistic and descriptive in nature; I sought to understand the phenomenon of high school students’ identity formation by investigating their experiences and opportunities, or lack of opportunities, in relation to the language in which they were learning in their school and their perceptions of their future possible selves, both of which may obstruct or nurture the formation of their identities. The research question in the current study was developed based on this aim and the main focus of the study which relates to investment and identity formation. Thus, the overarching research question my study sought to answer is: In what way, if at all, does investment in learning in English or Punjabi affect the learners’ construction of their identity?

4.4. Research approach and research design
To answer such a broad overarching research question, the ideal research approach would allow me to investigate the experiences of the participants, and elicit their insights into the complex phenomenon of identity formation. Therefore, I reflected on the possible strengths and limitations of the main research approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Given that I wanted to explore attitudes and experiences with the participants, I decided that the most appropriate research approach for this study was qualitative and that adopting Charmaz’s (2006) constructivist grounded theory would best allow me to find answers to my research questions. The rationale for these decisions is outlined below.

4.4.1. Qualitative research
The various debates surrounding research approaches in the methodology literature significantly influenced my thought process and decisions about the research approach and design chosen for the current study. The literature on research methodology stresses that the entire research approach should be in the service of the research aims and questions as they flow from the research problem and purpose statement (Bryman & Cramer, 1994; Creswell, 2014b;
Crotty, 2007; Maxwell, 1996; Robson, 2011; Thomas, 2013b). First, I identified that the research aims and the research question outlined above are exploratory, therefore, they necessitate a qualitative study. Second, I reviewed the literature on poststructuralist views on identity formation and on the concept of investment, and concluded that both would be particularly helpful to me when conceptually framing the current study. Poststructuralists view identity as multiple, changing, in flux, emerging and in process as it is co-constructed with other people in discourse (Bamberg & Fina, 2011; Cote & Levine, 2014; Norton, 2016b). The concept of investment, from a sociological perspective, serves as an overarching umbrella term which encompasses other main concepts used in this study such as capital, ideology and agency, and captures the complex relationships between power, language learning and identity formation (Norton, 1995). Both a poststructuralist view of identity formation and the concept of investment developed my understanding that students’ identities are constructed discursively in dominant social discourses in relation to the language of the MOI, and that power relations play an important role in the process of an individual’s identity formation. Moreover, Norton (2013) drawing on a poststructuralist perspective, recognised identity as multiple and changing, and argued that ‘a quantitative research paradigm relying on static and measurable variables will generally not be appropriate’, for research on identity formation (p. 13). For example, several studies on language attitudes and identity formation which were undertaken in the 1990s used quantitative surveys with closed-ended questionnaires (e.g. Axler, Yang, & Stevens, 1998; Evans et al., 1998; Pennington & Yue, 1994; Pierson, Fu, & Lee, 1980). Such surveys, however, are unlikely to reveal individuals’ attitudes and beliefs as the participants are restricted by having to choose from a list of possible answers provided by researchers, and hence they are not given an opportunity to express themselves openly.

Emphasising the significance of adopting a qualitative research approach to investigate identity formation, Norton states that we (the researchers) require a research approach which enables us to focus on ‘issues of equity and power’
and ‘work in this tradition [poststructuralism] calls for qualitative research design’ (Norton 2011, p. 426). Thus, engagement with the literature on identity formation, and in particular on the concept of investment in language learning and identity formation from a poststructuralist perspective, developed my understanding of how students’ identities are constructed. I therefore concluded that a qualitative mode of inquiry was the most appropriate approach for exploring the process of students’ identity formation in the current study.

A third reason for using a qualitative research approach was that qualitative research methodologies afford the participants an opportunity to debate and discuss their experiences, rather than simply responding to the assumptions made by the researcher, as in quantitative research which mostly lacks narrative accounts. Adopting qualitative approaches to data gathering allows us to hear the voices of participants, and therefore to understand their experiences within the context whereas a purely quantitative research approach provides a limited understanding of the context (Maxwell, 1996; Norton, 2009; Patton, 1990; Pavlenko, 2002a). In addition, qualitative research approaches enable to varying degrees the researcher’s participation in the field and allows the researcher to explore the research context in depth, thus enabling him/her to better understand the particular phenomenon under study.

There has been a strong focus on using narratives in research on identity formation (see Block, 2007; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Although I am not using narrative approaches to data gathering and analysis, the narrative accounts obtained in the participants’ interviews, in which attention was given to exploratory and interpretive inquiry, played a vital role in obtaining in-depth data from the participants in the current study. This type of research, therefore, has the capacity to illustrate the dynamics of a particular context. In the current study, the dialogic exchanges among the participants in the focus groups and with me (the interviewer) in the extended interview provided detailed interview excerpts or narrative accounts. Emphasising the significance of narrative accounts in research on identity and language, Norton
(2011) noted the particular contribution that narrative interview accounts can make to co-construct knowledge. Qualitative research, therefore, provides a holistic approach as it entails interactions with the participants through debate and discussion. Beyond these theoretical and methodological reasons, I had some personal reasons for preferring a qualitative research approach. Those are outlined in the following paragraph.

In this study, I also sought to explore whether and to what extent the different languages that are used as the MOI foster social inequality among students and the reproduction of an elite and non-elite social class in the Punjabi context. I was also keen to know if the discrepancies in the language of learning draw on the differences between students at a social level and affect their social identity. Social inequality caused by the difference in the language of teaching and learning in school could have an impact on students’ identity formation in relation to the social significance of the language in which they were being taught. I was interested in finding out whether PM students feel that they are marginalised or at a disadvantage because they are not learning in English, the most in-demand language for higher education and good professions in Punjab, India. Developing a detailed account of all this to further help me to identify the process of students' identity formation, was possible only through direct interaction with the participants in order to conduct a purely qualitative study by using extended interviews.

I also reflected on other types of research approaches: quantitative and mixed methods research. A quantitative research approach, which generally uses closed-ended questions, is considered more relevant when the intention is to generalise from a sample of a wide population (Fowler, 2013) and this is mainly relevant to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Additionally, a quantitative research approach primarily answers questions related to measuring ‘how many’ or ‘how much’ of certain variables. It is mainly used to identify the similarities and differences between different variables, to measure outcomes and to test theories. Moreover, quantitative research is often conducted by collecting data through surveys. However, in order to
explore participants’ beliefs within social settings in a more contextualised way, it was essential to be in direct contact with them to investigate social processes and to establish how the language used as the MOI has affected their identity formation.

Furthermore, in the literature on methodology, although quantitative and qualitative research tends to be viewed as two different approaches, with the former underpinning a positivist paradigm and the latter underpinning an interpretivist paradigm, many researchers argue that these two research paradigms are related and thus they cannot be separated completely; they, therefore, consider a mixed-methods approach to research as one of the main approaches (Creswell, 2014a; Robson, 2011; Thomas, 2013b). I reflected on adopting a mixed-methods approach, which is believed to enrich the findings, increase the depth and breadth of a study and allow generalization (Creswell, 2014a). A mixed-methods study could have drawn on the strengths and minimised the limitations of both quantitative and qualitative research, helping with ‘bridging the schism’ between quantitative and qualitative research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, I decided that, had a mixed-methods approach been used, although it could have made a further methodological contribution to the research⁹, this would not have been a suitable approach to answering the research question and for co-constructing knowledge because the use of questionnaires instead of focus groups would have affected the methodological congruence. Additionally, had I undertaken a mixed-methods study, and replaced the focus groups with questionnaires, the data gathered from questionnaires would have lacked an interactive element, which was essential in helping me in the co-construction of knowledge.

⁹ In most of the studies about identity formation a qualitative research approach was used.
One may argue that questionnaires with open-ended questions could have been used to gather more detailed information. However, such questionnaires would not have provided enough freedom to the participants as they mainly comprise questions with options from which the participants are required to select a response and, in some cases, invite them to elaborate on or justify such responses. However, probing these brief qualitative responses further would not have been possible. Moreover, as explained earlier in this chapter, the research question drives the entire research process, and therefore a mixed-methods approach would have only been appropriate had the research question sought to allow me to gather both exploratory and confirmatory data (Bryman, 1994). The research question for the current study is not however about measuring outcomes or testing theories; it is purely about developing understanding and co-constructing knowledge, elements that are closely linked to qualitative research questions that attempt to explore a topic in some depth to allow researchers to collect rich data. Therefore, having carefully considered the overarching aims of the research, the research question, and the strengths and limitations of adopting a mixed-methods approach, I decided not to use this research design.

In order to collect rich data and to allow me to gain a full and nuanced understanding, I used semi-structured, highly-active and interactive interviews, as described by Holstein and Gubrium (2004), as one of the data-gathering methods for this study. Active interviews enabled me to probe and gain in-depth information on the topic. In active interviews, interviewers and interviewees interact to construct a shared understanding that creates knowledge, which is one of the features of a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014). Providing a ‘thick description’ (Geertz 1994) of the findings also allowed for contextualisation and helped me to present detailed information about the context.

In summary, qualitative research is generally subjective in its approach and it is considered to be the most appropriate way of exploring social world phenomena, such as human experiences and emotions (e.g. Bryman, 1994;
Flick, 2007; Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2004). Information on a topic such as identity formation, in which participants’ personal experiences need to be investigated, can be more effectively gathered by using a qualitative research approach in which participants’ voices can be heard. Considering all the practical advantages of the qualitative research approach outlined above in this chapter, the overarching research question and the desire to study participants in their natural setting, I concluded that a qualitative research approach was the most appropriate for the current study.

4.4.2. Constructivist grounded theory (CGT)

Given the broad focus of the current study, I considered constructivist grounded theory (CGT) to be the most appropriate approach with the potential to provide insight into the complex phenomenon of identity formation. I decided to use CGT rather than traditional grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967a). There are philosophical differences between the grounded theory designs developed by different scholars. For example, the traditional grounded theory outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) has its ontological roots in realism and it is defined as ‘the discovery of theory from data’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1). It is also inductive in nature as the researcher does not have any preconceived ideas and all ideas emerge from the data collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967a). Strauss and Corbin’s grounded theory, which has its ontological roots in relativism, provides researchers with an authoritative voice and argues that reality is interpreted. Constructivist grounded theorists, however, adopt a reflexive stance and focus on co-construction of knowledge by the researcher and participants. In CGT, the researcher is a ‘passionate participant’ and the outcome of such participation is the co-constructed understandings shaped by both the researcher and the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1995, p. 196).

In CGT, theories are not discovered but instead constructed by the researcher based on real knowledge of empirical worlds. Constructivist grounded theorists use both top-down and bottom-up approaches to derive a theory grounded in their interpretations of the social setting, based on the perceptions of those
who live in them (Puddephatt & Charmaz, 2006). In traditional grounded theory, induction (discovery of patterns), the process of generating categories out of data, and deduction (testing of ideas), fitting these categories into other data, are described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1998). With regard to CGT, Charmaz (2006) stressed the role of abduction (uncovering the best of a set of explanations in order to understand results) in constructing a theory. Unlike induction, abduction is ‘the imaginative leap’, i.e. the logical analysis or considerations made by the researcher to understand their results and confirm a theory (Ezzy, 2002, p. 14). Thus, abduction occurs when, during the data collection and data analysis processes, the researcher takes a ‘creative leap’ whereby he/she finds some surprising empirical data or significant information that could fit into a broader picture or explanation of the phenomenon under study (Ezzy, 2002, p. 14). This imaginative leap or knowledge, when confirmed by further induction and deduction, then becomes a vital element of the knowledge and theory being developed. In CGT, abduction, followed by induction and deduction, involves the process of ‘inference, insight, empirical observation and logical reasoning’ (Ezzy, 2002). Abduction is thus inference focussed on finding an explanation for observed facts that describe the grounded theory based on inductive and deductive reasoning (Richardson & Kramer, 2006). This process of moving back and forth between general propositions and empirical data allows new knowledge or theories to be developed.

4.4.2.1. Why I chose CGT?

It was appropriate to use CGT in the current study for several reasons. First, my philosophical assumptions closely aligned with Charmaz’s (2006) constructivist orientations which posit that knowledge emerges from data. Second, CGT emphasises the subjective relationship between the researcher and the participant. As explained earlier in this chapter, researchers using CGT are not mere observers, but rather they are part of the research (Charmaz, 2006b). CGT, therefore, arises from the interplay between the researcher and the participants by using ‘what’, ‘how’ and sometimes ‘why’ questions and it
offers knowledge that enhances our understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Charmaz, 2006). The interaction with the participants in the interviews in this study allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants’ views of the language used as the MOI and its impact on high school students’ identity formation. Therefore, CGT enabled me to fulfil the aim of the co-construction of knowledge by working together with the participants and situating them as contributors to the joint production of knowledge.

Third, in her account of CGT, Charmaz (2014) argues that researchers are expected to demonstrate whether and to what extent their position within the research study has influenced their interpretations of the data. Careful and detailed documentation of each stage of the research process can allow the researcher to demonstrate how he/she has behaved reflexively. This flexibility in terms of ‘adding ... a description of the situation, the interaction, the person’s affect and [their] perceptions of how the interview went’ enriches the data (Charmaz, 1995). In traditional approaches to grounded theory, researchers were advised to enter the field with an open mind, i.e. without an extensive literature review (Glaser & Strauss, 1967a). The rationale behind this was to prevent the risk of the data and its interpretation being impacted by the preconceived ideas of the researcher (Charmaz, 2006). However, disassociating ourselves (researchers) from who we are, what we know and the experiences we have had, is impossible (Charmaz, 2006a; Strauss & Corbin, 2007). Although I made every effort to be reflexive and reflective when asking questions during the interviews, I was alert to the fact that my role as an insider, and my preconceived ideas, could have impacted on my interpretation of the data gathered. In order to avoid the impact of my personal biases on the emerging categories, during the data analysis I moved back and forth between the data sets gathered to identify any ideas and prior assumptions that could have directly or indirectly shaped my interpretation of the data. Thus, as a researcher, I made every effort to take a step back and to be as objective as possible all the way through, at every stage of the research. The details of the steps I followed to behave reflexively during the research are
outlined in Section 4.10. Fourth, Charmaz states that ‘a constructivist approach to grounded theory reaffirms the value to the researcher of studying people in their natural settings’ (Charmaz, 2000, p. 510). Thus, the flexibility and adaptability of the CGT methodology allow the researcher to interact closely with the participants in their social settings and facilitates an in-depth understanding of the participants’ context. Considering all the advantages of CGT over other qualitative research approaches and the traditional grounded theory approach regarding the topic of identity formation I used CGT to carry out this study. Additionally, reflecting on its flexibility in simultaneous coding and categorising of data, which enables the researcher to follow up on the data gathered by posing additional questions, I believe that CGT was an appropriate qualitative research approach to take in the current study with a view to understanding the complex phenomenon of identity formation (Charmaz, 2014, p. 25). The following section gives details of the number of participants and the procedures used to recruit them.

4.5. Sampling

The research methods literature outlines the different kinds of sampling approaches that researchers can use. For example, some researchers use convenience sampling, which makes access to the field easier and is considered cost-effective; however, the nature of the research results and their generalizability is often questioned because of the lack of a purposeful approach (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). The purpose of the sample is not only to represent the chosen population but also to gain a deeper understanding of a particular social context by getting answers to what, why, when, where and how certain activities occur and the meanings constructed by the participants within that context (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). In an attempt to identify the participants with the greatest potential to advance my understanding (Palys, 2008), and to address the purpose of my research, I decided to select participants using purposive sampling. According to Maxwell (1996) in purposive sampling, ‘settings, persons, or events are deliberately selected for the relevant information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from
other choices’ (p. 87). Whilst I initially employed purposive sampling to recruit the participants, at a later stage of data collection, when I was conducting follow-up interviews with students for further exploration of the issues raised in the focus groups, the sampling method became theoretical following the grounded theory methods.

4.5.1. Schools within the study

The two schools selected for the current study are Convent School\(^{10}\) (English medium school) and Government High School (Punjabi medium school). The selection criteria for the schools was that both the schools are located in the rural area, they each used a different language as the MOI and they are representative of all other schools of the same type in Punjab. For example, the English medium school is governed by ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) and the Punjabi medium school is governed by PSEB (Punjab School Education Board), which are the national and state education boards respectively. Both the schools selected for this study are representative of all other schools governed by ICSE and PSEB in Punjab, India. Detailed description of the school boards is provided in Section 2.6 in Chapter 2.

In addition to being representative of the government and private schools based on different education boards and schools of their type, the school sample also represents the socioeconomic background of the students learning in each type of school. The government school students’ sample comprises the marginalised section of Indian society. Both of the schools are located in a rural area of Punjab. Given that government schools provide education free of cost and private schools in India charge high fees, students attending the private school in this study come from more socio-economically privileged backgrounds and are more advantaged than the students from the government school. This also becomes evident from the data collected from

\(^{10}\) Pseudonyms are used for the schools.
the headteachers and teachers presented and discussed in Chapter 5. They reported that the parents of private school students are more educated than the parents of government school students and are financially well-off, able to afford their children’s learning in private school. This further confirms that the students from the Punjabi medium school belong mostly to the lower socio-economic strata of society.

Table 1: Research sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convent School</th>
<th>Government High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private school.</td>
<td>Government school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in Gurdaspur District, Punjab, India.</td>
<td>Located in Gurdaspur District, Punjab, India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English medium of instruction.</td>
<td>Punjabi medium of instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School run by individuals and private organisations on fee revenue; essentially no government involvement.</td>
<td>Government supported school run by the Punjab government on government funds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recognised by the Punjab (state) government. Government recognition is an official stamp of approval.

The total number of this type of school in Punjab is 1,746 (NCERT 2006).
Recognised\textsuperscript{11} by the Indian (national) government.

The number of unaided recognised private schools in Punjab is 260 (NCERT 2006). (This number includes all the recognised private schools including schools governed by the ICSE board such as the one recruited for this study).

ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) board regulations.

This private school is representative of all private unaided (recognised) schools affiliated with the ICSE education board, in Punjab State. This school is like other schools of this type in terms of recognition by the Indian government, the language of MOI, curriculum, the number of academic hours, education board, examination and assessment system and teachers’ qualifications.

Subject to PSEB (Punjab School Education Board) regulations.

This government school is representative of all government (state) high schools in Punjab as all these schools are affiliated to the PSEB (education board) in Punjab State, and maintain similar features, such as language of the MOI, curriculum, number of academic hours, education board, examination and assessment system and teachers’ qualifications.

The headteacher was contacted by phone to obtain permission to access the school. I had some contacts in this school so, with the references they provided, access to this school was easy.

\textsuperscript{11} To gain recognition a private school is required to fulfil a number of conditions. All the ICSE affiliated schools are recognised but not all the private unaided schools are recognised as they do not fulfil some of the conditions.
hours, the board of education, examination and assessment system and teachers’ qualifications.

The headteacher was contacted by phone to obtain permission to access the school. I used to work in this school, so it was easier to access.

The significant differences between the two schools recruited for this study allowed for the generation of rich data through comparative analysis of the different experiences, both personal and professional, of the participants. The two completely different school contexts allowed me to identify the differences that could exist in the students’ identity formation based on learning in the two different languages. Although there are many other types of private schools, discussed earlier in Section 2.7 in Chapter 2, in Punjab, the private school chosen in this study is representative of schools of its kind only.

4.5.2. Participant sampling

In the literature, it is noted that the choice of participants for a qualitative study is crucial and, therefore, that researchers are advised to comply with some
requirements when recruiting participants. For example, the participants must know about the topic, they must be willing to talk, and they must represent the population (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Taking into account different stakeholders in the field of education, it is important to consider who the potential participants to be included in any particular research in this area are. It was important to include the high school students in the study to achieve the purpose of gaining their perspective about their identity formation. They were the first group who could share their first-hand knowledge with me. However, it was also important to explore the views of the school headteachers and the English language teachers who are responsible for language in education policy provision in the schools and who also represent the students’ world. Therefore, school headteachers, English language teachers and high school students were recruited as a sample for the current study.

As the exclusion of a particular group from a research may increase the likelihood of the results being biased (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001) I therefore considered including parents as another group of participants, as they were the ones who financially invested in their children’s education and indeed who chose whether the children went to an EM or a PM school. However, the final decision not include parents in the sample was informed by the fact that English is not used for interaction at home in Punjab. In order to build a detailed description of learning in English or Punjabi and its impact on students’ identity formation, parents would need to be able to judge their children’s (students') linguistic skills, which not every parent may be able to do. Therefore, considering that parents may not directly interact with their children in English – one of the languages used as MOI in the two selected schools – I did not involve the parents in this study. However, parents’ consent was obtained for their children’s participation in the study.

In brief, the sample for the current study consisted of 30 participants selected from two high schools – one EM and one PM school – in Gurdaspur District in Punjab. There were three different groups of participants. The first group comprised two headteachers, the second included four English language
teachers and the third group comprised 24 high school students, 12 from each of the EM and PM schools. For the individual interviews with students, 12 student participants from the focus group discussion were invited to take part voluntarily in follow-up interviews. All the participants chose their pseudonyms. For each of these three cohorts, there were pre-set criteria that I abided by as far as the circumstances allowed. For example, factors such as gender, grade, years of experience and language of teaching were taken into consideration. Tables below present a detailed picture of the participants recruited and their selection criteria.

*Table 2: Participants’ sample size by data collection method.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ group</th>
<th>Focus group</th>
<th>Individual semi-structured interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private school students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government school students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Participants’ selection criteria.*

| Participants | Selection criteria |
| Two headteachers | The current headteacher of the selected private school.  
The current headteacher of the selected government school. |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Four English language teachers | Teachers teaching English as a foreign language subject.  
Teachers with more than three years of English language teaching experience.  
One English language teacher teaching English to ninth grade in the English medium school.  
One English language teacher teaching English to tenth grade in the English medium school.  
One English language teacher teaching English to ninth grade in the Punjabi medium school.  
One English language teacher teaching English to tenth grade in the Punjabi medium school. |
| Twenty-four focus group participants | Two focus groups with children from the government school and two from the private school.  
Six participants in each focus group.  
Both male and female students aged 13 to 15.  
Students had to have the ability to speak and express themselves.  
Obtained class teachers’ help in gathering groups. |
Twelve students for individual semi-structured interviews

Six students from the government school
Six students from the private school
The students who participated in the focus groups voluntarily participated in the individual interviews.

Table 4: Overview of the focus group participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School &amp; medium of instruction</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convent School English medium of instruction</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Six males Six females</td>
<td>13-15 years</td>
<td>Ninth and tenth grade</td>
<td>Six students from each grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government High School Punjabi medium of instruction</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Six males Six females</td>
<td>13-15 years</td>
<td>Ninth and tenth grade</td>
<td>Six students from each grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Overview of the individual interview participants.

### School headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>MOI in school</th>
<th>Languages known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varinder</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Government school</td>
<td>Punjabi MOI</td>
<td>Hindi, Punjabi, and English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seena</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Private school</td>
<td>English MOI</td>
<td>Malayalam, English, and Hindi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### English language teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Years in teaching</th>
<th>Languages known</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chamanjit</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English medium school</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td>Teaching English language to 10th grade students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anjali</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English medium school</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, Bengali, and English.</td>
<td>Teaching English language to 9th grade students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Medium of instruction</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Languages known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avtaar</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jugraj</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preet</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taran</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muskaan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simrat</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kajal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajan</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Punjabi, Hindi, and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I chose to select the student participants from the ninth and the tenth grades because these two years comprise high/secondary school education in India. Schooling culminates after tenth grade and then students choose academic streams for higher studies\(^\text{12}\). This is the crucial stage for the students when they think about their future careers; their linguistic competence, specifically their English language skills, as the exams to enter the university courses are conducted in English, centrally inform such decisions. While the majority of the data comprised the interviews with the students, in which their views and perceptions were sought, the views of headteachers and teachers were represented in semi-structured interviews as they come into daily contact with the students and with whom the students interact in English.

### 4.6. Methods

Charmaz (2006) states that methods are tools and some of these tools are sharper than others with various capacities to clarify what is being found in a given context. Therefore, in order to achieve the aims of research, different kinds of data gathering methods can be used either alone or in combination with other methods. However, when choosing data collection methods the researcher should consider what is feasible in terms of the availability of resources such as time, money and most importantly ‘the type of information sought, from whom and under what circumstances’ (Robson, 2011, p. 232). For example, with reference to the current study, ethnographic methods involving observation of participants by observing their actions and behaviour over an extended period of time could assist in obtaining rich data. However, due to the difficulty of accessing classrooms and time constraints, this was not a feasible option for this research.

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\(^{12}\) Their choice of and admission to these streams is influenced by their MOI (Mohnot, 2006); the higher level studies in these streams in India are in English medium.
Having adopted a CGT approach, I decided to use multiple methods comprising a combination of documentary analysis, focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. These methods complement each other in an interactive way and strengthen the study (Bowen, 2009; Patton, 1990). The findings from the documentary analysis were used to design focus group tasks and interview questions for all three groups. Any new ideas that emerged from the focus group data were also probed further in the individual interviews. In this way, the data collected through different methods informed further data collection.

A detailed description of the research methods and the procedures used to collect data for this study is provided below.

4.6.1. Documentary analysis

Documents such as government reports and school policy statements are often used in multiple ways to address specific research questions. For example, some researchers use data from documents to answer research question/s, some to support their observational and interview findings and some others to plan data collection methods, such as focus groups and interviews (Charmaz, 2014). Documentary analysis, therefore, can either be used as a primary or secondary source of data.

For the present study, it was necessary to obtain the school policy documents from the two schools to examine their language policies. However, both the headteachers stated that schools in India are not obliged by law to produce any school policy documents and they both noted that they follow the policies outlined by the school education boards\(^\text{13}\) (school governing bodies). Therefore, two of the documents I analysed were the Regulations Indian

\(^{13}\)The two schools operate under two different education boards, the ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) and the PSEB (Punjab School Education Board), each of which regulate duties, curriculum, language policies, teaching methodologies and assessment systems.
Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Examination and the Punjab School Education Board (PSEB) Notifications. Another significant document that I examined was the National Education Policy (1986) document which sets out the overall school education policy that applies to schools across India (Mohnot, 2006). I analysed the part of the national policy document entitled ‘Language Development’. This includes details of the Three Language Formula (1968), the language in education policy in India (discussed earlier in Chapter 2 Section 2.5). These documents outline the policies that the schools must follow and are available online.

I analysed these documents carefully, in particular, the parts of the documents which discussed language policy that schools are obliged to implement. The documents were cross-checked to gain information about the language systems used in the two schools, particularly in terms of the languages used as the MOI. Although these documents say very little about the languages used as MOI in school, they provided me with some useful information about the importance that English language teaching is given in schools. For example, in the National Policy on Education (1986), English is mentioned as a compulsory second language and to attain a pass certificate students must get at least 33% in the English examination (The Government of India, 1986). Moreover, careful analysis of the topics concerning teaching context, curriculum and pedagogical approaches to language teaching and learning practices helped me gather knowledge about the Indian school educational context, and to articulate meaningful, probing questions to obtain data from the focus groups and interviews. This further allowed me to highlight any contradictions that emerged as a result of inconsistencies between the data collected from the participants and the data in the documents.

Use of the documents as a way to collect data on the research context rendered the documents a secondary data source because the information contained in them was not gathered to answer the research question directly, but instead to develop primary data collection methods (Appleton & Cowley, 1997). The purpose of the documentary analysis – which was mainly to inform
the focus groups and interview questions for all three cohorts – in the current study was carefully considered. However, the documents were not looked at solely as sources of information. Following Prior's (2003) recommendations, I considered carefully the purpose of the documents, what and whom they affected, how the documents were interpreted and to what extent they were followed/used in the school context in Punjab.

The first column in the table below presents the titles of the documents that were analysed and in the second column, the type of questions I sought answers to are given. Charmaz (2014) recommends considering such questions while using documentary analysis as a method to complement interviews.
Table 6: List of the documents analysed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents analysed</th>
<th>Questions reflected on while carrying out document analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Policy on Education, 1986 (part of the document was analysed)</td>
<td>For contextualisation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) examination</td>
<td>1. What is the purpose of the document?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab School Education Board (PSEB) Notifications</td>
<td>2. Who produced the document?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Who participated in shaping it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Have the participants provided enough information for us to develop a reasonable understanding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Do we have sufficient understanding of the related worlds to read this in a considered manner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For understanding content:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the structure of the document?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which categories can be discerned in its structure?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does the document reflect its author’s assumptions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the documents linked to each other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What comparisons can be drawn between the documents?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What does the information mean to the various participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who has access to the information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does any unintended information or unintended meaning arise from the document?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.2. Focus groups

A focus group discussion is a discussion among participants in a group to obtain their perceptions on a specific set of issues. Participants often feel comfortable sharing their views in a group and encourage each other to respond to their ideas in a group discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Discussion in a group stimulates the participants to talk about sensitive topics about which they generally have a shared understanding (Robson, 2002). Since I wanted to gain insights into students' identity formation, which is a highly sensitive topic, a focus group discussion among students with similar experiences and understandings was designed to put the participants at ease. Stimulated by the comments and thoughts of other participants in the group, the accounts that emerged through such interactions provided insights into the participants' beliefs.

However, there are some limitations to using focus group discussions, in particular with adolescents (high school students). For example, power conflicts may arise among participants and some may dominate the discussion, whereas others may be reluctant to offer personal views in a group setting (Smithson, 2000). To overcome this, in my role as a moderator, I ensured that all participants were involved in the discussion. If any participants were reluctant because of the dominance of some other participant/s, without discouraging the dominant participants, I encouraged the quieter participants by asking types of questions advised by Krueger and Casey (2009) such as: ‘Does anyone feel differently’? or ‘Does anyone have another point of view’ (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p.118)? In this way, a range of views and experiences was obtained from the participants. In fact, such a situation did not arise to any significant degree in any of the focus groups. All the students appeared to enjoy the focus group discussions. They were comfortable and used it as an opportunity to share their ideas about the language in which they were learning and being taught and its impact on their identity formation. I only became involved in the discussion to ask follow-up questions and to seek examples to uncover the precise meaning of any vague but critical points (Krueger, 2002).
There were also several advantages and disadvantages to my being an insider, which I have considered elsewhere (see Section 1.2 in Chapter 1). However, I believe that my position as an insider gave me an advantage in the discussion as the participants appeared comfortable expressing their views in front of a person who was familiar with their school educational context (Smithson, 2000). One potential disadvantage of my positioning as an insider was that I may have led the discussion in a particular direction based on my assumptions. The focus group methodology, however, encourages the discussion to be amongst the group participants and guides the researcher to work as a moderator and thereby 'shifts the balance of power in favour of the participants' (Barbour & Kitzinger, 2019, p. 18). Despite some of the limitations of using focus groups with adolescents, I believed that this was a practical and suitable method by which to gain in-depth information about the highly sensitive topic of identity formation.

4.6.2.1. Focus group procedures

Carrying out focus group discussions with children is potentially different from conducting focus groups with adults. Hence, to stimulate discussion, many scholars have suggested the use of creative or task-led research methods alongside straightforward questioning (Mand, 2012; Punch, 2002). To initiate the discussion, I used a range of group discussion strategies, such as task-based activities combined with follow-up questioning (see Appendix F). Before each task, I explained what was involved in the activity. After every task, for further clarification, any relevant questions concerning the research topic were asked to stimulate discussion.

To be as convenient as possible, the focus groups were held in the participants’ schools. The average duration of the focus groups was one hour thirty minutes. However, at the start of the focus groups, I asked for the participants’ consent if it appeared that the discussions would be longer. The focus groups were conducted in the language the students were most comfortable with – either English or Punjabi. The focus group recruitment methods have been discussed in Section 4.5.2. At the beginning of each focus
group, I introduced the topic and the technical terms, explained my role as moderator and how participants' comments would be used. I clarified the ground rules for the discussion, such as outlining that there are no right or wrong answers; that the participants may disagree with other members; that they must listen to others respectfully; that I would record their discussion (written consent was obtained); and that they could leave the group at any time if they chose.

A detailed review of the available literature on focus groups indicates that researchers are advised to aim for homogeneity and heterogeneity among focus group participants (Morgan, 1997; Sandelowski, 1999; Smith, 1995; Smithson, 2000). However, in regard to this Kitzinger & Barbour (1999) state that ‘precise composition of groups will often be a product of circumstance rather than planning’ (p. 8). This is because such detailed reasoning of whether heterogenous or homogenous groups can provide useful data to answer given research question/scan can often only emerge when the focus group discussion has been initiated.

However, the methodology literature suggests that participants in homogenous groups have common experiences that may help free-flowing discussions (Lazar et al., 2017). The homogeneous composition of the groups encouraged more openness and ease in talking to one another and allowed me to draw out the comparisons that the participants made between themselves and the students from the other school (Morgan, 1997). For the current study, the focus groups created were identical in terms of the participants’ gender distribution (three males and three females), age, gender and MOI. Semi-structured interviews were then used to augment the data from the focus groups, to reflect on the themes emerging, and to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic.

4.6.3. Semi-structured interviews
Interviewing is one of the most widely-used research techniques in social science (Briggs et al., 2012) and can take several forms ranging from completely unstructured to entirely structured interviews. Structured interviews involve a set of closed-ended questions asked of each participant in the same
order, with little or no flexibility to change the content or wording of the questions. Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, contain open-ended questions, which can be asked in any order (D. Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Such interviews are completely flexible and entail minimal restrictions. Structured interviews lack flexibility, whilst unstructured interviews can be very time-consuming in both the data gathering and the data analysis stages (Robson, 2011). Moreover, when putting the data together to report findings, unstructured interviews can leave the researcher in a ‘frustrating’ situation (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 83). Semi-structured interviews involve a list of questions to be asked in the interview, but the interviewer can add further questions where appropriate (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). The semi-structured interview approach, therefore, offers some structured and unstructured elements and allows the flexibility required to gather in-depth information.

4.6.3.1. Strengths of semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are considered appropriate for a constructivist grounded theory approach as they facilitate an open-ended, in-depth investigation of a topic in which the participant has extensive experience (Charmaz, 2014). Such interviews are useful to explore participants’ beliefs, and therefore can become collaborative processes that involve participants in meaning-making work, a two-way conversation that is both interactional and constructive; this is referred to as an active interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). The interviews in this study were active as they were conducted in the preferred language of the participants, which enabled ideas to emerge from the participants’ perspectives about their world (Briggs et al., 2012). Moreover, semi-structured interviews allowed me to stay ‘on target while hanging loose’ (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 42), and simultaneously afforded an opportunity to the participants to expand on, or give details of, any topic under discussion. Thus, some information from the participants may suggest a new line of inquiry, which could then be explored further to get greater detail without losing focus. This further enabled me to pursue responses in detail and to check accuracy by repeating the participants’ views during the interviews.
4.6.3.2. Limitations of semi-structured interviews

Despite the various strengths of interviews as a data-gathering approach, this method nonetheless entails several limitations, which cannot be overlooked. Among these are the time constraints and the impact that inexperienced researchers can have on the quality of the data collected. Reflecting on these, I realise that I encountered both of these challenges during this research study. It should be noted that I had some experience in conducting interviews, which I gained during data collection for my master’s research. However, in that study, I interviewed adult participants, whilst in the current study the majority of the interviews were carried out with the students (children) and there are specific considerations to be taken into account when interviewing students (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001).

To reduce the chance that my limited experience in interviewing would have an impact on the quality of data gathered, at the initial stage I drafted the interview questions following recommendations from Charmaz (2014, p. 59-66) which focused on the idea that interviewing in CGT has the aim of exploring and not interrogating. The interview questions for each group of participants were designed to engage them (the participants) in a conversation as a way to explore their experiences and beliefs. Charmaz (2014) states that when conducting in-depth interviews in CGT it is important to find a balance between hearing the participants and probing further to obtain details about a particular topic. Thus, following Charmaz’s recommendations, I was constantly reflexive about the nature of the questions I asked and whether they were appropriate for specific participants. The literature on research methodology also suggests that interview techniques vary based on the age group: children, adults and older people (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). For instance, in the current study, some of the questions about the school management and language policy were more appropriate for the headteachers and teachers than the students. Hence, considering the participants’ age and position, different interview schedules were created for the three cohorts (see appendices G, H, and I).
However, one may argue that an effective interview design cannot be created simply based on learning theory from books. To overcome this barrier, researchers are advised to pilot interviews before using them in a given study (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000). I, therefore, piloted the focus groups and student interview schedules with some students, who were not part of the main study, from both the EM and PM schools. This helped me to identify potential problems before undertaking full-scale research. In this way, I came to recognise how the focus group and interview questions were likely to be interpreted by the students. This helped me to consider any issues that might impact the data collection process and impede gathering the data required to answer the research question. Piloting, therefore, helped me to improve the interview design and the techniques for the actual interviews with the participants.

4.6.3.3. Issues in interviewing student (adolescent) and adult participants

Interviewing students (adolescents) is often associated with researchers encountering many challenges and dilemmas. Therefore, some researchers advise the use of observations rather than interviews with students (adolescents) (Corsaro, 1997). However, other researchers argue that interviews with children/adolescents can be conducted successfully by becoming open and friendly towards them, which helps to build rapport (Eder & Fingerson, 2001). In the current study, the task of interviewing children provided me with an opportunity to reflect the voice of high school students – a perspective that has been mostly unreported – in particular on a topic directly related to them: the language in which they are learning and its impact on their identity formation. This, however, presented me with the need to conduct interviews with students (children/adolescents). Research ethics, which are discussed in Section 4.12 in Chapter 4, draw attention to the researcher's obligations to participants to avoid harm, for instance, not to damage their reputation, not to misunderstand and misreport them, not to do emotional harm by embarrassing them, and to respect their autonomy (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). In order to combat the risk of getting inaccurate information, the
questions asked from the students were straightforward, clear and unambiguous, meaning they could be easily understood. The students were given clear instructions, which are called ground rules in research, so they felt comfortable expressing themselves (Brubacher et al., 2015).

Additionally, power dynamics between researchers and participants are recognised in the methodology literature; these can come into play between an adult researcher and adolescent participants and/or between an adult researcher and adult participants (headteachers and teachers), and can have an impact on the results of the study (Hritz et al., 2014; McFarlane et al., 2002). Therefore, to safeguard the students’ and headteachers and teachers’ vulnerability, interview settings and the interviewer’s (my) authoritative position and power were carefully considered and steps were taken to reduce the power differentials and to establish a rapport to enhance trust. To achieve this, the study employed the strategies suggested by Holstein and Gubrium (2001): smiling; not arguing; maintaining a polite tone; respecting headteachers’, teachers’ and students’ dignity; avoiding controlling behaviour; and reciprocity.

Furthermore, as a native of Punjab who has also worked in a private school, I shared the same cultural and linguistic background as the participants. There were therefore, also challenges related to being an insider as I have discussed in Chapters 1 and 4. Participants may, for example, have felt that they are being used to gather information (Gregory & Ruby, 2011), the students could have regarded me as a teacher with a significant amount of power compared to themselves, and headteachers and teachers could have viewed me as a researcher. To overcome this situation, I ensured that I created a relaxing atmosphere during the focus group discussion and interviews so that the researcher’s (my) perceived power could be reduced or even equalled to that of the participants; this was done by making the interview context more natural (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). Being an insider, however, I believe was advantageous for me, not only in terms of access to the school and the participants, but also in establishing a rapport between the interviewer and the
interviewees; this helped me to interpret the participants’ world by developing a shared understanding (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

My review of the methodology literature revealed that there are some other general issues related to using interviews as a data-gathering approach. For example, the participants’ responses may sometimes be affected by interruptions and pressures of time (Anderson, 2002; Teijlingen, 2014; Uribejongbloed, 2014) and the trustworthiness of the interviews can be questioned due to concerns about the participants’ accuracy in reporting their personal experiences (Sandelowski, 1999). Moreover, interviews are prone to bias; the researcher can be biased in articulating questions, and the participants’ may craft their responses in such a way as to show themselves in a good light (Robson, 2011). I believed, however, that the advantages of semi-structured interviews outweighed their limitations and rendered them the most suitable method for collecting in-depth data in this work (Bowen, 2009). For example, during the data analysis process and the presentation of the findings, examples of how the participants expressed their views and opinions can be provided through excerpts which can contribute to the understanding of the data and the researcher’s analysis. Personal bias by the researcher can also be checked by adopting a reflexive approach (discussed in detail in Section 4.10). This method, therefore, was used in this study to develop the focus groups, to add to the comprehensiveness of the data collected (Charmaz, 2014).

4.6.3.4. Interview procedures
Interviews were conducted with a total of 18 participants in three different sets. Each of the interviews was conducted in the participant’s preferred language. Although I initially decided that each interview should last between 45 minutes and an hour, the actual timing of each varied to allow the process to be interactive and conversational. With the participants’ written consent, all of the interviews were recorded to have a permanent record (Robson, 2011). The interviews were conducted in the schools. To put the participants at ease, all the interviews began with background questions and then moved to some
general questions about the language used as a medium of instruction in a given school. I then moved onto a focused conversation about the topic of the research. The interview questions ranged from the role of English in school education to the role, status and function of English in society at present and in the future. Different topic sets were developed for each of the three cohorts based on insights emerging from the preliminary literature review (D. Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), the questions arising from the document analysis, and the themes that had emerged from the focus group discussions. The topic sets for the headteachers, teachers and students varied based on their personal and professional differences. In general, the topic sets included questions about demographic characteristics of the participants; language policy and provision; language used as the MOI; and students’ exposure to and attitudes towards the English and Punjabi language, etc. Further details of the topic sets for different cohorts are given in Appendices G, H, and I.

4.6.3.4.1. Interviews with the headteachers
Two headteachers, one from the PM school and one from the EM school were invited to be interviewed. Headteachers are responsible for executing language in education policy in their given school. Therefore, they were interviewed to seek their views on the language in education policy, EMI and other topics related to language and the formation of high school students’ identity.

4.6.3.4.2. English language teacher interviews
Two English language teachers teaching English as a foreign language to ninth and tenth-grade students were interviewed from each of the EM and PM school. Given that English is not used at the students’ homes, English language teachers in the PM school, in particular, are the only ones who interact in English with the PM school students as they are responsible for English language teaching in the school. They were therefore interviewed to gather information about English language learning in the schools and its impact on students’ present, future and overall identity formation.
4.6.3.4.3. Student interviews

Six students from each school were invited to attend individual semi-structured interviews. Individual interviews were conducted with them to further investigate the aspects that the focus group participants might have been reluctant to discuss within the group. This also allowed me to seek additional information about the themes which had emerged during the analysis of the data gathered from the focus groups and from the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews.

The data gathered from each cohort informed the subsequent set of data gathered and the ongoing data analysis. This research was developed collaboratively with the participants as they helped in developing additional questions to be asked in the subsequent interviews. In this way, all the participants played an important role in informing the interview design/schedule. For example, the interviews with the headteachers informed the teachers’ and students’ interviews and, additionally, the teachers’ interviews informed the students’ interviews. This meaning-making cyclical process of each interview guiding the subsequent interviews, and being guided by them during the data gathering and data analysis, enabled me to co-construct knowledge with all the participants involved. In this way, the data were constructed collaboratively by both the participants and the researcher (Kvale, 2008; Mishler, 1991).

4.7. Transcription and translation of the focus groups and interviews.

All the focus groups and interviews with the PM school students were conducted in Punjabi, the language in which they were most comfortable. Therefore, their focus group discussions and interviews were translated and transcribed. This highlighted an additional methodological issue; how to ensure that the interviews were transcribed were translated accurately without losing the actual meaning of the information provided by the participants. As the data gathering and data analysis in the current study were carried out simultaneously, the translation and transcription began at the early stages of
the research. Thus, any issues concerning both the transcription and translation were addressed carefully, as outlined in the following paragraphs.

4.7.1. Transcription

Prior to intensive data analysis, the recorded focus group discussions and interviews were fully translated and transcribed. Transcribing the focus group data before analysing is considered essential to enhancing the richness of the data and ensuring rigorous data analysis (Bloor et al., 2001). Transcribing focus group data is complex in comparison to transcribing individual interviews as a larger number of people are involved in focus groups. Sometimes the speakers in the group are not easily identifiable and sometimes more than one participant will speak at the same time. For this reason, when transcribing the focus group and individual interview data, I kept in mind several points. First, at the start of the focus groups, I recorded a sample of the participants introducing themselves by their pseudonyms (chosen by them). This served as a reference point for transcription and helped me to identify the participants’ voices. Second, I attempted to transcribe every word, including complete and incomplete sentences, in the focus groups and interviews. In the focus groups, in particular, this helped me to hear the voices of everyone and not only the dominant persons. Third, while transcribing, I was cautious in interpreting the linguistic patterns, such as short and long pauses in a speech in places where the participants hesitated, paused or repeated themselves. Such linguistic patterns can lead to discrepancies between the intended and the interpreted meaning of the conversation, which can result in inaccuracies in data (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Additionally, body language and any aspects other than verbal communication, such as laughter or sighing, which could indicate the participants’ agreement or disagreement to some point under discussion, were noted. Whilst transcribing the interviews the participants’ silences during focus groups and the interviews were considered. Participant silence can have different meanings, such as ‘resisting a response, waiting for further expansion on the question, waiting for something to occur’ (Wellard & Mckenna, 2014, p. 184). Memo writing during the data gathering allowed me to record the specific
contexts of particular interactions in which such silences occurred, and memos were later incorporated into the analysis of the transcripts. In this way, I believe that anyone reading the transcription of either the focus groups or the interviews would be able to create a clear picture of how the group discussions and interviews had progressed. I transcribed the focus groups and the interviews myself, which helped me to become familiar with the data and also assured the confidentiality of the data gathered which is an important ethical aspect of the research. The accuracy of the transcription was ensured by re-reading the transcripts while the audio was played back. Repeated listening to the recordings often reveals previously missed but essential data, as well as many other significant features, especially for the group discussions, which may ‘improve’ the transcripts (Silverman, 2013).

4.7.2. Translation

Another vital issue to address was translating data from one language into another as some words lose meaning when translated into the target language (Rossman and Marshall, 2014) and this can influence the reliability of the study findings. Lopez, Connor and Maliski (2008) proposed that when all the data has been collected it should be checked by another person or the translator who has some sociolinguistic competence which allows him/her to provide a conceptually-accurate translation. Considering that the process of translation of the whole data set would have been exceedingly expensive in terms of time and money, the data was not translated by a professional translator. However, to check the accuracy of the interview translation and any potential mistranslations which could change the meaning or misinterpret the content, a forward and backward-translation technique was used: the translated text was translated back into the original language to check the meaning (Robson, 2011). For this, the translated and transcribed data were critically reviewed by my partner (husband) who, as a native Punjabi speaker, is sociolinguistic competent which is one of the important characteristics of a translator (Lopez et al., 2008). In this process, we read each version of the Punjabi to English (forward translation) and English to Punjabi (backward translation) while
listening to the audio recordings and discussed whether there were any mistranslations until we achieved an agreement. We checked whether some expressions or words in Punjabi were used accurately in the translated language (English) of the data. Then, in the writing, if the English translation did not retain the meaning the participants wished to convey, I used direct quotations in the original language (Rossman & Marshall, 2014). To help readers understand the text, all the words in Punjabi are italicised and literal dictionary translations are provided. Where necessary, I explained the words that do not translate easily into English. Following the procedure discussed above, the translation issue was carefully addressed at every stage of the study i.e. before data collection (in developing research instruments), during data gathering, data analysis and in reporting the findings.

4.8. Data analysis

Although data collection and data analysis are described separately in this chapter, they were carried out simultaneously. Following Charmaz’s (2006) guidelines for data analysis in CGT, the analysis commenced once the first focus group discussion began and it continued until the study was completed. The simultaneous data collection and analysis allowed me to follow up issues raised during the focus groups and interviews to formulate questions to explore further, which provided additional depth in the research. For example, in the interview pilot, focus groups and many of the individual interviews, the participants associated English language with intelligence. To explore this further in relation to students’ identity formation, the interview schedule was updated by adding a question about the perceived relationship between English and intelligence. This process of adding new questions into the interview schedules continued until the data collection was complete.

4.8.1. Memo writing

A ‘memo’ refers to an analytic idea that occurs during an interview or while using another method of data collection. Such ideas can be noted down to be checked during the further data collection or analysis stage. I began writing
memos at the start of the data collection. Writing memos allowed me to reflect on the ideas that emerged during the fieldwork and interview transcription. Data analysis in the form of memo writing commenced with the piloting of the focus groups and individual interviews with students and continued throughout the entire data collection and data analysis process.

As discussed under Section 4.4.2., in constructivist grounded theory, abductive reasoning, which combines both inductive and deductive reasoning, plays a vital role in data analysis. Induction, deduction and abduction refer to different stages of inquiry and analysis, in which abduction is the process of associating data with ideas (Richardson & Kramer, 2006). In this process of data analysis, the researcher moves between generating categories from data (induction) and considering how these categories fit with other data (deduction) as a way to extract a substantive theory grounded in the researcher's interpretation of participants’ perspectives on their world. In CGT, the researchers are often very familiar with the research area and some of the literature, but they must remain open to what they see in the data (Charmaz, 2006b). Therefore, having undertaken a preliminary literature review and brought my personal experiences to the study site, I could enter the field with ‘an open mind but not an empty head’ (Dey, 2007, p. 176). Coding the data allows the researcher to consider the data closely to draw out important points that the researcher might otherwise miss (Charmaz, 2006). Coding for data analysis in CGT is carried out in several phases: initial coding, focussed coding and theoretical coding. The coding procedures employed for the focus group and interview data analysis in the current study are outlined below.

**4.8.2. Coding of the data**

Coding refers to categorising and labelling the data by breaking the data into fragments. Following the initial analysis, to make sense of the data, the focus group and interview transcripts were coded and analysed and the emerging themes were discussed in the subsequent focus groups and individual interviews.
4.8.2.1. Initial coding

At the initial stage of coding, all the transcripts from the focus groups and interviews were coded line by line to order the data (Charmaz, 2014). This not only facilitated initial coding but also enabled micro-analysis of the data. Initial coding was provisional and the aim was to remain open to all possible theoretical directions as a way to discover the participants’ views. Openness during initial coding stimulates the researcher’s thinking and allows new ideas to emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2006). However, as mentioned above, Dey’s, (1999) often quoted statement that ‘there is a difference between an open mind and an empty head’ (p.251), left me concerned at times. In particular, I was questioning whether I was forming links between the data based on my own experiences as an insider and the ideas that emerged from the preliminary literature review. Despite these challenges, I found the initial coding very helpful in gaining a general understanding of the data and as a way to achieve an overall sense of the topic under study. At this stage, I looked for similarities and differences between the interviews and made notes of the themes that emerged. Constant comparative methods were used to draw comparisons between the interviews and incidents discussed in the interviews as a way to undertake analytic interpretations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967b). Such comparisons allowed the data to be grouped under different categories (Ezzy, 2002).

4.8.2.2. Focussed coding

In the process of focused coding, codes were grouped to generate promising tentative categories and to synthesise a large amount of data (Charmaz, 2014). This allowed me to categorise the data as a way to locate further patterns across and between the different data sets. The categorisation of the data facilitated an understanding of what the participants were communicating about the impact of language as MOI on students’ identity formation. In this way, focussed coding illuminated ‘new threads of analysis’ (Charmaz, 2006, p. 59). This illumination allowed me to see the data in a different light and helped me to address my preconceptions about the topic under study.
4.8.2.3. Theoretical coding

Finally, the process of theoretical coding involved identification of the ‘core category’, or the final category/categories (Robson, 2011, p. 491) that the analysis was focused on. This helped me to draw out a relationship between the categories developed from the focussed coding of the data. According to Charmaz (2006), theoretical coding is the most sophisticated level of coding, helping the researcher to theorise the data and focussed codes developed at the previous stage of data analysis. Theoretical coding enables the researcher to develop a coherent analytical story by repeatedly cross-checking with the transcribed interview data. In this way, a central theme or category is created, around which all the other codes and categories can fit. At this stage of the research, I reviewed the literature to further understand the data. The use of a constant comparative method at this stage further enabled me to identify similarities and differences between participants’ beliefs, and it allowed me to compare them against the literature.

Charmaz (2014) calls the entire process of coding data ‘interactive coding’, as the researcher interacts with the participants by studying their accounts numerous times and re-envisioning the scenes of the interviews. Following the CGT data analysis approach, as explained above, the data produced are thus considered as co-authored and co-produced by the research participants and the researcher (Kvale, 2008). It is always possible that new information will emerge from the data, but saturation is considered to be achieved when the coding or data analysis begins to support the knowledge that has already emerged (Ezzy, 2002).

During the constant comparative analysis, I found that some themes were dominant across all three data sets, while other themes appeared in some of the interviews but not in others. However, I found that these themes were quite significant for exploring high school students’ identity formation. Therefore, the discussion of the findings is divided into two sections: key findings and additional important findings. To tell the story coherently, I decided to move
from the key findings to the additional important findings in both the findings chapters and in summary of the findings in the discussion chapter.

4.9. Trustworthiness, reflexivity and generalizability

Qualitative and quantitative researchers have different views about how their research findings may be evaluated. The concerns of validity, reliability and generalizability, used in evaluating quantitative research, are considered to have little significance when checking the rigour of qualitative research (Creswell, 1994; Golafshani, 2003; Robson, 2011). The accurate use of research methods is referred to as rigour (Golafshani, 2003). The researcher in qualitative research is not entirely objective; he/she rather becomes a part of the research process by asking questions such as what, why and how, in their efforts to obtain detailed descriptions and deeper understandings of the topic under study. Robson (2011) notes that the key elements of qualitative research, i.e. description, interpretation and theory, which are related to the understanding of the phenomena under study, are mainly based on the researcher’s evaluations and interpretations. Various qualitative researchers have therefore avoided the term ‘validity’ and preferred to use terms such as ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘confirmability’ to establish the trustworthiness and rigour of the qualitative research (Creswell, 1994; Kvale, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1995). The following section outlines the methods applied to ensure credibility and trustworthiness in this study.

The theoretical framework and literature review in this study, which were drawn from previous research in the field and discussed in Chapter 3, greatly enhanced my interpretation of the data. The connections between the data, theoretical concepts and findings developed from the data are illustrated by excerpts from the focus groups and interviews. These excerpts provide the reader with the opportunity to undertake an independent assessment of the study. The data collected from participants with different educational and professional experiences provided me with an opportunity to develop systematic comparisons which was an important component of the data analysis.
From an interpretivist perspective, the trustworthiness of research refers to how well the research methods and other components such as sampling, data gathering, and data analysis have helped in investigating what the researcher intended to achieve (Mason 2002). To enable the reader to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research process, a detailed description of the key elements of the study, such as setting, sampling, data collection methods, and procedures, as well as the data analysis processes used to identify categories, are provided. The purposive sampling, a sampling technique used in this study, adds to the credibility as key informants who could provide relevant information were selected. A detailed description of the whole research process, specifically the explanation of the appropriateness of the research methods used in this study for answering the research question, demonstrates that an appropriate research design was accurately devised. This allows the reader to assess any biases that may be revealed by the researcher. In this way, the transparency of the entire research process validates that the emerging categories, and the interpretations provided, are well-grounded in the collected data (Hennink et al., 2010).

Additionally, a thick description of the systematic comparisons carried out between focus groups, interviews, and emerging categories added to the originality and trustworthiness of the current research (Geertz, 1994). The original transcribed accounts of the participants’ focus groups and interviews are added in the findings’ chapters. Member checking strategy, which is also called participants’ verification (Rager, 2005), was deployed to obtain feedback from the respondents to ensure the correctness of the information gathered through interviews, to determine the accuracy of the interpretation of data (Harper & Cole, 2012; Lincoln & Guba, 1995). The overall aim of member checking is to provide authentic and original findings (Creswell, 2014a). Member checking can be carried out simultaneously during the interviews by verifying any information provided or at the end of the research by sending preliminary findings to the participants (Creswell, 2014a; Lincoln & Guba, 1995). In the current study, no written reports were sent to the participants to
review the authenticity of the findings. I verified my understanding of the data throughout the data collection period by sharing my data interpretations with the participants. I contacted some participants after the data analysis to seek their agreement or disagreement, and to explore any conflicting issues in more detail to obtain clarifications to determine the accuracy of the findings.

In this way, the trustworthiness of the current research was enhanced by reflecting on the research procedures and presenting them transparently throughout the thesis. Some researchers recommend developing a research audit trail for the reader to establish the trustworthiness of the research (Santos & Alex, 2014). The audit trails are the journals used to document all the research stages, which reflect the methodological decisions made by the researcher. The transparency of interpretations was also therefore maintained by keeping an audit trail of all the decisions related to the translation.

4.10. Reflexivity

Throughout the thesis, I have described in some detail the efforts I have made to be reflexive throughout my research study. Reflexivity is the process of self-reference and the recognition of the researcher’s role which encourages researchers to be reflective about how their research questions, the questions asked of the research participants, the research methods used and the researcher’s positioning, might impact on and influence the research process and results (Langdriddle, 2007). Such reflection and reflexivity encourage researchers to remain alert to the possibility that their beliefs and assumptions and their role as an outsider or an insider could affect the research results. Emphasising the significance of reflexivity in CGT, Charmaz argues that researchers are ‘obligated to be reflexive’ (2014, p.27) as their reflexivity keeps them engaged with and close to the data which brings a ‘tone of authenticity’ to the analysis of the data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 133). In an attempt to be reflexive throughout this study, I reflected on the following questions: who am I and how might my position influence my research?
The researcher’s role as either an insider or an outsider is viewed as ‘situational identities’ as they may or may not share their identity, language and experiences with the participants; this may have an impact on a researcher’s perception of their power and position in comparison to the research participants (Angrosino, 2005, p. 734). Although as an insider I had many advantages in terms of gaining access, establishing a level of trust and openness with the participants, which an outsider may have found difficult to achieve, it was possible that my interpretations of the data might have been influenced by my preconceived notions and experiences as a member of the same group; my identity was shaped in ways which were very similar to those of the participants and my own education and subsequent employment were very similar to those who participated in this research study. However, I was aware of the fact that constant reflection throughout the research process, and remaining alert to the possibility that my personal biases and perspectives may influence my interpretations of the participants’ accounts, could lessen any negative impact on the research results caused by being an insider. I believe that I was both an insider and an outsider; although I shared experiences with the participants I was also to some extent an outsider because I had lived away from Punjab for many years and therefore have also had many different experiences from most of the participants which to some extent ‘created immunity to the influence of personal perspective’ on my research (Dwyer, 2009, p. 59).

To be reflexive during my research, I examined carefully my role as a researcher and continually questioned whether and to what extent my beliefs about learning in English, because of my investment in English during my school education and during my work in an English medium school in Punjab, and my lived experiences in Punjab and Scotland, had had an impact on how I designed and carried out the study. I recognise that my investment in English proved useful as it afforded me the linguistic capital required to access different global communities in Scotland and employment as a teacher in Punjab, which many others who learned in regional languages have been denied. This may
have influenced my feelings about learning in English and how I conceptualised and carried out the study. However, being reflexive about my positionality and biases reduced the likelihood of imposing my preconceived notions on my interpretations of the data.

To demonstrate the reflexive approach, I adopted throughout this research study, I have provided a detailed account at each stage of how I sought to achieve this. I discussed my position as both an insider and outsider (see Chapters 1 and 4); I situated my research within a poststructuralist framework; I reviewed critically the literature on identity formation (see Chapter 3); and I outlined in some detail the processes I used for participant selection, data collection and data analysis (see Chapter 4). Furthermore, simultaneous data collection and data analysis helped to address the effect of any bias I may have had that impacted on the interpretation of the data. For example, while concurrently collecting and analysing the data I added emerging themes from the focus groups and interviews to the subsequent interview schedules. This allowed me to ensure that the findings reflected the participants’ beliefs and experiences and were not influenced by my preconceptions. To avoid any potential impact of my personal biases on the emerging themes, during the data analysis, I moved backwards and forwards between the data sets gathered to identify any ideas and prior assumptions that may have directly or indirectly shaped my interpretation of the data. Thus, as a researcher, I made every effort to take a step back and to be as objective as possible throughout the research process.

I recognise that situating my research within a poststructuralist framework, and the literature review on the theme of identity formation, have certainly shaped my conceptualisation of language and identity formation and guided me at all the stages of the research. Therefore, despite being reflexive, I was aware that there is a difference between an open mind and empty head (Dey, 2007) so my own experiences as a person who learned and worked in an EM school in a Punjabi context might have had an impact on how I engaged with the whole process. However, engaging reflexively by following the steps outlined in the
paragraphs above and discussed throughout the thesis helped me to acknowledge that my existing beliefs and attitudes could impact on the design and implementation of the study. Throughout the research process, I kept a reflective journal in which I documented my feelings to record my thoughts and feelings and to distinguish them from emerging themes during the data analysis. In doing so, I sought to prevent any preconceptions influencing my analysis and interpretation and to avoid any bias. I hope that I made effective use of my position both as an insider and outsider to appropriate and full effect and that by being reflexive I have dealt with any disadvantages that may have arisen.

4.11. Generalizability

Generalizability refers to whether, and to what extent, findings and theories generated from one research study and research context can be applicable or transferable to other research settings. Qualitative studies are not generalizable in the traditional sense because of their small sample sizes (Thomas, 2013). In addition, Guba & Lincoln (1982) argue that in qualitative research “[g]eneralizations are impossible since phenomena are neither time-nor context-free”. Research context and setting are particularly important in qualitative studies (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Because the current study is both small-scale and context-dependent, no claims can be made that the findings reported from this research study are generalizable to the wider population (i.e. high school students) in India.

Generalizability, however, was not the principal aim of this study; it was considered more important to explore in detail the variety of views emerging from the representative groups. In India both the National Education Policy (1986), and the language in education policy, the Three Language Formula (1968), are the policies which prevail in education in most Indian states, therefore some of the findings and insights which emerged from this study may be of particular interest to other researchers and practitioners in the field, particularly but not exclusively in states which are similar to Punjab where the
current study was carried out. Further research and exploration, which build on this study, could add ‘rigor, breadth and depth’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 4) as researchers and practitioners investigate the impact of English or Punjabi as the medium of instruction within their own particular settings and contexts on the identity formation of their students.

4.12. Ethical considerations

In this section, I have discussed points related to ethical considerations in this study. Many ethical issues were considered to ensure integrity, quality and transparency in this research. Firstly, ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the relevant School of Education Ethics Committee. To safeguard the participants’ rights the details of the instruments used such as data collection and analysis procedures were reviewed following BERA’s (British Educational Research Association) guidelines. The research ethics committee of the University of Edinburgh granted ethical approval with a letter (see Appendix J). The research has complied with British, Indian, local and institutional ethical codes for academic research. I obtained permission from the relevant people to carry out research in the selected schools and to access the participants; this was the headteachers in both the schools. Similarly, written informed consent was obtained from the participants, including parental consent for the student participants, before the commencement of gathering data. The informed consent letter included details about the purpose of the research, the background of the researcher, ensuing the anonymity of the participants and, most importantly, the voluntary nature of participation. Verbal consent was also obtained from each participant at the start of the focus groups and interviews, and this was audio recorded (Allmark et al., 2009; Bryman, 2012). I provided contact details so the participants were able to access further information about the research. Such measures force the researcher to consider the participants as the ones providing the data in research and therefore note that they ‘deserve respect and concern’ (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 95).
As argued by Davies and Dodd (2002, p.281), ‘Ethics exist in our actions and in our ways of doing and practicing research’ and, as emphasised by Rubin and Rubin (1995), the researcher must ‘keep thinking and judging [their] ethical obligations’ throughout the research (p. 96). Therefore, to respect their rights and values, continuous verbal consent of the participants was obtained, even during the interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Also, participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they chose. Confidentiality was ensured throughout, and participants were made aware of this from the outset.

Research ethics relate to acquiring ‘trustworthy information’ without causing any harm to the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This study involved high school students and therefore some particular ethical considerations were taken into account concerning the students’ participation in the research. To avoid any emotional and psychological harm to the students, the content and wording of the focus group tasks and interviews were thoroughly checked. For example, in the process of designing focus group tasks and an interview schedule, I avoided including any activity or question evaluating students’ competence in English as a foreign language as this could have put the participants in an awkward situation. Before administration, I also discussed the ethical appropriateness of the focus group tasks and interview questions with my supervisors, who considered them suitable for use with high school students. Stressing the confidentiality of the data to the students, I assured them that it would not be disclosed, even to their teachers or any other person in the school. There were some additional ethical considerations necessary to consider in order to enhance the confidentiality of the participants in focus group discussions. The participants in the focus groups did not just reveal their thoughts to the researcher, but also to other members of the group, which may have led to some stress being experienced by the participants (Smith, 1995). Although the researcher cannot ensure absolute confidentiality, as stated by Smithson (2000), I acknowledged this potential problem in the introductory
statement at the start of the focus group discussion. I also guaranteed their anonymity in this thesis and any future publications of the data.

4.13. Summary

This chapter provides a detailed report of the methodological approach used in this study. To establish methodological congruence, the rationale for adopting a constructivist grounded theory approach has been discussed. Justifications for each of the decisions related to the choice of research approach, sampling technique, data collection methods and data collection and analysis procedures, are outlined in this chapter. In addition, in the final section of the chapter, decisions taken to address trustworthiness, reflexivity and ethical considerations are presented in full.

To ensure the clarity of the findings, the findings are discussed in two separate chapters: chapter five presents the findings from the headteachers and teachers’ data, whilst chapter six reports the findings from the high school students’ data.
Chapter 5: Data, discussion, and findings – headteachers and teachers.

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents key findings that emerged from the analysis of the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews. I purposely integrated the data collected from these interviews at the data analysis stage because the headteachers were interviewed to hear their views about the significance of English or Punjabi as a MOI in schools in Punjab and to obtain information about the school language policy and guidelines for the English language teachers and therefore the context in which the teachers were teaching. Furthermore, headteachers monitor the teaching-learning process in their schools and are in regular contact with the teachers. Therefore, the data collected from the headteachers informed the interview schedule for the English language teachers and, consequently, the data from headteachers and teachers are deeply related. Combining them enabled me to locate the similarities and dissimilarities between the headteachers’ and teachers’ views, which provides a broader picture of the two different school contexts.

In this chapter, I have presented the two key findings which were (a) the hegemony of English in higher education and employment in Punjab, and (b) the social significance of learning in English, along with further insights from the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews. In this study, the concept of hegemony refers to the domination of English over Punjabi in the context of Punjab. These key findings are discussed under the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews as presented in Figure 5 below.
Figure 6: The findings, themes and subthemes that emerged from the headteachers’ and teachers’ interview analysis.

**The key findings**

**The hegemony of English in higher education and employment in Punjab, in India.**
- English is essential:
  - For entrance examinations
  - To study science and technology
  - For students to overcome academic difficulties
  - For students’ high aspirations for their future
  - For good employment

**The social significance of English in Punjab.**
- English is associated with:
  - Higher socio-economic status
  - Higher social class
  - Superiority in Punjabi society

**Additional findings**
- English provides students with self-confidence:
  - Lack of English causes anxiety in PM school students
  - Parents’ differing attitude towards EM and PM school students impacts children’s self-confidence

- Speaking in English makes a good impression on others:
  - Speaking in English is associated with good manners.
  - English-speaking is viewed as a good personal attribute to impress others.
  - English is associated with intelligence
5.2. The key findings

5.2.1. The hegemony of English over Punjabi in higher education and employment in Punjab, India.

From the analysis of the headteachers' and teachers’ interviews, which was framed using the three key constructs of investment i.e. ideology, agency and identity, it was found that both the headteachers and teachers generally agreed that English is an investment in students’ future possible–selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). To explore headteachers’ and teachers’ views on the significance of English, when asked how important English was in their daily lives, most recognized its importance for academic and professional purposes and some pointed out the social significance of English. From a fine-grained analysis of the headteachers’ and teachers' interviews, it became clear that English is perceived by them as a ladder to success which works as symbolic capital and provides students with opportunities in higher education and eventually in future employment. English is not a prerequisite for employment. However, we cannot deny the fact that every good occupation requires at least a bachelor's degree (Schwartz et al., 2009), which can mainly be obtained through learning in English, in the Indian context.

A detailed analysis of recurring themes emerging from the views expressed by headteachers and teachers in interviews is given below.

5.2.1.1. English is essential for entrance examinations to access good courses in higher education

The view that learning in English can ease access to higher education emerged as an important theme in the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews. Almost all the participants in this study (including students as reported in the following chapter) associated investment in English with access to higher education, which they believed had an impact on students’ identity formation. The following account captures an EM school teacher’s opinion about this:
English is very important for their [students] future. Nowadays, students are opting for medical sciences as their career. There also they need English. If they are going for non-medical stream then also, they must learn English ..., so students must learn English and be fluent and competent in English. In higher education, students can give their best if they know English. (Chamanjit, EM teacher).

In the preceding extract, the teacher emphasised the significance of English for students entering the medical and certain non-medical e.g. Engineering courses in higher education and in their future career. Chamanjit explicitly stated that those who know English can do better in higher education. Thus, she appeared to believe that students who do not learn in an EM school face difficulty due to the lack of required linguistic capital to access the most desired courses in higher education. One possible reason for this, as most of the participants (including students) reported, was that all the entrance tests for these courses in India are conducted in English (The Government of India, 1992). Entering courses in medical and non-medical disciplines thus opens up opportunities for entry to professional occupations, such as medicine and engineering. The investment in English, which appears to open the door to these attractive courses, therefore, tends to provide EM school students with more opportunities that can lead to their better future possible selves than is the case for their peers learning in a PM school. This perception of the EM school teacher is consistent with the beliefs held by the PM school headteacher:

It is quite common that students learning in PM school lag behind their counterparts in EM schools because the pattern of selection in good jobs or higher qualification, such as engineering and medical etc. is

14Admission into these two disciplines is in high demand and very competitive in India. These subject areas are considered superior to other disciplines such as the humanities and arts (Cheney et al. 2005).
based on the proficiency in the English language only. All the entrance tests are conducted in English, and higher education is in English, so it is difficult for PM students to compete with EM students (Varinder, PM headteacher).

Discussing the significance of English in accessing higher education and jobs, the PM school headteacher expressed her concerns about the PM school students lagging behind their counterparts in EM schools. The headteacher explicitly stated that it is hard for PM school students to compete with EM school students. This appeared to be due to a lack of the required linguistic capital to pass the examinations to enter good higher education courses. This suggests that students from PM schools face major challenges in improving their skills in English enough to allow them to enter these well-regarded courses in higher education. Similar difficulties and challenges were found to be experienced by regional language medium school students in a study conducted by Ramanathan (2005) in Gujrat, India.

In Varinder’s (PM school headteacher) account above, there was a sense of English as a form of linguistic capital, which can be used to exercise agency, for students to enter into the most sought-after fields: engineering and medicine. However, such beliefs related to the agentive use of English over any other language, for entering high profile courses in higher education, seem to be problematic for students’ identity formation in Punjab where English is not equally distributed and is used as a MOI in some schools but not in all. English medium school students’ investment in English, therefore, decreases their worry and enhances their prospects of achieving their desired future selves. The lack of investment in English may however contribute to PM students’ negative sense of self in comparison to EM students, which in turn may have an adverse impact on their (PM students) identity formation.

5.2.1.2. English in relation to studying science and technology

As noted above, it is mandatory for students to pass entrance examinations to enter competitive fields in science and technology. Although it is difficult to
pass these exams without knowing English, the students were reported to be keen on entering medical and non-medical streams to become doctors and engineers. One of the possible reasons for this might be that such courses are considered more valuable as they may open doors to occupational opportunities for students in the future (Banerjee, 2016; Bhattacharya, 2016). Additionally, the societal discourses which give an elevated position to these courses seems to rouse students’ desire to enter these so called high profile courses in Punjab in order to be identified as elites (Cheney et al., 2005). In relation to this, Das (2007, p. 59) highlighted that these courses are viewed as elevated streams in education and professions in India and people are obsessed with entering these which he refers to as a ‘craze’ and questions:

But can everyone become a scientist or a doctor or an engineer? Perhaps not. Some have to be artists, musicians, writers, social scientists, and litterateurs. Unfortunately, a student is very often forced to join a science course, although his or her natural inclination is creative arts. The results are usually disastrous, both from personal and social standpoints.

The relationship between learning in English and access to medical and non-medical subject areas in education has also been revealed in many other studies conducted in India (e.g. Asadullah & Yalonetzky, 2012; Berry, 2013; Bowl, 2001; Briggs et al., 2012; Kumari, 2016b).

In addition, the demand for extra classes in maths and science, according to one of the EM school teachers and one of the headteachers, bears witness to the perceived significance of English for higher education and students’ aspirations to enter medical and engineering fields. According to them, science and mathematics are considered as important subjects in higher education and are taught in English so students prefer taking extra lessons in these subjects: ‘I think they do take private lessons in science and maths’ (Anjali EM teacher). ‘I think they take tuitions more in science and maths depending how they are doing in English’ (Seena, EM school headteacher). Moreover, as will be reported in the following chapter, all the students in the focus groups agreed
with the statement that, *English is the most suitable language for the study of science, medical, technology and commerce.* This belief in turn provides EM school students with self-assurance that they possess the linguistic capital required to enter these elevated streams.

My concern here is not that students are opting for science or maths in higher education but rather that the significance of investment in English for the most aspired to future selves of students, such as becoming doctors and engineers, is recognised by students. Higher education is mainly carried out in English in India and students must learn science and maths in English. Since admission into the two disciplines medical (science) and engineering (maths) is quite competitive in India, those who are admitted into these courses feel fortunate while those who are not admitted might feel that they had lagged behind. As described by the EM headteacher:

> Those students [PM students] might have to face more failures in the entrance exams which are generally held in English. They barely can express themselves in English. Hence, it is a kind of stigma... I would say a language stigma. They might think of doing something else, but that emotional stress, the stress of society, the stress of relatives; thinking that their cousin has become a doctor and they have not even passed a year one in college or university. So, a social stigma of failure I would say has a huge negative impact. It might be thought as if the person had not worked hard enough, but it has more to do with the base which is hard to form when all the years of school time have passed, and it gets too late. (Seena, EM headteacher)

The EM school head teacher, in the extract above, described the mental and emotional state of students who lack the linguistic capital required to enter the prominent fields in higher education. Seena’s account clearly illustrates that PM school students, due to the lack of required linguistic capital may consider themselves incompetent to pass the entrance examinations to become doctors. Seena, however, added another string to the argument by stating that not all students want to enter these elevated fields. She appears to suggest
that some students choose these streams only because of societal pressure and to avoid the humiliation of being viewed as failures because they had not opted for courses which are considered superior in Punjabi society. The lack of knowledge of English, which is a pre-requisite to pass the entrance examinations and is viewed as a superior language, could possibly be the reason that the students who do not opt for medical and engineering courses are viewed as failures. The deficit view of PM students about their competence in English appeared to cause challenges and emotional stress for them which the EM head teacher refers to as a language stigma. The investment in English, which appears to be used as a measure for students' success and failure, plays a significant role in students' identity formation.

5.2.1.3. Lack of knowledge of English adds to students’ academic difficulties

The discussion in the above paragraphs about the significance of English for science, technology, and entrance examinations to access higher courses in universities highlights the weight given to English in academics in India. The importance of English for academics was also noted by the EM school headteacher. She outlined the academic difficulties students might face that can lead to their failure:

The biggest problem they (PM school students) will face I think is regarding the academics in higher education because they will not be able to understand what the lecturer is teaching. Another thing is they will be hesitant to ask any questions in the class, which will lead to the lack of understanding of the subject, and they might end up in failure in that subject or even that year. This might result in their withdrawal from studies. So that is basically the end of their career in that stream.

(Seena, EM headteacher)

The headteacher in the extract above indicates that students from PM schools might face major challenges in demonstrating their competence in higher education. Discussing PM school students’ academic performance in higher education, the headteacher expressed her concerns about the students being
reluctant to ask questions in class. This was because of their lack of competence in English in comparison to the students from EM schools. The EM headteacher stated that this can result in PM school students' failure and withdrawal from their studies. There are a number of studies noting the challenges faced by students in higher education because of poor communication and poor understanding of lectures in English (e.g. Hiew, 2012; Mohamed, 2013; Kirkgoz, 2014). Singh (2006) stressed the relationship between claimed proficiency in English and students’ educational competence in Punjab. With regard to the impact lack of English can have on students’ identity formation, PM school students appear to struggle to be identified as members of the community of practice (Wenger, 1998), in this case, as students of college and university. In communities of practice, such as colleges and universities, there are prevalent issues of power and unequal access that make new participants feel like peripheral members (Wenger et al., 2002). Thus, colleges and universities become a community of practice where, in order to join in, the PM school students must work hard to transform their position and to develop relations between them and the EM students. PM school students may exercise their personal agency in the form of hard work to develop their English linguistic competence as a way to negotiate their identity and to position themselves in a given community of practice such as a college or university. For example, PM school students in this study stated that they join English speaking centres to improve their knowledge and English-speaking skills (discussed in detail in Section 6.2.3.1.2).

A lack of competence in English further impacts on the PM students' participation in wider contexts. For example, the EM school headteacher provided the example of the IELTS exam, which is mandatory for students to enrol and to achieve set grades in order to pursue further studies abroad. This highlights how the students from PM schools might feel because of their lack of linguistic and cultural capital in the form of English language skills which may enable them to pass the IELTS exam. In this way, a lack of competence in English closes the door to them regarding access to higher education
abroad, their future imagined communities (Anderson, 1996). As a result, the students lag even further behind the students from EM schools as they have no choice but to either withdraw from their studies or to undertake a higher education course delivered using Punjabi language as instruction. This is likely to highlight further inequalities between the two types of students which discourages the PM students and may shape their perceptions about themselves adversely. Such perceptions concerning the shortcomings of regional language medium school students are evident in a number of studies related to EM and regional language medium learning in India (e.g. Pathan, 2012; Ramanathan, 2003, 2014; Sandhu, 2010, 2014b).

It is apparent from Seena’s account that knowledge of English is perceived to be widening opportunities and preventing students from experiencing difficulties in higher education and life in general that the lack of knowledge of English can bring. This theme also emerged clearly in the students’ focus groups and interview data as is reported in the following chapter. Seena however, in an extract above, appeared to recognise the disgrace the lack of English could bring to PM students. Such emotional insecurity is viewed as an identity vulnerability which Ting-Toomey (2005, p. 219) refers to, ‘the degree of anxiousness and ambivalence in regard to group based and person-based identity issues’.

Hence, it is clear that the lack of English which is perceived as linguistic capital to gain entry to the most desirable academic and professional fields can leave students from the PM schools feeling at a disadvantage. This might be because of their limited linguistic capital when it comes to higher education and jobs. Thus, PM students seem to suffer from emotional insecurity and vulnerability due to the fact that they are not competent enough to enter the higher education courses and professions which are much valued in Punjabi society. In contrast, EM school students, with their competence in English, are clearly at an advantage. These differences based on the accumulation of English as a means of accessing the most desirable positions academically and professionally has been found among people in North India, in the study
conducted by Sandhu (2014). Such beliefs that English is indispensable for high profile educational courses and occupations support the notion that learning in EM enhances the chances of EM students to enter these fields. This opinion about themselves may further encourage EM students to think that they have greater worth than their counterparts in PM schools and to form their sense of who they are. Therefore, learning in EM or PM seems, in the opinion of the teachers and headteachers interviewed, to be closely linked to students’ self-conception or identity formation and subsequently can have an impact on their future aspirations.

5.2.1.4. English associated with students’ aspirations for the future

The EM school headteacher’s response to the question: ‘to what extent does learning in Punjabi or EM school have an impact on students’ aspirations and hopes in the future?’ further evidenced the positive impact of learning in English on students’ future aspirations in relation to their higher education:

Yes, a child learning in EM school can obviously aspire to go and study at Harvard or can aspire to go and join NASA because of his higher level of speaking in English. (Seena, EM headteacher).

The distinction between PM and EM students is evident in the EM headteacher’s account. While talking about the distinguished professions and access to higher education in well-known universities like Harvard, Seena appeared to exclude PM students. Such beliefs bring into mind Ting-Toomey’s concept of group-based differentiation which may cause PM students feel ‘unwelcome and excluded’ (2005, p. 220). The headteacher seemed to believe that learning in English is a fundamental requirement to achieve the most aspired to future possible selves (for instance, to go abroad and study at Harvard or to join NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). Certainly, getting into high-profile courses such as medicine and engineering would also bring symbolic capital to students. The accumulation of symbolic capital incorporating linguistic, cultural, economic and social capital would empower those who have learned in English and further authorise them to
achieve their desired future selves or, as Anderson (1991) puts it, to enter the ‘imagined communities’. Thus, entering these privileged fields in higher education or professionally may label the EM students as those who possess valuable symbolic capital, and this is likely to make a positive impact on others. Nonetheless, the inadequacy in English among the PM students may serve as an identity trigger which could make them more conscious about the fact of being less proficient in English which might make them less confident about their possible future selves.

A similar opinion highlighting the differences between EM and PM schools and the students’ learning there can be clearly seen in the following extract from another EM school teacher’s interview:

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See, the medium of instruction in higher education will be English. All the learning material like books and all will be in English, and if a child will not be able to comprehend vocabulary then it would be difficult. They might need to run for private lessons and all. So, such differences will always be there. That is why children, those who want a bright future, are leaving those schools (Punjabi medium) and coming to our school. (Anjali, EM teacher)
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In the extract above, the teacher seems to express the view that students from PM schools are transferring to EM schools because of the value of learning in English for aspiring higher education students. The teacher seems to be making a judgement and brings to the fore that the PM schools are leaving the students in a disadvantaged position. This is because of the lack of exposure to English, a language which is believed to empower its speakers and provide them with better access to opportunities (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The teachers’ statement, however, needs to be interpreted cautiously because her thinking might have been influenced by her being the EM school teacher who had had her education in an EM school. One of the possible reasons for the students’ transfer, as given in the literature, may also be sound pedagogy and quality education in EM schools (Kaur, 2017). The pedagogical differences, in particular in English language teaching, between the two types of school were
also discussed by the student participants and are reported in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3.1. It could also be the case that the value placed on English, which carries linguistic capital, is perceived as a gateway to higher education and deemed to provide future opportunities to students and this probably influences parents’ decision to transfer their children from PM schools to EM schools (Hill & Chalaux, 2011; Okal, 2014; Singh & Sarkar, 2015). The reason for this shifting could therefore be either sound pedagogy or English medium of instruction. Nevertheless, it is apparent that parents want their children to have a good education, which they believe can be obtained in EM schools, to enable them to stand out in society and thus to have a positive impact on their identity overall.

From the discussion in this section, it becomes clear that the connection between English and highly desired educational courses might have a positive impact on those who manage to get into the so-called high-profile educational courses. The majority of them, however, would be the EM school students who would have a feeling of self-efficacy (the competence to perform successfully) (Dornyei, 2005) because they possess the linguistic capital required to access these fields. Thus, learning in English gives them a feeling of positivity which may provide them with confidence in their ability to access these valuable and most desirable fields and to achieve their desired future possible-selves. This accords with Singh’s (2015) study in which she compared EM and Telegu (regional language) medium high school students in Andhra Pradesh (another state in India), and reported the positive effects of learning in English such as making a good impression on others because students had acquired self-efficacy and agency in English.

The feeling of self-efficacy, one of the elements of self-perception, is seen as something which EM students could utilize in their identity formation. The attributes of an individual’s personality such as self-efficacy have been named as ‘identity capital’ which could increase a person’s chances to gather many tangible and intangible resources or, in other words, economic, linguistic, cultural and social capital (Schwartz & Cote, 2002). Thus, it can be said that

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among EM school students, a sense of their own ability to pass an entrance exam, as discussed earlier, and cope with any future academic challenges might suggest self-assurance in their ability to achieve their desired future possible selves. Learning in English, therefore, may contribute to the EM school students’ positive thinking about themselves in relation to their success in the future and their identity formation. However, the negative impact of the lack of self-efficacy in English on PM students’ chances to fulfil their future aspirations and, in turn, on their identity formation cannot be underestimated.

The key finding highlighting the hegemony of English is discussed further in relation to the sub-theme: *English for employment and students’ identity formation.*

5.2.1.5. *English for employment and students’ identity formation*

The teachers’ and headteachers’ belief about the significance of English for students’ employment in the future is in line with their views on the importance of English for higher education. Such beliefs highlighting the dominance of English in employment in Punjab emerged consistently in the headteacher and teacher’s interviews and has already been briefly discussed in the section above. The participants explicitly focussed on the use of English to get employment and associated this with the students’ identity formation.

When the headteachers and teachers were asked, *focussing on students’ future, such as jobs or career in Punjab, how important is English for students?* their responses suggested that English is viewed as an important language for students’ future jobs and career. For example, in the extract given below, pointing to students’ future in terms of employability, the EM school teacher explicitly stated how speaking good English at job interviews and in a workplace can enhance students’ chances of getting and retaining a job.

> Coming to their future, I will say that certainly, they will have difficulties in interviews and all, whenever they want to go for joining a good firm, they will need to speak in English to impress the job interviewers. So, they will have to interact in English. The first impression that a person
makes lasts forever and whenever a person is speaking in English that gives the lasting impact of that person. So, that person's personality is enhanced. (Anjali, EM teacher)

The EM school teacher, Anjali, appears to believe that English speaking is mandatory to secure a good job. The investment in English, which is perceived to function as linguistic capital in Punjab, seems to prevent students from encountering difficulties in job interviews which are conducted in the English language. Anjali appeared to stress that the use of good English at job interviews is a means to impress an interviewer to get a job. One possible reason to prefer English speaking in jobs could be that a knowledge of English can bring economic returns to the companies operating nationally and internationally (Azam et al., 2013). Along with that, English is considered as an identity mark of elite and well-educated people, which is mentioned in the SLL literature as one of the variables of motivation to learn a language (Smith, 2013).

The lack of investment in English, therefore, can be seen as strongly obstructing the chances of PM students accessing good employment, as their linguistic capital is considered to be of less value. This, however, reinforces the privilege of EM students who already have an advantage over PM students in terms of access to valued higher education courses that lead to good employment. Thus, the hegemony of English, the language which is a part of human capital (Latukha et al., 2016) and is inextricably tied to employment opportunities in an Indian context, posit a deep relationship between the investment in English and students’ future possible selves and their identity formation. Speaking in English thus seems to be considered as a specific factor that can provide credibility, in a Punjabi context, where it can be converted into economic and social capital, for instance, in the job sector (see Roshid & Chowdhury, 2013; Srinivas, 2013). Even if they have the same academic qualifications and good academic results, PM school students might not be successful in job applications because of their lack of investment in English. Such beliefs regarding the significance of English in jobs were further
expressed by the PM school teacher who describes the connection between English and good employment using a proverbial saying:

As we say, money makes the mare go, in the same way English makes the mare go. (Seema, PM teacher).

The teacher makes her point using a traditional saying to highlight the significance of English. The general meaning of this saying is that it is difficult to survive without money. Similarly, the teacher here has attempted to show the significance of English, which she seems to believe is a necessity in daily life. Although the statement given above is short, it gives the same impression as that given by other teachers and explicitly expressed by one of the headteachers i.e. that competence in English is essential to gain good employment. The headteacher stated that ‘I would say English is very helpful not only for students in getting good positions in the future but also for their bread earning in the future’ (Seena, EM). As discussed earlier, English in an Indian context, although it is not used much in daily conversation, has an important place academically and professionally.

Thus, English is considered to provide access to opportunities like higher education and jobs in the future and comprises a linguistic capital that affords its speakers’ symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991a) which enables its operator to convert one type of capital into another. The use of fluent and good English in job interviews in Punjab thus appears to exercise an invisible power (Bourdieu, 1991a) which is not known to the people who are subject to it and those who exercise it. However, it has a deep impact on people’s (students’) identity formation.

In short, English is the native language of most developed countries and also has left a mark of its superiority because of its colonial history in India. Parents’ high demand for EMI in schools in India (Harma, 2011; Luz & Cruz, 2013) in conjunction with the National Education policy (Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), 1992) and the school education board policies (Mohnot, 2006; Ramanujam, 2011) that approve English to be taught as a compulsory
language in schools all point to the hegemonic view of English in Punjab. Such strong hegemonic ideology is exemplified in one of the PM school teacher's statements that 'if you fail in English you fail in all school subjects.' (Seema, PM teacher).

In summary, based on the majority of the preceding extracts, it is notable that in the headteachers' and teachers' opinion, communication in English is a requirement for most jobs, especially in the private sector in Punjab. This has also been noted by Ramanathan (2005) who argues that opportunities to learn English, which have been unevenly distributed in the Indian context, play a gatekeeping role in relation to accessing well-paid professional jobs. A number of studies have shown that the English language is deemed to be cultural capital that tends to lead to job opportunities (e.g. Enxhi, Bee Hoon, & Mei Fung, 2012; Feldmann & Feldmann, 2016; Tam, 2012; Taylor & Bain, 2005). A few studies conducted in countries where English is the native language also reveal that immigrants with English as a second language have fewer opportunities to gain employment because of their lack of communication skills (Trofimovich & Turuseva, 2015). Thus, it can be said that valuing one's linguistic capital accords symbolic value and legitimation to a person's identity in structures of power such as higher education and employment (Taylor & Bain, 2005). At the same time, because of the prevailing ideology in relation to the dominance of that particular language and systematic patterns of control, such as attending job interviews to obtain a good job, lacking this valuable linguistic capital can constitute an obstacle to obtaining the desired position.

In the current study, however, the headteachers' and teachers' concerns about EM and PM school students' English speaking did not end with its link to higher education and jobs. Instead, this led to another aspect: social discrimination based on the language the students are learning in. An inequitable distribution of the valued linguistic capital, which occurs as the result of different languages used for instruction in schools, reinforces inequality among students. These differences not only influence opportunities to access higher education and jobs, but also have a profound effect on students' sense of self-worth which
may affect their social identity. The hegemony of English in Punjab and its uneven distribution in schools, seems to split students into two groups, which reinforce inequality among them and influences their social identities in the case of PM students, negatively. Such concerns were expressed frequently in the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews. They informed the analysis of the teachers’ accounts concerning students’ identity formation in relation to their social status which is discussed in detail in the following section.

5.2.2. The social significance of English in Punjab

The fact that English is viewed as a marker of social status in society in Punjab was another key theme that emerged from the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews. Both the headteachers and teachers made it explicit that people who can communicate in English are considered to have a higher social status in Punjab. As discussed in an earlier section, knowledge of English facilitates entry into occupations such as doctors and engineers which are considered elite professions in the Punjabi context. It is likely that students with linguistic capital, English, aligned with the hegemonic ideologies of people with regard to its higher value as compared to Punjabi, are able to make a good impression in Punjabi society. Likewise, the ideologies and societal discourses related to the valued position of English over Punjabi in Punjab may impact students’ perceptions about themselves based on the language they are learning in. The extracts given below highlight the fact that learning in English is viewed as a status symbol and helps to explain further why the headteachers and teachers perceived this to be related to students’ identity formation.

5.2.2.1. English associated with socio-economic status

From the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews it became evident that English in Punjab is associated with high socio-economic status. In their accounts, both the headteachers and teachers compared the PM and EM school students’ parents’ socio-economic status and linked good jobs and higher socio-economic status with the EM students’ parents, and vice versa. For example, it was apparent in an interview with the PM school headteacher
that most of the parents of the PM school students who worked as labourers had had their education in a PM school.

I think most of them [parents] had their schooling in PM schools and after that, they started working as a labourer in building construction, rickshaw pulling and helping the farmers. (Varinder, PM headteacher)

It is likely that a deficit view of people educated in PM school working as labourers, which has taken a form of a social ideology, creates an understanding in PM students that they are meant to enter into the labour market because they have not acquired English, the capital required to access higher ranking jobs. Such beliefs could have an impact on how students learning in PM schools view themselves and are viewed by others when their future possible selves are considered.

Furthermore, during the interviews, English was linked to rich people in Punjabi society which adds further to the view of PM students that they are behind EM school students in respect of social standing and / or earning prospects. As exemplified in the account of one of the EM school teachers:

Our society is already divided based on rich and poor. Because rich people can send their children to EM school, English is thought to be as the language of the rich and the people with a high standard. Therefore, one who speaks in English in Punjabi society is viewed as the one with a high standard of living. (Chamanjit, EM teacher).

Chamanjit suggested that English speaking is linked to a person’s socio-economic status and is viewed as the language of the rich people. This is because people who are financially secure can afford to send their children to EM schools. She further expressed her concern that differences based on English speaking have added another category, people with high living standards, which further divides people in Punjabi society based on their and their children’s learning in a particular language.

Research in India strongly suggests that people who are financially well-off send their children to EM schools to show and maintain their high living
standards (e.g. Kingdon, 1996; Smith & Joshi, 2016) which further signifies their high social standard. Additionally, in the literature review, it was found that the association of English with people’s socio-economic status creates a new category of division of people in Punjab. For instance, business 27.7% and high ranked government jobs 60.6%) were revealed as the professions of parents of EM school students while farming (40%) and labour jobs (53.6%) were reported as the professions of parents of PM school students (Singh, 2006).

With regard to the link between English and socio-economic status, the EM school headteacher’s opinion is similar to Chamanjit’s views:

I think in Punjab a person’s social economic status rely almost on the English language. Just the children from upper and middle class come to EM private schools. Children from lower class families do not get this opportunity to learn in EM school and further to get good salaried jobs in the future. This interrupts their growth in society and it certainly produces a new caste system that divides people into two categories, poor and elite. (Seena, EM headteacher)

The headteacher, like the EM school teacher, identified the close links between learning in English and an individual’s socio-economic status. EM schools in India are expensive. Parents need to pay high fees, therefore not everyone can afford to send their children to EM schools (Harma, 2011; Singh & Sarkar, 2015). The headteacher seems to suggest that in Indian society the English language opens doors to opportunities such as higher education and jobs but is not easily accessible to all. The interrelationship between economic capital and the chance to acquire access to English language skills have also been highlighted by Park (2011) in his study conducted in Korea. In the extract above, Seena (EM headteacher) linked English to socio-economic status and also referred to a new social class category based on one’s learning in EM or PM school, i.e. poor and elite. Similarly, the other headteacher also highlighted a social class division of people as ‘English educated, and non-English
educated’ and stated that ‘people learning in English schools were considered elite as compared to others’ (Varinder, PM headteacher).

The PM school teacher’s account, which appears to be in the form of a plea to the government to introduce EM of instruction in all schools, exemplifies the ideological hegemony of English and its importance for achieving a higher social status:

If we want to grow, I mean to grow in society and if we want to go among the reputed ones (people) so we should try to speak English. I mean ... it shows our standard. If we don't speak English and not conversing in English, somewhere we feel shy, it hurts us that I am not able to speak English. So, there must be something done ... If we want to raise the standard of all the schools in Punjab then the medium of instruction should be English. (Seema, PM teacher)

The teacher expressed her concern that English should be introduced as a medium of instruction in government schools in Punjab so everyone can gain a good position in society, or ‘grow in society’. She seems to present the emotional voice of students learning in PM schools who lack knowledge of English. The use of the expression, ‘it hurts’, reflects her concern for students who are unable to speak English, the language which represents social prestige. English is recognised as a global language (Crystal, 2005) and has been given an elevated place, in an Indian context, in that mastery in English determines an individual’s position in society. Such beliefs relate to the high status of English which may position the EM school students as members of the socially-privileged sector of Punjabi society. In contrast, the students from PM schools may be regarded as those with a lower social status.

5.2.2.2. English associated with high social class

With regard to the links between English and social class, the PM school headteacher, focussing on differences between the people who learned in English and Punjabi, stated:
People living in big cities [and working at officer ranks] have a better lifestyle than the people living in villages or remote areas. When they meet or get-together they always prefer speaking in English. So, to rise and survive in Punjabi society, which is getting more advanced day by day, it is important to know English. If we do not know English, then we cannot sit among good people, by good I mean well-read people. (Varinder, PM headteacher)

The headteacher added a new perspective on how English-speaking people are seen in Punjab. She referred to the lifestyle of people in big cities in Punjab and related English speaking to higher occupational positions and better lifestyles. This further indicates that English speaking in Punjab is viewed as a marker of the higher ranks in jobs and good lifestyle in general. English has been described as a language used mostly by the people in urban areas and linked to their higher social status. This accords with the claims made by Vulli (2014) who, in his study on EM of instruction and Dalit discourses on this subject, confirms that English learning is mandatory along with the mother tongue to acquire good social status in an Indian society.

Additionally, the headteacher in the extract above explicitly relates English speaking to good and educated people. The use of terms like ‘good’ and ‘well-read’ for people who can speak English serves to determine the relationship between English speaking and an individual’s positive and influential identity. Such ideologies make it quite clear that English speaking plays an important role in being viewed as an important person in Punjabi society. The differences in the use of the English language between people from urban and rural areas in India has been discussed in many studies (Kumari, 2016b; Singh, 2015; Vaish, 2008b). The positioning of English-speaking people as good people who are ranked higher in society, draws our attention to Davies and Harre’s (1990) notion of interactive positioning, whereby a person is positioned by another or by others. Davies and Harre (1990) presented the idea of reflexive and interactive positioning. Reflexive positioning is when a person positions himself/herself differently from others and interactive positioning is when
others position that person differently. Here, the teacher seems to be interactively positioning those who can speak English, drawing our attention to how people in Punjab are positioned differently within the society, based on their investment in English.

Social class based division has been recognised as one of the important aspects of identity formation (Block, 2015). As discussed in the literature on Second Language Learning and identity, many factors including class influence identity formation, but here is a plethora of research highlighting the interrelationship between language and social class (Block, 2015; Hanafin & Lynch, 2002; Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 2016; Sacker, Schoon, & Bartley, 2002). Block (2007) defines a social class as one of the dimensions of identity which, unlike other dimensions such as gender, race or nationality, is based on the distribution and redistribution of material resources. In Punjab, the accumulation of English which brings social status appears to determine the individual’s social class. This might be creating differences between students from EM and PM schools. Ramanathan’s (2005) work on English as a MOI in India is a good example of this, as she illustrates connections between symbolic markers such as the language used as a MOI and social class.

The teacher’s account above shows that the differences based on investment in English divide people into high and low class in Punjabi society. The social class division based on the language in which the students are learning indicates that in their daily lives, students from both types of school might be positioned or identified based on the type of school in which they are learning. This stratification results in social class hierarchies in societies (Block, 2015), especially, in Indian society, which has already been stratified on the basis of castes and religions (Ramanathan, 2014). In this way, learning in two different types of schools with regard to the language used for instruction can also result in social inequality among students.

Thus, investment in English appears to bring with it both economic and social capital. The accumulation of this capital distinguishes Punjabi speakers from English speakers or, to be more precise, PM school students from EM school
students. Examples demonstrating the differences between the two groups of students were evident in the interviews, where participants highlighted how English speakers and EM school students are considered superior to PM students.

5.2.2.3. English as a symbol of superiority and cause of social inequality in Punjabi society

The superiority of English over the Punjabi language and therefore, the supremacy of EM students over PM students in Punjabi society is clearly exemplified in the following account from the EM school headteacher:

It has a huge impact on their social lives because the kids learning in EM schools hang out together and others hang out together. It is not just that, even when they find their life partners it goes up to that level. For example, a boy who learned in a PM school and is doing a small business, on the other side, a girl who learned in EM school and becomes a doctor, if they like each other, they cannot marry because their parents do not agree. So, this inequality which starts at school level goes up to the next level of their life. (Seena, EM headteacher)

Talking about the social inequality caused by learning in different languages, the headteacher asserted that students from English and PM schools do not socialize together. One possible reason for this might be the effect of the dominant discourses and ideologies concerning the differences between students from both types of school (Vulli, 2014). The headteacher’s account (given above) also reflects parental beliefs with regard to students learning in different languages and points to the commonly expressed parental wishes to marry their EM educated children to those educated in EM school. Sandhu (2010) identified the similar perceptions among women participants educated...
in English and Hindi medium schools in Dehradun, in India. It may be that students socialize with students from the same group (learning in the same language) because of parental pressure. This has also been demonstrated in the findings from student focus group discussions in this study and has been discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2.2. *EMI and social inequality in Punjab.*

Such comparisons place EM school students and PM school students in favourable and unfavourable positions respectively, which could damage the PM students' future positioning in society. For example, the EM school students are accepted and the PM school students are kept at bay because of the differences in their investment in English. The use of terms like 'illiterate' and 'uncivilized' indicate that students learning in PM schools do not create a good impression of themselves. Hence, such negative perceptions of PM school students by people in Punjabi society might impact adversely on students' beliefs about themselves. Thus, not only is the English competence seen to enhance students' higher education and employment opportunities, but it is also regarded as fundamental to determining social prestige or superiority in Punjab and perceived as an investment in people's social identity in Punjab. The following extract from one of the EM school teachers sheds some more light on this:

> In our daily life, in society people are not interacting in English, so, English is not very much used. Over here, I think if people are going to parties they are interacting in English with their friends. In parties or any other social gatherings, for example, in school functions where parents are also invited. Those who know English they speak English in parties and other gatherings. I think it is because they want to have their impact or impression on others that they know the

15Arranged marriages are quite common in an Indian context. Parents themselves find and approve a boy or girl their child should marry. One important thing they consider and look for in a prospective boy or girl are their educational and professional qualifications.
language of high class. In this way, they want to show their status. 
(Anjali, EM teacher)

At the beginning of the extract, Anjali appears to suggest that English is not that important for daily life in Punjab. However, she asserted that English is preferred in formal gatherings such as parties and functions. Thus, it becomes clear that English speaking is associated with social prestige or superiority in Punjabi society. In this extract, she clearly identifies the relationship between English speaking and being viewed as superior and belonging to a higher class with the example of parents using English while attending school functions. These parents attempt to position themselves above others by speaking in English, which has been openly acknowledged as the dominant language and which represents a higher social status in Indian society (Mohanty, 2006). It is likely, that they are trying to impress others as people in India are believed to be impressed by those who can speak English (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). In this way, they exercise agency to position themselves differently from the parents who cannot speak English. This might also be indicative of their dismissive or prejudiced attitude towards other parents who cannot speak in English (Sandhu, 2014). Therefore, either intentionally or unintentionally, they are sending a message to others who cannot speak English that they are inferior to them. This is an example of reflexive positioning (Davies & Harre, 1990) according to which a person attempts to position oneself differently, most of the time in order to be viewed as superior to others.

The connection between the dominant status of English and a high-class life in Punjab was described by Anjali, one of the EM school teachers:

The English language has become essential to get good jobs and to get recognised in the society. If a person doesn’t know English, he/she cannot live a very high-class life at least in our society, where English is considered the language for enjoying a social status. (Anjali, EM teacher).
At first sight, it becomes clear that English in Punjab is considered as a language that brings with it opportunities and recognition for its speakers. Those who do not speak English are positioned by others as having a lower social status. The teacher’s stress on ‘at least in our society’ reinforces how people in society in Punjab view those who can speak English as superior to others.

The impact of the lack of English as valuable social capital was exemplified in one of the PM school teacher’s interviews:

   English is considered as the language of high class and when someone is unable to speak in English, especially in a group of people who can speak good English, he/she feels embarrassed and, in this way, it hurts. (Sandeep, PM teacher)

Sandeep suggested that knowledge of English is related to ‘high class’ and it is important to speak in English with people who know English in Indian society. It appears that lack of competence in English in Punjab, can cause embarrassment. The lack of this linguistic capital can thus become a cause of stress for PM school students.

The EM school headteacher’s comments concerning lack of competence in English and social stigma, discussed earlier, echo those of the teachers. A strong relationship between lack of knowledge of English and social humiliation among students has also been reported in previous studies conducted in some countries where English is used as a MOI in some schools but not in all (Mohamed, 2013; Sandhu, 2010; Tamim, 2014). It can be argued that because of negative feelings, such as embarrassment, the students from PM schools might position themselves as inferior to their counterparts who can speak in English. Such feelings were articulated by one of the PM school teachers who appeared to position herself as a student when she says:

   If we don’t speak English and not conversing in English somewhere, we feel shy, I mean it hurts us that I am not able to speak English. (Seema, PM teacher).
It appears that PM school students want to speak English, but due to their lack of knowledge of English, they are hesitant about communicating in English. Thus, the lack of this valuable linguistic capital becomes a reason for their reluctance or hesitation. Such insights into the importance of the English language to achieve high social status cannot therefore be ignored when thinking about the impact of learning in a particular language on students’ identity formation. This unintended downgrading of Punjabi while considering English the language of status, can be seen as a kind of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). Punjabi, which is the regional language and is also used in most of the government offices in Punjab, is undermined because English is viewed as a form of symbolic capital. With regard to linguistic imperialism, the powerful language not only replaces other languages but also displaces some (Phillipson, 1992). Thus, it is not inappropriate to suggest that in the Indian context English has displaced other languages. For example, the elevated position of English as the official language in the Constitution of India places it alongside Hindi, the national language (Indian Constitution, 2007). In practice, however, English enjoys an even more eminent position in comparison to Hindi, or any of the other regional languages in India (e.g. Erling et al., 2016; Evans, 2002; Petrovic & Majumdar, 2010; Rao, 2014). The same seems to be true in relation to Punjabi, as the participants in the current study appeared to associate the knowledge of English to a person’s good manners which, they expressed, is generally believed are not to be found in students learning in PM schools.

In the discussion in the section: the social significance of English, the hegemony of English in relation to social status has been considered from different perspectives, such as its association with socio-economic status, social class, the superiority which it provides and its use by individuals perceived as well-mannered. All the discussion above, makes it clear that a knowledge of English or lack of it plays a vital part in validating a social class or social status of an individual in Punjab.
The interrelationship between social class and the English language has also been recognized by sociolinguistics (Rampton, 1996) and applied linguists (Pennycook, 1995, 1998). It has been argued that this has had an impact on an individual’s identity (Block, 2015). Such beliefs about access to English learning and thus higher social status could have a significant impact on students’ views about themselves and their social status in relation to the language in which they are learning. They might feel that because they are not learning in English, they do not have a high social status, and they may feel they do not have the same social power as others who are learning in English. Such feelings about themselves would certainly have a negative impact on their confidence about their position in Punjabi society.

In summary, proficiency in the English language, which seems to provide social mobility and prestige in the Punjabi context, can be closely associated with a person’s identity. Thus, it can be argued that investment in English offers an elevated social status to those who have access to English, but threatens others’ social identities. For example, in Punjab, viewing English as a language of status can be good for EM school students, but could have serious consequences for PM school students with regard to how others view them. Thus, the prevailing ideology that competence in English is important with regard to someone’s position in society tends to relegate PM school students, rather than encourage them and offer them opportunities for upward social mobility. In a nutshell, learning in EM school is viewed as an investment in students’ social identity.

5.3. Further insights from the headteachers and teachers’ interview data

As I was looking to explore students’ identity formation, I wanted to know in what other ways teachers considered EM and PM students to be different to each other. Therefore, I consciously steered the conversation in the interviews towards the topic of potential differences between students based on the language in which they were learning. The contrasts the headteachers and teachers made between the students shed light on how students may position themselves and are positioned by others in society based on the differences
between them. This further aided understanding of students’ identity formation. The differences in the competence of English speaking between the two groups of students that may influence the students’ sense of self are reported in this section and further extends the discussion of the main findings of this study.

5.3.1. English provides students with self-confidence

In response to the question which focused on perceived differences between an EM student and a PM student, both the headteachers and the four language teachers asserted that investment in English by learning in English develops confidence in students. This was one of the most prevalent themes that emerged from the data collected from all the participants, including students.

In relation to this, the PM school headteacher stated:

Because of the lack of knowledge of English, there is a lack of confidence in PM school students. When private school student speaks in English with a government school student then that student gets so scared, and because of that fear and hesitation, he cannot speak if he wants to. So, he lacks the confidence. (Varinder, PM headteacher)

Comparing students from the two types of school, the PM school headteacher asserted that PM school students exhibit a lack of confidence while speaking to EM school students. The headteacher thus seems to believe that PM school students aspire to speak English, but they hesitate due to anxiety. Furthermore, with regard to the reasons for the difference in students’ confidence in speaking in English, the PM school headteacher Varinder stated that ‘EM school students get more exposure to English not only in school but at home also’. This however, contradicts the EM school headteacher’s assertion that: ‘they (EM students) do not quite often speak English at home’. Despite the EM school headteacher’s claim that students do not speak much English at home, EM students do of course get to speak in English in school. Moreover, it has been strongly evident that increased exposure to speaking
in a foreign language develops communication skills and confidence in speaking in this language (Kim, 2012). Hence, the lower exposure to English in PM schools seemed to trigger a sense of anxiety among PM students. This further seemed to be governed by the ideology that English is the language of power. For instance, Chamanjit suggested that EM students feel more empowered as a result of learning in English:

They can express themselves. They are more confident than the PM students and feel more empowered. They also feel that they have more knowledge. So, they feel they are more confident and intelligent. They know that they have more opportunities and they are far ahead than PM students. So English definitely gives empowerment to the people. (Chamanjit, EM teacher)

This statement appears to confirm the critical role of English, suggesting it plays a powerful role in creating opportunities, for example, in jobs and higher education, as was discussed by many participants in the interviews. Since EM school students can exercise agency in the form of English language abilities, Chamanjit argued that they perceive themselves to be more empowered than the PM school students. This sense of empowerment, as a result of accumulated linguistic capital, in turn, makes EM students feel more confident.

One of the possible reasons for feeling this empowerment might be due to the powerful status of English in the discourses of people in Punjabi society (Sandhu, 2014). Societal discourses certainly give rise to ideologies related to comparisons between students from English and regional language medium schools (Ramanathan, 2008). The influence of such societal discourses on parents of students learning in EM and PM school was reported by many participants in this study.

On the other hand, the PM students’ lower level of proficiency in English seems to impact negatively on their sense of self and thus makes them feel less confident. With regard to speaking in English, it was noted by the EM school
teacher that students from the PM schools need to think and translate in their minds before they say anything in English.

The student who is learning in EM school will not need to think much and translate before speaking in English, which I think the PM student will need to. So, there is always an imbalance between them. That is why the EM school students are more confident and fluent in speaking English. (Anjali, EM teacher)

Anjali, in the extract above, recognised the imbalance between students from the two types of school and seemed to believe that EM students are more confident and express themselves clearly and fluently in English. This might be due to their increased exposure to English in EM schools which facilitates student proficiency in English speaking. Anjali’s beliefs can be questioned and may be considered as discriminatory owing to her position as an EM school teacher who had her education in English. However, considering that lack of investment in English, which is considered as the language of power, can result in an imbalance of power between students from the two types of schools; it does seem that the lack of English hampers PM student’s confidence. Such beliefs, however, again place the EM school students in a higher and more favourable position.

5.2.3.1. Lack of knowledge of English causes anxiety in PM students

Not getting an opportunity to learn in English in Punjab, which is considered essential for students to reduce their fear of failure in personal and professional life, in particular, aiding their future possible selves, is considered to cause students anxiety when it comes to English speaking. Anxieties in relation to a lack of investment in English seem to occur because of the negative attributes ascribed to those who lack a knowledge of English. This was believed to have an impact on students’ communication and views about themselves, as is exemplified in the extract below:
If people are speaking in English and he is the only one who is not then the inferiority complex will surely be there in that person. So, obviously it will impact his identity. (Anjali, EM teacher)

Talking about student identity, Anjali asserted that a lack of proficiency in English creates an ‘inferiority complex’ in PM students. This makes them more vulnerable to a state of anxiety that can have a negative impact on their identity. This is what Krashen (1981) referred to as a ‘low affective filter’ that impacts the learner’s motivation, self-confidence and anxiety state.

It is likely that a student’s lack of competence in English may make them introverted, and that anxiety renders them quiet in the classroom when the English teacher asks them to speak in English, as suggested in the following account:

If you will ask them [PM students] something in English, they will be quiet and will not say even a single word. If you strictly ask them to talk to each other in English, then they will start laughing and remain quiet during the whole period. (Seema, PM teacher)

In the similar vein, another PM school teacher stated that PM school students face difficulties in English speaking and are not able to express themselves:

They [PM students] think that it is better to be quiet than to answer any questions. So, they prefer listening to others than speaking or expressing themselves. (Sandeep, PM teacher)

Both the teachers from the PM school stated that students become quiet when they are asked either in school or in college to speak in English. This is due to the lack of proficiency in English which makes them feel shy and introverted.

5.2.3.1.2. Parents’ differing attitude towards students learning in EM or PM schools impacts children’s self-confidence

The headteachers’ and teachers’ interview accounts further highlighted parents’ dominant ideologies indicating general differences between EM and PM students. As expressed by the EM school headteacher, EM and PM
students’ parents make comparisons between their children. These comparisons are mainly based on the advantages attached to learning in English:

I think when parents who were not able to send their children to EM school, they compare their children to others they do feel that their kids lag behind ... they do feel bad about them that they (children) did not learn in EM school. I too think that kids when they realise how important English is in their lives, they would blame their parents that if they had learned in an EM school, they might have had that confidence to compete with other students. Certainly, they do feel that there is a gap that cannot be filled at that stage; it’s too late by then ... On the other hand, parents who send their children to EM schools they feel pride that their children are getting good jobs. EM school students feel good about themselves and they might feel that their parents have done a great job by giving them an opportunity to learn in EM school. (Seena, EM headteacher)

In the extract above, while describing the differences between the students, the EM headteacher echoed the beliefs of parents that parents of EM students feel proud because their children are learning in an EM school and parents of PM school students believe that their children lag behind the students learning in English. These comparisons, based on knowledge of English, seem to begin at home as the parents of students learning in Punjabi themselves feel that their children lack confidence because of the lack of investment in English. On the other hand, parents of the students learning in English were reported to feel proud that they are sending their children to EM schools. Parents’ differing attitude towards children learning in English and Punjabi medium school was evident in the students’ interview accounts and is discussed in the following chapter in Section 6.2.2.2. Due to the advantages attached to learning in English, PM school students seem later in their lives to criticise their parents for not giving them an opportunity to learn in English. They feel this opportunity might have given them the confidence to compete and attract educational and
professional opportunities. Ideologies such as these appear to favour EM school students and seem unfavourable towards PM school students. It further indicates that in the stratified Indian society, such differences between students can be related to not possessing attributes that are considered more desirable in society, in this case, the English language. English language proficiency is thus viewed as legitimate cultural capital that can provide excellence and, in turn, self-confidence (Lueg & Lueg, 2015).

5.3.2. English speaking makes a good impression on others

As discussed above, parents associate learning in English with pride and status and since English is related to high social status (Akram & Ghani, 2013; Banerjee, 2016; Samaranayake, 2015), acquiring the cultural capital of English that can create social and economic capital can make a good impression on others. This is why both the headteachers argue that English should be introduced as the MOI in all the schools in Punjab. Although in the literature there are concerns about the loss of cultural language, which has been referred to as a linguistic genocide (e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), a number of studies outline the advantages of English MOI (e.g. British Council, 2014; Kirkgoz, 2014; Mohamed, 2013; Yip et al., 2003), especially in the postcolonial contexts where English is considered as a language of power. As discussed in section 6.2.2: the social significance of English, investment in English by learning in an EM school provides students with socio-economic capital in Punjab and, therefore, students from EM schools are viewed as belonging to a higher social class than PM school students. This is why the headteachers and teachers reported investment in English as a means for EM students to create a good impression on others in society. This has been identified as one of the additional findings and has been discussed under different themes in the following paragraphs.

5.2.3.2.1. English-speaking is associated with good manners

Most of the participants in this study associated good manners to learning in English. Focussing on the importance of English, one of the EM school
teachers pointed to the prevalent ideologies of people in Punjabi society, which suggest that people who are not able to speak English are devalued:

People who do not know English are mostly considered as illiterate and uncivilized in our society. English is a marker of success. One who knows English or is fluent in English have more chances to succeed, whether it is in studies, or jobs in the future. (Chamanjit, EM teacher)

Here, the teacher appears to believe that competence in English is a marker of success in education, and of being an educated person in Punjabi society. One possible reason for this might be the significance of English as a global language (Graddol, 1998) to access higher education and job opportunities not only in the context of Punjab but worldwide. What is important to note here is the teacher’s views that people who do not know English are positioned as ‘illiterate’ and ‘uncivilized’ in Punjabi society. This demonstrates the unfavourable impression that students learning in PM schools make in comparison to students learning in EM schools in Punjab. This corresponds with the EM school headteacher’s assertion that EM school students in Punjab are believed to have good manners: ‘I think that students from EM are thought to be well-mannered. I do not agree with that because I think values come from family’ (Seena, EM Headteacher). The headteacher disagreed with the dominant ideology of EM school students being considered well-mannered; however, she appears to concur with the belief that students learning in English are well-mannered. Good manners are seen as central to the formation of good public identity (Eliason, 1996; Vignoles, 2011), the lack of which threatens a person’s reputation in society and impacts on their identity formation (Goffman, 1959). Probing for further information, the headteacher was asked if she agreed that EM school students were well mannered, her response was:

EM schools, for example, in our school we stress on manners and students’ behaviour in society. I don’t think there is much stress laid on teaching good manners to students in government schools. I have seen people from PM schools who are polite and well mannered. But
overall, I think that students of EM are thought to be well-mannered.
(Seena, EM headteacher)

In the headteacher’s account given above, she asserted that in EM schools, in particular in the school in this study, there was more attention given to students’ manners and behaviour in comparison to PM schools. This perception is consistent with the commonly held beliefs about English and good manners by the majority of other participants. This might be the headteacher’s tactic to support the hegemonic ideology of learning in English and its association with good manners in Punjab. This is because English is hegemonically positioned as a legitimate language that empowers people, and lack of English can put people at a disadvantage (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Investment in English thus appeared to be thought of as a way to convey a good impression on others in society. These findings echo the results of a study by Pathan (2012), emphasising that because of the nervousness and shyness among regional language medium school students, they develop inferiority complexes, get distracted easily and do not behave well. It is important to note that behaviour is the umbrella term that encompasses manners, acts and emotions (Chowdry et al., 2010).

In the extract discussed earlier, the participants’ use of the two oppositional words, ‘well-mannered’ and ‘uncivilized’, referring to the EM school students and PM school students respectively, clearly indicates that students are recognised socially based on the type of school in which they are learning. Thus, this stigmatising gaze of people in Indian society might force the students from a PM school to internalise negative self-images and prevent them from developing a positive identity. This is in alignment with idea of recognition, which is essential to the development of a sense of self as the misrecognition of an individual can lead to ‘an injury to one’s identity’. Thus, belonging to a group that is devalued or misrecognised is ‘to suffer a distortion in one’s relation to one’s self’ (Fraser, 2000, p. 109).

Moreover, positioning the PM school students as ‘illiterate’ and ‘uncivilized’ reflects an attitude of ‘othering’ and ‘stereotyping’ (Said, 1978), and points up
the dichotomy of self and other by perceiving the other as inferior. Othering refers to the ways in which people are identified and positioned in opposition to self; thus, it is an ‘us’ and ‘them’ view that constructs an identity for the other as well as for the self (Palfreyman, 2005). The concept of Self and Other plays a central part in the process of identity formation as a personal identification takes place only through one’s contact or comparison with other (Jackson, 2008). This can be fully explained in Bakhtin’s words: ‘I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another and with the help of another’ (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287). Nonetheless, the decisions for othering are mainly based on the stereotyped viewpoints about a person or a group as a whole (Riggins, 1997), in this case, the PM school students group.

Since there are no empirical studies about the association of learning in the English language with students’ good manners, it is important to pause and analyse this in relation to other distinctive features, which express the social differences among students from both types of schools, in the stratified society of Punjab, India. This is because, as Bourdieu (1984) suggests, all the indices of good manners are contingent upon the market they are placed in. The market, in Bourdieu’s theory, denotes a social field in which the individual struggles to acquire the symbolic resources such as status and wealth. Thus, the market according to Bourdieu can be domestic, social and scholastic. The product which is marked favourable or valuable by a particular market is considered superior. Hence, it can be said that the weight of social capital inherited by EM school students mark them as valuable and make them look better than their counterparts in PM schools. On the other hand, the social capital of PM school students is still attached to their labouring class roots. Thus, in Punjabi society, the meaning of manners to assign a mark of identification to a person, as a well-mannered or ill-mannered seems to rest on the language in which students are learning.
5.2.3.2.2. English-speaking is viewed as a good personal attribute

Discussing about the future of the students in relation to their employment and interviews for employment, the EM school teachers stressed that: ‘students will need to speak in English to impress others.’ (Anjali: EM) and ‘English speaking will be more impressive aspect of one’s personality’ (Chamanjit: EM). Speaking in English in Punjab, therefore, appears to have a significant impact on others because of English speaking being considered as an important aspect which enhances the personality of those who speak English. Such interrelationship between English speaking and enhanced personality was further highlighted by Chamanjit in answer to the question, how important is English speaking for students?

In every aspect of our life, whether at school, in a job, in society, career or in higher education. Whatever is there, if we are lacking in our communicative skills then we cannot impress others. Surely, it has become a part of our personality. The lack of English will be a negativity in our personality. (Chamanjit, PM teacher)

Chamanjit has extended this idea further by noting the importance of English in all spheres of life: ‘at school, in a job, in society, in career or in higher education’. In this regard, it seems as if English is not considered a language but a skill, which, if used effectively, can add value to an individual’s employability and life in general and most importantly to one’s individuality. One can argue that the value and advantages attached to being bilingual and multilingual (Gorter et al., 2006) could be one of the possible reasons why people are impressed if someone speaks English in Punjab, especially in formal contexts like schools, offices and other workplaces. However, it is important to note that from the demographic data on the current research participants it was clear that all the research participants, except the EM school headteacher (Seena), could speak Hindi (third language), the national language. Then again, there was no suggestion that speaking in Hindi offered any kind of social or economic benefits. In most of the societal discourses in India, English is viewed as ‘the language of power and opportunity’ (Kachru
1986, p. 90) and, when it comes to employment, English is believed to be even more valuable than Hindi, the national language. Such stereotyped societal discourses reproduce power and dominance (Dijk, 1989), and develop power relations among learners which have repercussions for their social identities (Block, 2013; Norton, 2016).

Moreover, English speaking is strongly viewed as one of the personal ambitions and attributes which position English as superior to other languages and its speaker as superior to the non-English speakers. This is not simply because someone can speak an additional language or is multilingual but because there is a weight given to English which makes its speakers feel confident and allows them to create a good impression. Again, it is important to understand that no language can be powerful in itself; it is essentially the advantages attached to a certain language which give it the higher status. English is well documented as a global language (Crystal, 2005) and is deemed to be the language of social and economic prestige (Bhattacharya, 2016; Dearden, 2014; Mlay, 2010; Murali, 2009; Samaranayake, 2015; Tamim, 2014; Tse, 2000), which has made it a symbolic capital that brings social, economic and cultural capital as compared to other languages, such as Hindi and Punjabi in Punjab, in an Indian context. English in Punjab appeared to be recognized as a ‘commodity’ which is linked to wealth and is offered in the private education sector (Mckinney & Mckinney, 2007).

This belief about knowledge of English viewed as an important personal attribute, is further reflected in the following EM school teacher’s account. While comparing the students from PM and EM schools in terms of employability Anjali stated:

I do not deny that they will be able to get through, but the thing is that the first impression that the person will make on another person. If he starts speaking fluently or if he hesitates that shows the personality of a person. So, from that, I think if one must put an impression, the first impression on a person then he must be that much communicative in
English that the person (interviewer) gets satisfied with his performance. (Anjali, EM teacher).

Although Anjali did not suggest explicitly that the students from PM schools may not succeed, it is clear that the teacher is expressing the belief that students from EM schools will have more opportunities. This is because of the important linguistic capital they possess which gives them an advantage over those who cannot speak English. Similar to Chamanjit, Anjali another EM teacher viewed English speaking as an individual’s strong personal attribute to impress others. It is apparent within the EM school teachers’ accounts given above that the students’ identities are likely to be shaped by their English-speaking skill, which is perceived as a personal attribute of an individual. In relation to the links between an individual’s personality and identity, Schwartz et al. (2009) state that no clear distinction can be made between the individual’s personality and different aspects of identity so it is useful ‘to consider ... [a person’s] individuality when examining how identity is embedded within a person’s personality’ (p. 346). English-speaking which the EM school teachers appeared to believe is an important personal attribute for students’ well-being and personality, therefore, may have a significant impact on students’ identity development based on their learning or not learning in English.

The headteachers’ and teachers’ interview accounts discussed above demonstrate the ideologies suggesting that if a person wants to achieve academic and professional success, they must use English. English is considered as linguistic capital to acquire economic capital in the form of jobs in Punjab. The hegemonic ideologies related to English speaking reflect people’s differing attitudes towards English and PM learners. Hence, it can be inferred that people who can speak English are granted elevated positions in society, academically as well as professionally. They therefore make a good impression on others in society. One of the most likely reasons for this is that people who can speak English are viewed as intelligent, which was another recurring theme in the interviews.
5.2.3.2.3. English and intelligence

The students in the pilot frequently used the term ‘Intelligent’ to describe a person learning in English and it was therefore included in the interview questions. When teachers in this study were asked if they consider those who can speak English as intelligent, the responses to this question were generally consistent with the one below:

Only from speaking English we cannot consider someone intelligent or weak, but sometimes if someone is very intelligent but he cannot stand in society with high-profile people those who are fluent in English and those who are highly qualified, there this factor is considered ... this factor comes. In general, when we think about our society this is also true that a person who speaks English is looked as an intelligent person. (Chamanjit, EM teacher)

Most teachers appeared not to believe that competence in English speaking means that a person is intelligent; however, they emphasised that people in society, in general, consider those who can speak English as intelligent. As can be seen at the beginning of the quotation, Chamanjit is suggesting that those who can speak English are not always intelligent; however, at the end of the quotation, she seems to self-contradict, admitting that largely people in Punjab view English speaking people as intelligent. These views are similar to those expressed by the EM school students in the focus groups, (discussed in detail in the next chapter), all of whom believed that a person who could speak English was not necessarily intelligent. However, they all agreed to the statement that: A person who can speak English is viewed as an educated and intelligent person (in Punjabi society).

In contrast, to the EM students, all the PM school students expressed the view that those who can speak English are intelligent. They also agreed with the statement that: A person who can speak English is viewed as an educated and intelligent person. This reflects how a lack of investment in English, which is clearly viewed by the PM school students as a lack of intelligence, can have
an impact on their opinions about themselves and making sense of their identities in comparison to their counterparts in EM schools. Similarly, Vaish's (2008, p. 209) ethnographic study conducted in the city of New Delhi in India, support's the view that people who speak in English sound more ‘intelligent and polished' than those speaking in Hindi or any other regional language in India.

The perception that there is a link between English speaking and intelligence further enhances the position of those learning in EM schools. The association between English and intelligence, which has also been discussed in the identity literature as a possible characteristic that can be used to describe someone (Bamberg & Fina, 2011; Vignoles, 2011), may have an impact on people’s beliefs of students’ intelligence contingent on their learning in English or PM schools. Hence, this could be how people could get that impression from students, based on the type of school they are learning in. It might also have an impact on students' perceptions of themselves and their identity formation. This further reveals the hegemonic ideology of the people in Punjab; it appears as if English is not viewed as a language but is seen as a symbolic power that the EM school students are believed to possess.

In a similar vein, the use of English to impress others has been described by the EM school headteacher who calls the English language as valuable as a gem:

   "It is such a gem for people in society. If there is someone speaking in good English people here are all over that person thinking like ... oh my God! ... People who speak English, they do get more attention and respect. People do adore them and they are thought as the role model and maybe inside people wish that they can speak like him or her. So, they kind of respect them [English speaking people]. (Seena, EM headteacher)"

The headteacher described the importance of English for social status by comparing it to a ‘gem’. The word gem in general means a precious jewel or
stone. The English language seems to be considered as valuable as a gem and the possession of this ‘gem’, makes people have a good impression on others. A good impression of English-speaking people in Punjabi society was described by the headteacher, who stated that people are ‘all over’ the English-speaking person and respect him/her. Most of the expressions used in relation to an English-speaking person, such as ‘gem’, ‘attention’, ‘respect’, ‘role model’, place the English-speaking person at a higher social level than others. Again, the headteacher gives an example of how people in Punjab treat tourists as ‘celebrities’, especially those who have English as a native language. It highlights the hegemonic ideology of Punjabi society. With regard to this, the headteacher stated that, ‘I have seen people talking to them in English and feeling at the top of the world.’ (Seena, EM headteacher). This feeling of being at ‘the top of the world’ might be because of the higher status of English which is perceived as having the power to impress others. It is likely, that people who know English use the opportunity to impress the native speakers as well as others around. English is considered as a language of social prestige in Punjab and it is therefore no surprise that those who can speak English are viewed as superior and make a good impression on others.

5.4. Summary

To conclude, English is associated with the academic, professional and social success of an individual in Punjab in India. For this reason, it cannot be denied that the possession of this highly-valued cultural and symbolic capital enables the person to create a good impression. The ideologies related to English speaking in Punjab highlighted through the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews are telling indications of English as symbolic and cultural capital. Thus, competence in English can have a significant impact on people in terms of how they view themselves based on whether or not they have knowledge of English. Hence, English, which can work as an agent to access and maintain a powerful position in society, might affect the PM school students negatively, as they are deprived of the valuable capital that could aid them to position themselves differently. English in Punjab not only enjoys a high position but
can also move people who are skilled in English to the higher positions within the society.

From the discussion of the main findings of this study under various themes and sub-themes, I conclude that the English language provides many educational and professional opportunities and is viewed as symbolic capital. The accumulation of this capital gives EM school students agency, whilst the PM school students lag behind. All these differences, along with the discourses and ideologies of people in Punjabi society, highlight the differences between the students from the two types of schools. Hence, the ideologies associated with English as capital which gives agency may have an impact on students' identity formation. They may feel more or less confident and also perceive differences in the way they are viewed by others, which in turn makes a negative or positive impression on others in society. In a nutshell, it can be concluded from an analysis of the extracts discussed in this chapter, that English-speaking people in Punjabi society are viewed as having a higher social status. An example of this is the previously mentioned categorisation of students from EM and PM schools as ‘well-read’ and ‘uncivilized’, respectively. Since English speaking is closely linked to factors such as the accumulation of linguistic capital, a unique personality characteristic, and an individual’s perceived intelligence, in the Indian context, it adds value to a person who learns in EM and, therefore, adds to his/her identity formation accordingly.

In this chapter, I reported the outcome of the analysis of the headteachers’ and teachers’ interview findings. The chapter began with a discussion of the key findings under the themes of English providing educational and professional opportunities. The findings revealed that students from EM schools have more access to such opportunities than PM school students. In presenting the main findings, I also drew on other themes discussing the relationship between knowledge of English and a person’s social status, and identified differences between the two group of students which are attributable directly or indirectly to knowledge or a lack of knowledge of English.
6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided an interpretation of the headteachers’ and teachers’ interviews, and, using themes and subthemes which emerged from these, the key findings were analysed and discussed. In this chapter, the key findings from the student focus groups and interviews are presented, together with emergent themes and subthemes. Findings from the analysis of the focus groups informed the interview schedule, thereby providing an opportunity to explore in more depth issues which had emerged in the focus group tasks. This enabled me to explore further any discrepancies that emerged between students’ views during the focus group discussions. A comparison is also drawn between the data from the focus groups and the subsequent interviews in order to identify whether the students’ opinions had changed or had remained the same. This chapter begins by presenting, in an integrated way, an analysis of the student focus groups and individual interviews, and the key themes and subthemes that were identified.

Like the headteachers and teachers, the students emphasised the hegemony of English and the educational, occupational and social advantages attached to investment in English. Students believed that learning in English provides them with access to opportunities and, therefore, gives them confidence to achieve their possible selves and creates a good impression of EM students. The key findings identified from the analysis of the students’ responses are: (a) the hegemony of English (b) the social advantages of learning in English for students’ identity formation. Further insights from the student focus groups and interviews revealed that speaking in English develops students’ self-confidence and enable them to make a good impression on others, which, in turn, they believed, can have an impact on their identity formation. The findings also highlight the perceived differences and similarities between students learning in English and Punjabi in Punjab and reflect their perceptions of their identity formation.
This chapter has been organised around these two key findings and additional findings which have been discussed under the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the students’ focus groups and interview accounts as summarised in Figure 5 below.

Section 6.2.1 therefore presents and discusses student beliefs regarding the language in which they are learning and its impact on their identity, particularly the hegemony of English in higher education and employment; Section 6.2.2, discusses the social significance of learning in a particular language, the advantages or disadvantages attached to that and how the language of learning influences students’ identity formation; and Section 6.2.3 reports further insights from students based on the difference in their investment in English and its impact on their identity formation.
Figure 7: Key findings, themes, and subthemes that emerged from the students’ interview accounts.

Findings from the student focus groups and interviews

- Hegemony of English in education and employment, and students’ identity formation
- Significance of English for medical and engineering courses.
- Job interviews in English.
- PM students joining English speaking centres.
- Less importance of Punjabi for higher education and good employment.
- English for entrance examinations to gain admission to elite colleges and universities.
- English as the language of high social status in Punjab.
- EMI and social inequality in Punjab.
- English signifies socio-economic status in Punjab.
- Pedagogical differences in teaching English language in EM and PM school.
- English provides students with confidence, intelligence and empowerment.
- Lack of investment in English causes hesitation among students.
- Speaking in English brings respect.
- English associated with good manners.

Further insights from the students based on their investment in English and its impact on their identity formation

- Social significance of learning in English
Analysis of the student focus groups and interview accounts revealed that English has a significant impact on students’ decisions when contemplating their futures in their academic studies, careers and their social lives. The majority of the students in this study believed that learning in English is vital in making their ‘future secure’ (PM1: Sunny)\(^\text{16}\) and that English is ‘more valuable’ (EM1: Daman) than Punjabi, especially ‘for higher education and good jobs in the future’ (Aman: PM interview). Such beliefs about the significance of English appear to have an impact on how students form their identities, depending on whether they are learning in English or in Punjabi. Furthermore, the significance of English perceived as linguistic, cultural and social capital, in the educational, occupational and social context of Punjab, appears to have a significant and different impact on students depending on whether they know or do not know English. Students’ views on the effect of knowing and not knowing English on their identity formation are discussed below.

6.2. Key findings

6.2.1. Hegemony of English in education and employment and its influence on students’ identity formation

Students’ competence in English, which, according to them provides access to higher education and better opportunities in the future, appears to be fundamental to their identity formation. Students from each of the focus groups provided an affirmative response to the statements describing English as a form of linguistic capital which provides them with access to higher education and employment in the future. For example, students from all the focus groups agreed to the statements: *English should be the language for learning in all*

\(^{16}\) Participant codes: EM = English medium; PM = Punjabi medium; 1 = focus group # 1; 2 = focus group # 2.
the schools in Punjab, India; English provides chances for overseas (foreign) education; and English is the most suitable language for the study of science, medical, technology, and commerce. Additionally, in the focus groups, all the students, irrespective of the language in which they were learning, agreed with the statement that *when they think about their future, it is important that they study in English*. Thus, all the students reported a positive perception of English as an important language for learning in schools.

Furthermore, in response to, *if given a choice, I would like to learn all the school subjects in the ... language because ...*, most of the students from the English medium\(^{17}\) school focus groups preferred English over Punjabi. Some of the underlying reasons the students gave for their preference for English were: all the modern subjects like science, technology, and computing are in English. (EM1: Pawan); English is important for our bright future. (EM1: Rajan); and, English is more valued, nowadays. (EM2: Simrat). Similarly, PM school focus group participants noted the importance of English for their future. This is exemplified in the quotation given below:

> If we think about the future, then maybe in ten years from now Punjabi will not have much value so we need to learn English. So, I choose English. (PM1: Sunny)

Most of the student participants asserted that learning in English is essential to secure entry into higher education and the employment market given that all the courses that lead to good jobs are delivered in English in India (Cheney et al., 2005). The students thus appeared to relate the language in which they were learning to their future possible selves. Their positive attitude towards learning in English, and its association with high profile educational courses and occupations, seems to work as a powerful element in constructing EM students’ powerful identities and, in contrast, may have a negative impact on

\(^{17}\) Hereafter English medium will be referred to as EM
PM students’ identity formation. Students’ perceptions regarding the hegemony of English highlighting the advantages of investment in English for their higher education and future employment, as discussed in the sections below, further demonstrate how this could have an impact on their identity formation.

6.2.1.1. English for higher education

The majority of students believed that English is very important for them academically, both at present in school and in the future for their higher education in colleges and universities. As discussed earlier, the student participants in the focus groups preferred English over Punjabi because they viewed English as a gatekeeper to access higher education. To explore this further, when the students were asked about their choices and reasons behind their preference of English over Punjabi, some of their responses in the interviews demonstrated their views on the significance of English for higher education.

I think learning in English medium will give me the privilege to go to one of the best colleges where I think people with very good English language skills are selected. (Muskaan: EM).

We can get admission in some elite colleges of the country where students are chosen only on the basis of their English-speaking skills. So, I think to be fluent in English is really a plus point. (Daman: EM).

English medium school students appeared to view themselves as the potential beneficiaries of learning in English and more privileged than their PM counterparts. They appeared to believe that learning in English leads to opportunities to gain admission to elite colleges and universities. In the extract above, Muskaan’s certainty that she will be selected for entry to an elite college appears to be grounded in her belief that she possesses linguistic capital which comes with competence in English. This is what appears to make her think about herself as privileged over her peers in PM schools. Similarly, another student, Daman, from an EM school, highlighted the importance of learning in
English and its association with admission to elite colleges. Both the quotations from the EM students reflect that, given that English carries linguistic capital, learning in an EM school is perceived by the students as an investment which could bring them higher education opportunities in the future. Thus, investment in English by learning in an EM school is seen by students as a passport for them to access higher education and enter into elite colleges and universities. The explicit use of expressions like ‘privilege’ and ‘plus point’ respectively by Muskaan and Daman, in relation to their learning in an EM school, further indicates that EM school students feel privileged because they believe that they have an advantage over their PM counterparts when it comes to accessing higher education. Such feelings appeared to be driven by their personal agency and power derived from their investment in English.

In addition to accessing good colleges and universities in Punjab, the students also believed that investment in English provides them with entry to good colleges and universities all over India:

In English medium school... obviously, you will get a strong base in English and it will be easy for you to go for higher studies outside the state. (Simrat: EM)

Because India is a multilingual country, English is considered as a language that links the different states (Mohanty, 2006). Knowledge of English thus enhances the likelihood of students securing admission to colleges and universities outside the state. Therefore, EM students seem to be well equipped to compete to enter higher education within Punjab, elsewhere in India, or, as is discussed in Section: 6.2.1.2. English to study abroad, globally. It comes as no surprise then that, because English plays the role of a gatekeeper to higher education, learning in EM implies an advantage for the students learning in EM schools, an already advantaged class, of Punjabi society (see Singh 2006), and enables them to construct their ‘imagined identities’ (Anderson, 1996). Thus, investment in English by learning in an EM school seems to be an investment in students’ identity formation to become a
member of the desired imagined community, for example, members (students) of elite colleges and universities.

In the literature on identity formation, the concept of identity has been linked to desire (West, 1992): ‘the desire for recognition and the desire for security and safety’ (Norton, 2016). Such desires are closely related to the material resources one possesses (West, 1992), and so, a student’s desire to enter elite colleges and universities cannot be separated from their knowledge of English which they must go to an EM school to gain if they are to acquire the required linguistic capital to access higher education. EM school students’ accumulation of English as the required linguistic capital, which may enhance their chances of future possibilities, is therefore likely to make them feel more privileged. This echoes the findings of the study conducted in Pakistan by Rahman (1997) who emphasised that learning in English makes students feel privileged and further creates elites out of elites. Several other studies conducted in an Indian context also conclude that students learning in EM schools feel privileged over the students from vernacular language schools (Bhattacharya, 2013; Ramanathan, 2006b; Sandhu, 2010; Vulli, 2014).

In the paragraphs which follow, attention turns to the perceptions of PM students with regard to the importance of English for entry to higher education and for their identity formation. Focussing on the importance of English, the PM students stressed the differences between them and their counterparts in EM schools. Both schools follow the National Policy on Education (Government of India, 1986) and the Three Language Formula which was designed to teach Hindi, the national language, English, as a foreign language, and Punjabi, the regional language of the state. Despite the fact that all schools adhere to the same education policy, there are differences in the language used as a medium of instruction. The PM students, however, were not only conscious of the difference between the language used as a MOI in their school and English medium private schools but also emphasised the pedagogical differences and the difference in their exposure to English in terms of the time and opportunities they get to speak and listen to English.
between the two types of school. They stressed the negative impact on their proficiency in English of having markedly less exposure to English than students in EM schools. This, in turn, they believed, affected their chances to obtain admission to a good college or university for their higher education. As a result of these perceived differences, PM students on the whole, in contrast to EM students, demonstrated that they were more anxious about their chances of being admitted to good colleges and universities. It is significant therefore that the PM school students saw themselves as less privileged than EM students.

Although PM students did not say much about this in the focus groups, they agreed with the statement: *English is the most suitable language for the study of science, medical, technology, and commerce.* A close association between learning in English and access to fields like medical and engineering was also described by the headteachers and teachers and was discussed in the previous chapter under the section: 5.2.1.2. *English to study science and technology.* Since these subjects of study are identified as amongst the most prestigious in higher education in India (Cheney et al., 2005), lack of knowledge of English could be a cause of PM students’ anxiety. Further analysis of the interviews showed that anxiety among the PM students might also be due to the lack of an English linguistic environment and pedagogical differences in PM schools, which was a common view amongst the PM school students.

6.2.1.2. *English for entrance examinations and to study abroad*

Another important theme that emerged from the students’ interviews was the hegemony of English in the context of entrance examinations and for study abroad. This appeared to add to the PM students’ difficulties in the examination-oriented education system, in particular, ‘to get admission in the courses in universities to enter the medical and non-medical streams’ (EM1: Simrat). For example, students have to sit All India Institute of Medical
Sciences (AIIMS) exams\(^\text{18}\) in order to enter professional courses in the medical stream in India. Following the National Policy on Education (1986), government schools in every state teach students in the regional language; however, when it comes to entering higher education, the exams conducted by AIIMS and other such institutions are in English. The hegemony of English in the entrance examinations in an Indian context undoubtedly constrains the performance of students who have had their school education in the regional language. As discussed above and also in the previous chapter, medical and non-medical (engineering) are the most valued and desired courses as they provide students with the opportunity to become doctors and engineers in India. Students from the EM schools, therefore, possess the linguistic capital required to enter these fields and thus feel privileged over their PM counterparts.

PM students, on the other hand, feel that they lack linguistic capital – English – which makes it difficult for them ‘to gain admission in some courses for which entrance exams are held in English’ (Aman: PM). In this way, many external pressures such as competition, globalisation and the hegemony of English, leave PM students with a negative view of themselves because they have learned in Punjabi, the educational and professional use of which is confined to Punjab.

The instrumental gains (e.g. study abroad, opportunities for work and trade) and integrative motivation (e.g. to make friends, attraction towards a foreign culture), associated with learning in English (Hennig, 2010; Lukmani, 1969; Luscombe & Kazdal, 2014) seemed to have greatly influenced the students’ desire to study abroad. This was a common theme as many students expressed their desire to go abroad for higher studies.

\(^{18}\)http://www.directmbbsadmission.com/list-of-medical-entrance-exams/
In response to ‘I need to learn English to be able to ...’ most of the EM students stated that they need to learn English as it can help them with studying abroad in the future. Investment in English, therefore, appeared to be essential for studying abroad and for integrative purposes. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

> English is the language which is known by most of the people in the world. When we go to other countries, there are many other languages spoken which we do not know, languages such as Italian, Spanish, etc. But people in these countries speak some English as well so we can communicate with them. So, English is a link-language'. (EM1: Rajan)

This extract highlights the fact that EM students appeared to believe that English, an international language, would help them to integrate into new linguistic environments abroad in the future. English also seemed to be viewed by the EM students as a tool to earn social capital, as they felt that proficiency in English would help them make contacts with people from other countries. In the extract above, Rajan mentioned some countries where English is not a native language, but is a language that can be used to communicate. Thus, EM students gave the impression that they feel themselves to be equipped with the most significant tool, the English language which carries linguistic capital and further enables them to obtain social capital.

However, in the PM school focus groups, the students’ responses to the same statement, with regard to the need to learn English, were slightly different. They mainly focused on their need for the basic use of English in their daily lives. For example:

> To use the internet. (PM1: Sunny)

> English is important in life because if someone asks a question in English then to answer him/her we need English. (PM: Aman)

In the focus groups, the PM students did not explicitly express a desire to learn in foreign countries. One possible reason for this seemed to be their
awareness of their lack of English, the linguistic capital required for higher studies in most foreign countries. Notably, most of the students considered English to be important for using the internet, thus the popularity of the internet culture among students may be seen as an example of their desire to interact with people in foreign countries. Hence, their lack of competence in English could be the reason why PM students in the focus groups did not openly express their desire to go abroad.

An understanding of their lack of competence in English and its impact on their desire to go abroad for higher studies, however, was clearly expressed by the PM students in the individual interviews. In these, PM students acknowledged their lack of competence in English as obstructing their path to study abroad. This is because it is mandatory to pass an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam to gain admission to courses in universities abroad. Jugraj, the PM student, stated in his interview:

I think I will not be able to fulfil my dream of going abroad for higher education. For this, I need to pass the IELTS exam and interview to get admission to a good university abroad (Jugraj: PM).

Jugraj seemed to have a low opinion of himself as a result of his lack of competence in English. This further reflects the way in which PM students feel themselves to be ‘lesser’ than EM students. PM school students thus appeared to believe that their limited knowledge of English was a major impediment to them studying abroad. This perception was further revealed by some other PM students in their interviews:

My English is not that good, so I do not think it will be easy for me to go abroad for higher studies. (Aman: PM)

Not knowing English is the biggest hurdle for me to fulfil my dream to study in a foreign country. (Jugraj: PM)

This illustrates PM students’ disappointment when they relate the language used for learning in their school to their imagined future identities, whether in higher education in their home country or in a foreign country. Thus, the
obstacles perceived to be encountered by PM students widen the gaps between English and Punjabi medium students in terms of how they view themselves. These differences between EM and PM students' proficiency in English and their perceptions of themselves with regard to their abilities in English were clearly visible in the interviews. In relation to this, it is noteworthy that all the EM school students preferred the focus groups and interviews to be conducted in English. In contrast to the EM school students, the PM school students preferred Punjabi over English.

Thus, it is clear from the above that at least some PM students do have a desire to go abroad for further studies. From the interview analysis, however, it was found that in contrast to EM students, PM students were not optimistic about their chances of gaining admission to foreign institutions. Hence, it cannot be denied that the lack of knowledge of English in an Indian context, where English is perceived as a gateway to access and to succeed in higher education, could impact adversely not only on the futures of PM students but on their overall identities. Once again it appears that a lack of investment in English and consequently linguistic capital and agency, causes an inner conflict and turmoil for PM students concerning their desire to go abroad in the future.

The significance of English as described by both English and Punjabi medium school students raises the question of the extent to which, if at all, learning in Punjabi is considered important for higher education. The student participants’ views regarding this are discussed in the following section.

6.2.1.3. Punjabi for higher education

When students were asked if learning in Punjabi is important for their higher education, some of the EM focus group students appeared to believe that Punjabi was not that important for their academic careers in the future. Furthermore, in the interviews, the EM school students stated that Punjabi is confined to Punjab state and thus learning in Punjabi may obstruct their wider access to opportunities. This is illustrated in the following extract:
I think to communicate with our families it is Punjabi, but if we come to higher education then learning in English medium is the must. English brings more opportunities and students get a bright future. Punjabi is limited to our area, but if one wants to explore and to get higher education, they get more opportunities with English. So, English is important. (Pawan, EM)

In the extract above, Pawan, an EM student, stated that Punjabi is the language that is used for general communication in Punjabi society and English is associated with higher studies and good future opportunities: a ‘bright future’. This further confirms the hegemony of English and its agentive use which endows EM students with linguistic capital and thus identifies them as linguistically more powerful than PM school students. This is why, during the focus groups, when asked what language the students would like to learn in, all the EM and most of the PM students chose English over Punjabi because they believe that English is more significant than Punjabi for their future academic and professional lives. This is exemplified in the following quotation:

If we think about the future, then maybe in ten years from now Punjabi will not have much value, so we will need to learn English. (PM1: Sunny)

In the quotation above, the PM student seemed to believe that in the future Punjabi will not have as much importance as English. It could be that, because of the increased significance of English over Punjabi in the employment sector in Punjab, Sunny the PM student felt that Punjabi will have less value than English in the future. Despite this, however, the view that English is preferred over Punjabi expressed above was not undisputed.

When asked which language would they prefer to learn in in school some students from the PM school focus groups stated that they in fact preferred Punjabi over English. This is because, having learned in a PM school since the beginning of their school education, they do not feel confident about
learning in English at this late stage of their high school education. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

If I am asked now, I will say Punjabi. If, suppose I had been asked when I was young in the primary classes, then I would have said English. Now I think it is not easy for me to move to an English medium school and learn in English. I think I have a strong foundation in Punjabi by learning in a Punjabi medium school. (PM1: Aman)

Although the majority of students stated that English is important for higher education and future careers, a few students preferred Punjabi over English. This is because they did not seem to be confident in learning in English. However, it is also important to note that the few students who chose Punjabi over English did not deny that English is important for learning in higher education. Rather, it is because of the lack of exposure to English in their school that they find it difficult at this stage (high school) to learn in English.

From the preceding discussion, both the EM and PM school students’ acknowledgement of the critical roles of English and Punjabi in their academic lives and in turn on their identity formation becomes clear. Hence, it becomes apparent that EM students were more satisfied with their knowledge of English and their futures in higher education than the PM students. This may have an obvious positive impact on them in terms of their identity formation. The PM students’ perceptions of themselves lagging behind EM students can certainly have an impact on how students view their possible selves in higher education and occupations in the future.

6.2.1.4. English for employment and job interviews

From the fine-grained analysis of the students’ accounts, it seems that they believe that learning in English or proficiency in English promises access to good/white collar jobs in Punjab. Focussing on the occupations the students wanted to enter in the future, most of the students in the focus groups agreed with the statement: I must study in English to be successful in my future career. The majority of the students also recognised English as the most important
linguistic skill required for the occupations they are hoping to enter in the future, such as becoming a ‘lawyer’, an ‘agriculture officer’ or ‘biotechnologist’, to name a few. Since the interviews to gain access to these jobs are mainly conducted in English, English appears to be a gateway to such professions.

Success in job interviews appears to largely depend on the candidates’ presentation in English, which must convey a good impression of the candidate and enhance his/her chances of being recruited. As stated by one of the PM school students: ‘In the future, we need English to pass the interviews to get good jobs’ (Preet: PM). One of the possible reasons for the preference of English for jobs might be that it is commonly believed in Punjab that people who can speak English are intelligent (Kaur, 2015; Ramanathan, 2016). Such beliefs are exemplified in the following extract from one of the students from EM focus groups:

Most of the interviews for good jobs are conducted in English. The interview questions are asked in English so if we respond to that in Punjabi then it is thought as if we are not very intelligent. (EM1: Simrat)

Simrat appeared to believe that it is important to use English in job interviews as this can make a good impression on the interviewer and the candidate is considered intelligent if he/she speaks in English. In a similar vein, another student from the Punjabi medium school stated during the interview that:

In 80% of jobs in Punjab, the English language is preferred to be used. If we want to move to some other state in India then definitely, we need to know English to work and communicate there. English is considered as a gauge to measure a person’s intelligence. It is thought that the one who speaks in English is smart. (Aman: PM)

From the extracts above, it is clear that English in Punjab in India is considered the most important language to help gain access to a good occupation. Similar beliefs were found to be held by the teachers and the headteachers as
reported in Section 5.2.1.5, English for employment and students’ identity formation, of the previous chapter.

Additionally, the PM school students expressed their concern that, as a result of their lack of proficiency in English, they may not get jobs in the private sector where English is mandatory for professional and communication purposes. In relation to this, in the study conducted by Singh (2006), 69.9 percent of the participants were found to believe that people who were proficient in English were given more attention in all fields, whether in education or in employment in Punjab, and 74.4 percent held the view that learning in English makes a person look ‘intelligent and broadminded’. Moreover, looking at people who lack knowledge of English as inferior to others in terms of intelligence seems to represent English speaking skill as a characteristic that plays a vital role in students’ identity formation. Since the interconnection between English and intelligence was frequently expressed by the students, the prevailing ideologies and perceived connection between English and intelligence in Punjab will be discussed in detail in section: 6.2.3.6.

6.2.1.5. Punjabi for employment in Punjab

Focussing on their future professions, some of the PM students stated that ‘Punjabi is the language of the state so for some of the Punjab government jobs Punjabi is important’ (PM2: Taran). From the interview analysis, the PM students appeared to believe that they might get a chance to enter some government jobs, where English is not required, for example, jobs in the Punjab Electricity Board, Punjab Police, etc. This is exemplified in the following extract:

If we are going to stay in Punjab in future then it is beneficial to study in Punjabi medium school. For instance, we can do any jobs here in Punjab such as in the Punjab Police Department, Punjab Electricity Department. But in the private jobs like in a bank, we need English in Punjab (Avtaar: PM).
In the quotation above, Avtaar seemed to believe that learning in Punjabi is adequate to live in Punjab because it is sufficient for jobs in the Punjab state departments. In the end, however, he acknowledged that, for private jobs, English is mandatory. It is important to note here that there is currently an emphasis on privatisation in most of the government sectors in Punjab, for example, the privatisation of the Electricity Board in Punjab is being considered (Ranganathan, 2004). This may have an impact on recruitment for jobs in this sector depending on whether Punjabi remains a preferred language or fluency in English will be necessary since this is the most sought-after language for jobs in the private sector (Sandhu, 2014a). Additionally, working in these departments is not considered as prestigious as working in fields such as medical and engineering and this can certainly have an impact on students’ identity formation.

PM students also expressed their concerns about the continuance of Punjabi, in occupations in the government sector in Punjab. As discussed in the focus group, PM students emphasised that ‘in ten years from now... Punjabi will be eliminated or will be least required in jobs’ (PM1: Sunny). Another PM student stated that ‘even in government jobs Punjabi will have very less importance’ and it will be required only ‘for the job of Punjabi language teacher’ (PM2: Preet). In this way, all the participants in these focus groups agreed that English would always be preferred over Punjabi when they think about their future possible selves in employment.

From the discussion above therefore it appears that hegemonic ideology concerning the significance of English in higher education and employment predominates in Punjab. The views of another PM student however add a further element to how the PM school students view themselves with regard to the language in which they are learning and their future professions:

If I was learning in an English medium school or if I knew English then I would have thought to go for a medical line and become a doctor, or else if I choose non-medical, I can become an engineer. But I think because I do not know much English, I can do some jobs like in
Punjab Police or any other clerical job which is under the Punjab government. In Punjab Police, I can work at the junior ranks such as constable etc. I think I will apply for some driving jobs or try my luck in the police department where I will have to go for a test but that will be in Punjabi. (Sunny: PM)

In the above extract, Sunny expresses the current state of affairs in Punjab where, because of the lack of English, a person would not be selected for occupations like doctor or engineer but could manage to be selected for the Punjab Police Department where not much English is required. Talking about himself, he further stated that if he does not get a chance to be in the Punjab police, he might think of doing some general jobs like driving. This indicates the low self-perceptions of PM school students in accessing good jobs as a result of their lack of investment in English. In a similar vein, another PM school student noted:

We do not get many options and, most of the students learning in PM schools do general jobs like driving and security jobs for which not much English is required (Aman: PM).

From the accounts above in this section, it becomes clear that, although some PM students asserted that learning in Punjabi could help them to get government jobs, they were anxious about their future possible selves. They felt that they did not possess the linguistic skills required to enter good jobs in the private sector. They imagined their future selves as ‘junior constables’ in the police, ‘drivers’ and ‘security guards’, which are not considered as the most prestigious professions in Punjab, and not as doctors and engineers. Similar results emerged in a study conducted in Iran, where the participants considered ‘engineering and medicine’ as prestigious occupations, ‘farming and manual working as non-prestigious ones and government office jobs as midway between the two’, and people’s identity formation was found to be related to and shaped by the occupations in which they were involved (Mirhosseini, 2015).
To summarise, English, and learning in English, are viewed as very significant for academic and occupational purposes in Punjab. The perceptions of students thinking about the significance of English could shape students' identities with regard to the language in which they are learning in school. This, however, does not stop here but goes further in their lives when they think about their social life in general. People are driven by the belief that learning in English can open doors for them and could provide them with social mobility. This leads to the consideration of the influence of learning in English or Punjabi on an individual's social status, another theme that occurred from the analysis of the students’ interview accounts. The discussion below of English and its importance in the students’ social lives will allow me to analyse the students' perspectives on their social identities and how they are viewed by others in society.

6.2.2. Social significance of learning in English

With regard to the social significance of English, almost all the students responded in a similar way, expressing beliefs that seemed to be formed by their personal experiences within the social context of Punjab. Students articulated their perceptions of their identities in relation to how they are treated and positioned in Punjabi society based on the type of school in which they were learning. Some students, especially those from the PM school, reflected on the higher status accorded to English, and thus to students learning in EM schools. PM school students frequently mentioned that they feel disempowered and that society does not have a positive image of them. In contrast to the PM students, EM students mainly communicated their positive experiences. Several examples from the students’ excerpts illustrate how PM and EM school students feel about themselves, which in turn shapes the students’ self-perceptions and identities in the outer world. These are discussed under various themes and sub-themes in this section.
6.2.2.1. English as the language of high social status in Punjab

In the opinion of most of the students, irrespective of the language in which they were learning, the English language, which provides opportunities for higher education and good employment in Punjab, also endows an individual with a higher social status. Thus, the hegemony of English not only seems to prevail in the educational and professional sectors but also in the social lives of the people of Punjab. In the focus groups and interviews, almost every student participant acknowledged that knowledge of English, which is generally obtained by learning in an EM school, is associated with higher social status, such as a good 'reputation', 'high social standard' and 'class' in Punjabi society. The ideologies revealing an association between investment in English and the acquisition of higher social status can be found in the statements of EM students in the focus groups:

People think that those who can speak English have a high standard. (EM1: Pawan)

English is the language of status so it develops our standard and reputation in society. (EM2: Simrat)

People who can communicate in English are thought to have a high status. (EM2: Daman)

The PM school students expressed similar views in the focus groups. When they were asked how they perceive those who can speak in English, all the students stated that they consider people who can speak in English to have 'higher social status' (PM2: Aman [all the focus group participants agreed]).

In the interviews, the students elaborated on this distinction, emphasising that this is not just their assumption and offering evidence that this is how people in Punjab view those learning in EM schools, as is exemplified in the following extract:

This is how it is in our society. People think that a person who knows English has a high status and a person who doesn’t know English is illiterate and doesn’t have much knowledge. Knowledge of English is
very important in our society. A person who knows English is considered to have class. I will give you an example. My uncle’s [father’s brother] children are learning in EM school and we are learning in a PM school. Their English is better than ours because they are learning in an EM school. So, they think of us as rural and backward, with no manners and low standards. (Aman: PM)

Investment in English seems to endow those who learn in EM schools with a high class\textsuperscript{19} or social status. On the other hand, the example provided by Aman indicates that students from PM schools are perceived as ‘illiterate’, ‘rural’ and ‘backward’ with ‘no manners’, and thus considered to have a low social status just because of their poor knowledge of English. This illustrates how discrimination in society is exercised based on learning in English or Punjabi.

In the same vein, when talking about the significance of English in Punjabi society, Daman, an EM student, stated that ‘English speaking has become a trend in our society’; he noted that people who can speak good English are thought to be ‘better than others’ who cannot speak in English. Proficiency in English thus seems to be a parameter by which to judge an individual’s social status in Punjabi society, and, therefore, a person is positioned in a society based on his/her learning in English or Punjabi. Such positioning based on the language in which a person is learning and a sense of being considered inferior can have a significantly negative impact on PM students’ views of themselves and their social identities. This, in turn, may create a bad impression of those not learning in EM schools, a concern expressed by most of the PM school students. The way in which an individual learning in an EM or PM school views him/herself is naturally influenced by the context (Pavlenko, 2002a) a person is in; in this case the type of school in which they are learning. This validates

\textsuperscript{19} The word ‘class’ here refers to social status and not social class division based on castes and religions in India.
the poststructuralist’s position that an individual’s identity is ‘context-sensitive’ (Pavlenko, 2002a).

Thus, it appears that learning in English is believed to make a good impression on others in terms of a person’s social status. For example, Daman, an EM student, explicitly stated that parents want their children to learn in English, ‘to impress others’ (Daman: EM1). Although Daman’s statement was followed by laughter from the other focus group students, no-one denied this, and thus they seemed to give their assent to him.

Another interesting example highlighting the positive impact of learning in EM, its association with social status, and illustrating parents’ outlook on this, was provided by a PM student in another focus group:

70% of people in Punjab marry based on how literate they are. Arranged marriages are very common in Punjab, so before getting married, especially for girls, their parents want a boy to be well-educated and they want them to have a good job. So, if a girl has learned in an English medium school then there is no chance of her marrying a boy who learned in a Punjabi medium school. (Sunny: EM2)

The quotation above illustrates that learning in English is perceived as a status symbol and this may be one of the reasons why parents want their children to marry a person educated in an EM school. This ideology among the people in North India was also noted by Sandhu (2010) in her study of women educated in Hindi and English medium schools. These women explained very clearly how some of them were unable to marry the person they wanted to because the difference between the languages in which they learned was unacceptable to their parents.

This further indicates the hegemony of English in India. English was introduced to India by the British, but it seems to have occupied a prominent position ever since. People in Punjab seem to draw comparisons between the students learning in English and Punjabi medium schools. Hence, it does not seem to
be imposed on people in India; instead, due to its value as linguistic capital that can create economic and social benefits (Sandhu, 2010), it seems to be the most sought-after language in the Punjabi context.

The association of learning in English with high social status could therefore result in PM students having difficulties when it comes to socialising. As noted by Sunny: ‘If you do not know English, it will be difficult to make friends and then you will feel alone’ (Sunny: PM). Comparing themselves with others who are more competent in speaking English may have a negative impact on PM students’ self-esteem and social identity. Thus, the deficit view of PM school students in the Punjabi society may threaten their self-esteem and create conflicts with their sense of competence which may have serious implications for their social identity. The students thus seemed to believe that people who know English receive more public attention and are held in higher regard by society. Such beliefs with regard to the high status which English and learning in English provides adds to social inequality in Punjab (Singh, 2015).

6.2.2.2. EM of instruction and social inequality in Punjab

Although the students from both types of school may be able to achieve the certificate for completing high school studies, the future opportunities offered to EM and PM students may differ widely. The inequality of opportunity to access higher education and good employment brings further inequality at societal level and divides those who know and those who do not know English into two groups: elites and non-elites, respectively. PM students in Punjab appeared to be discriminated against on this basis. For example, as illustrated in Jugraj’s extract below, parents in Punjab make judgements of each other on the basis of the type of school in which their children are learning.

People in society make others [PM students’ parents] feel lower if their child is learning in an English medium school. There was a fight between two families, now one of the families has moved to another city. Once their children were playing together here in the street and they had a fight. Their parents came and the one who was sending
his children to an English medium school yelled at his children, saying, ‘Why are you playing with these kids going to a government school? I am sending you to learn in a very good English medium school. So, you come back home and study. These kids are not going to succeed in the future. They will stay where they are.’ This is what I heard, but such things are very common. People who send their children to English medium schools, they don’t want their kids to be friends with Punjabi medium school children. Those who send their children to government schools [Punjabi medium schools] send them there because they cannot afford English medium schools. (Jugraj: PM)

A wide range of stigmatisation and discrimination against PM students appears to prevail in Punjab. From the example given by Jugraj above, parents’ discrimination between the students learning in English, the elitist language of power (Mohanty, 2010), and Punjabi, the regional language, seems to be one of the causes of discrimination which can further extend the social inequality in Punjabi society. Such discriminatory practices and negative stereotypes that students from PM schools are ‘not going to succeed in the future’ seems also to construct inequalities between the students. These discriminatory social practices may put PM students at a disadvantage and lead to the development of unequal power relations between EM and PM students and, further, between their families. Thus, PM students’ identity formation and social identity can be affected (Tajfel, 1978; Verkuyten, 2003) which ultimately leads to negative repercussions for the PM students. There is empirical evidence from various geographical contexts which demonstrates the impact of social discrimination based on different languages used as MOI in schools on people’s social identities (Arshad & Malik, 2016; Belhiah, 2016; Luscombe & Kazdal, 2014; Sandhu, 2014b; Tsui & Ngo, 2017). From this discussion, it becomes clear that students from the PM school perceive that they and even their parents are looked upon as inferior to the EM students and their parents. Parents of EM school students, on the other hand, were believed to feel proud of their children learning in an EM school. As stated by Daman, an EM student,
‘my parents feel proud that their child is learning in an EM school and can study abroad’. This seems to be because they perceive their child’s learning in an EM school as an investment in his linguistic capital that could bring additional social and cultural capital to him. Daman’s views, thus, can be linked with the notion of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) because learning in English was perceived by his parents as allowing him to participate in the future in imagined communities if he decides to study abroad. As such, Daman positions himself as a person who possesses linguistic capital and thus negotiates his future identity as an English-speaking person.

Another example which highlights parents’ beliefs and feelings of superiority with regard to their children learning in English is given below:

My parents are really proud to send me to study in an English medium school. They don’t feel hesitant in front of others who have their children studying in a Punjabi medium school. From that, I mean that some relatives or friends of my parents have their children learning in Punjabi medium schools. So, I think they [relatives and friends] cannot suppress my parents [laughs] that their children are learning in good schools. Because there is discrimination between the English medium and Punjabi medium schools in the eyes of our society. (Muskaan: EM)

The extract above is a clear example of language prejudice related to learning in the English language. This prejudice was not only found among the EM students; it was also noted that parents of students learning in EM schools, as reported by the EM students, feel privileged over other parents. As the quote from Muskaan above reflects, her parents feel proud and superior to other parents whose children are learning in PM schools, even when they are relatives and friends. Thus, sending children to an EM school in Punjab is certainly considered as a mark of superiority.

Additionally, in the interviews good manners which were described as one of the most expected characteristics of EM students further extend the social
distinction between EM and PM school students. A majority of the students in the focus groups stated that English speaking people get respect in Punjabi society. This perception was also discussed in the previous findings chapter. During the interviews, when asked if people who learn in English are respected in Punjabi society, Daman an EM student, stated that:

Those who learn in English medium schools are generally well-mannered and people only respect well-mannered people. (Daman: EM2)

Daman appears to believe that people respect those who know and speak English because they are considered well-mannered. In a similar vein, another EM student highlighted that ‘the students from PM schools do not have good-manners’. (Rajan: EM). Such negative judgements about PM school students segregate the two groups further and thus impede PM students’ social development and may even impact PM students’ perceptions of their own identity. One example of such segregation was given by Preet, a PM student:

I think this is the mental set-up of people in our society: that the students from Punjabi medium schools are not well mannered. So, they stop their kids from playing with PM students and ask them to avoid their company. (Preet: PM)

It was also reported above that some parents of EM students do not want their children to play with students from PM schools. In the extract above Preet seems to suggest that this is because they think PM students are not well-mannered. It thus appears that this is the general opinion of people in Punjab: that most of the students learning in EM are well-mannered.

From the discussion in this section, it becomes clear that English is considered a symbol of high social status in Punjab. This seems to be the reason why most of the children stated that their parents want them to learn in an EM school. However, because EM schools charge high fees, enrolment in EM schools ultimately depends on the economic situation of parents. Thus, people in Punjabi society are categorised into two groups, not only according to their
socio-economic conditions but also based on whether or not they and their children had the opportunity to learn in an EM school. This has, therefore, become a means of discrimination and has reinforced inequality among the people in Punjabi society. Due to this conferred status, people make fun of those who do not know English, and the PM school students, as well as those in general who do not know English, feel humiliated and embarrassed. Based on these linguistic differences, people in Punjab seem to have particular features or characteristics attributed to them that then impact adversely on their perceptions of themselves and others.

6.2.2.3. English signifies socio-economic status in Punjab

EM schools are very expensive and not everyone can afford to send their children to EM schools (Bhattacharya, 2013; Ladousa, 2016; Mohanty, 2006; Singh, 2015). Therefore, the social discrimination grounded on the link between families’ socio-economic status and the type of school in which their children are learning is perpetuated. This could have a substantial impact on students’ views about themselves. Firstly, because of the families’ poor economic situation, students are deprived of the opportunity to learn in an EM school. Secondly, because of the lack of linguistic capital they are excluded from opportunities to enter good employment in the future. And thirdly, due to their lack of opportunities, their deficit view about themselves can have a major impact on their identity formation thus reinforcing the social differences.

It seems that the instrumental vitality of English in Punjab is the reason why investment in English over Punjabi is preferred in Punjab. Since ‘competence in language functions as linguistic capital’ (Block, 2007, p. 14), English, which is viewed as a valued language in Punjab, provides EM students with access to economic and cultural capital. This might be the reason why it is thought that ‘the poorest of the poor want to send their children to English medium school’ (Daman: EM). A study conducted by Azam, Chin and Prakash (2013) provides an example of economic capital delivered in the form of a 34% increase in wages for men with more ability to speak in English compared with a 13% increase for those with less ability to speak English in India. Luscombe
and Kazdal (2014) highlighted this aspect of the instrumental motivation to learn a particular language and its impact on students’ identity formation. This has also been articulated in many other studies conducted in India (Kainth & Kaur, 2015; Mohanty, 2006; Tully, 1997).

The dominant ideology of the relationship between students’ socio-economic background and their learning in an English or Punjabi medium school in the context of Punjab, therefore, appears to create the impression that PM school students come from a poor socio-economic segment of society. This could perhaps be one of the reasons why most of the students emphasised, in their interviews, that learning and speaking in English can make a good impression on others. Hence, learning in an EM or PM school associated with socio-economic status in Punjab appears to be an important constituent of students’ identity formation.

However, this perception that all the students in PM school are from a poor socio-economic background does not seem to be true in all the cases, as revealed from the students’ interview analysis:

Some parents can afford EM schools but their child is not very good in English and it is difficult for him to score good marks. So, parents send their child to Punjabi medium school. (Daman: EM)

Thus, it is not reasonable to generalise that all the students in PM schools belong to poor families. However, considering the high fee demands of EM schools, it is clear that parents from lower socio-economic class in Punjab are forced to send their children to PM schools (Bau, 2015; Singh & Sarkar, 2015). Such ideologies highlighting the interrelationship between families’ economic constraints which results in students’ lack of knowledge of English have been reported by many researchers in studies conducted in different states in India (Bhattacharya, 2013; Ladousa, 2016; Ramanathan, 2014) and, in particular, in Punjab (Kaur, 2017; Rani et al., 2015; Singh, 2006). Thus, it seems likely that in Punjabi society, which is already stratified on the basis of socio-economic resources that one holds (Singh, 2015), learning in English or Punjabi further
divides students into the privileged and underprivileged. Such stratification and positioning might accentuate the concerns related to identity, based on the language one is learning in school. Indeed, the dominant ideologies with respect to the perceived instrumental importance of English for education and economic benefits that position regional language medium students differently from EM students in India (Mohanty, 2010) can presumably have a damaging effect on PM students’ social identity. This could perhaps be one of the reasons EM students did not consider learning in Punjabi important as they appeared to believe that this could have a detrimental effect on the impression they would make in society with respect to their socio-economic background.

With regard to the relationship between families’ socio-economic status and children’s learning in EM school, Gill (2017) asserted that parents’ desire to send their children to an EM school in Punjab in order to show their superiority, exerts financial pressure on parents themselves. In the same vein, in Kaur's (2017) study, conducted in the district of Mansa in Punjab, parents said that they send their children to EM schools because ‘government schools (PM schools) are labelled as the schools for the poor’, and also because children look smart in their private school (EM school) uniforms. Hence, the perceived financial and social incentives linked to learning English seem to convince the parents to invest in an EM school education for their children. From this it is evident that learning in EM schools labels the EM students as different from the PM students, thus providing the two groups with distinct identities, financially and socially.

Furthermore, the students themselves expressed the inequality they perceive between them. In order to explore students’ perceptions of their social identities, when they were asked how they feel about themselves in a social group comprising either English speaking or Punjabi speaking people, the majority of students from both EM and PM groups stated that they are more comfortable speaking Punjabi in a group of Punjabi speaking people because Punjabi is their mother tongue. However, in one of the focus groups, the EM
students explicitly stated that they do not feel uncomfortable in English-speaking social groups:

   It is not very difficult to communicate in English. We all know some English, so we feel comfortable in an English-speaking group as well. (EM2: Muskaan [All agreed]).

On the other hand, from the analysis of the PM students’ focus group and individual interviews there was no suggestion that they were comfortable in English speaking social groups. This might be the reason why most of the PM students in the focus groups and interviews referred to the ‘shyness’, ‘hesitation’ and ‘inferiority complex’ that they feel while speaking to EM students or any other English-speaking person, which feelings could be described as a high affective filter (Krashen, 1981). All such negative feelings expressed by the PM students indicate how they view themselves in a group of people who speak English. This could have a significantly negative impact on their identity formation in general. Thus, it can be reasonably inferred that, in contrast to PM students, EM students feel more comfortable when in a social group of Punjabi and English-speaking people.

The student participants also emphasised that people who know English are highly respected in Punjabi society. In the focus groups all the students, irrespective of the language in which they were learning, agreed with the statement: Learning in English is important to me because it will bring more respect to me and my family. During the focus groups, when the students were asked how they viewed people who can speak in English, most of them stated that people who can speak in English are respected and considered respectable in Punjab.

In stark contrast, one of the students from the PM focus group argued:

   Just speaking in English cannot bring respect. A person must behave well and have a good attitude towards others to get respect. I think people think that we [PM students] are learning in a government school, so we do not know much. (Taran: PM2)
This seems to be an example of resistance (Canagarajah, 1999a) or counter-hegemony, which involves refusing to accept the dominance of a dominant group. It could possibly be that Taran was simply resisting the hegemony of English. This further indicates the student positioning himself in a group and seems not to be driven by the pre-existing or dominant ideologies regarding the differences between English and Punjabi medium students. Such an outlook has been termed as critical self-reflection (Bondy, 2015). This could also be viewed as a use of power or agency to position oneself differently (Bucholtz & Hall, 2007). Despite this student’s unwillingness to accept that knowing English can bring a person respect in Punjab, the fact itself cannot be denied considering the majority of the students’ views on this, which became clear in the individual interviews.

6.2.3. Further insights from students based on their investment in English and its impact on their identity formation

6.2.3.1. Difference in English teaching and other English related practices in the EM and PM school

The PM school students particularly highlighted pedagogical differences between how the English language is taught in their school and in EM schools, differences which they thought accounted for their lack of proficiency in English. The following extract from one PM student’s interview explains in some detail why he feels he lacks proficiency in English:

   English taught in our school is very basic. It becomes difficult in college and university. We have only one period of English in school, which is not enough. We started learning the English alphabet in sixth grade and, students from English medium schools, they learn English almost all day from the beginning of school. So, it is not easy to bridge the huge gap between us. (Avtaar: PM)

Avtaar seems to focus on the time allocated to teaching English as well as the difference in the English teaching approaches employed in both the types of school. Many PM school students stated in the focus groups and it is also
reported in the literature discussing the educational context of India (Cheney et al., 2005) that English in PM schools is taught for only 45 minutes a day. This is far less in comparison to EM schools. Avtaar’s observations are not surprising if seen in the light of a comparative study conducted by Rani et al. (2014) which reported that most of the students learning in PM schools are first generation learners who get little exposure to English in their daily lives. Moreover, bearing in mind that English is not the native language of 99.8% people in India (Azam et al., 2013), it is the case that children’s main exposure to English is in schools only. Hence, learning English only for 45 minutes, which is not adequate compared with the time EM students are exposed to English in school can place PM students at a disadvantage.

Moreover, many other differences in school practices and classroom English teaching practices in the two types of school were reported by many of the PM student participants. For example, in EM school premises, the use of any other language than English is prohibited and classroom interaction is exclusively in English. By contrast, the regional language, Punjabi, is used to teach all school subjects, including English in PM schools. Indeed, English speaking is emphasised in EM schools in India to the extent that EM students are penalised and fined for speaking in any language, even their mother tongue, except English during school hours (NDTV, 2017). This is a further indicator of the hegemony of English and self-imposed imperialism of English over the local languages in India. Spolsky (2009) condemned this approach of ignoring and denying students’ mother tongue saying that it may cause among students to feel inferior in their communities. I argue that the significance of English over Punjabi in the educational contexts in India can hamper PM students’ positive perceptions about themselves because of their lack of competence in English

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20 Grammar translation method is used to teach English in PM school.
and little acknowledgement of their competence in Punjabi their mother tongue and the language in which PM school students have their education.

Furthermore, a grammar-translation\textsuperscript{21} based approach to teaching English as asserted by the PM students again appears to be an obstruction that leads to less exposure to spoken English and subsequently to their lack of competence in English. Similar results were found in the study conducted by Ramanathan (2005) highlighting an ‘English and vernacular [regional language] divide’, between the students. This division was reported to be caused by the differences in pedagogical practices in EM and Gujarati medium schools in Gujarat, a state in India. The findings from the PM school students in this study were similar to the findings of the regional language medium school students in Ramanathan’s (2005) study. Those students asserted that the grammar-translation method helped them to learn English but did not prepare them to speak English fluently in contexts like job interviews. It could be one of the reasons why Avtaar, in the extract above, stated that English taught in his school was ‘very basic’.

Moreover, the PM students in contrast to the EM students appeared to be more conscious of their lack of competence in English to communicate in general, or, to draw on Cummins’ (1979) terminology, in their BICS (\textit{Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills}), which they believe can be detrimental to the impression they make on others. Focussing on the English language teaching approach in the PM school, one of the PM school students stated that:

\begin{quote}
We know English for exams, but we need to learn English to speak with others who know English [for example, teachers and EM students]. English that we learn from the English-speaking centre
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{21}Grammar-translation methods rely heavily on teaching grammar and practicing translation and the main focus in teaching English tends to be on reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening which enables a person to use English for communicative purposes.
develops our English language skills and makes it easier for us. In school, they [teachers] just read the lesson and give us the exercises to learn for exams. (Jugraj: PM)

Jugraj explicitly stated that the method applied for teaching the English language in their school was responsible for their lack of competence in English. As suggested by Jugraj, the English language seems to be taught in PM schools only with the intention that the students will be able to pass their examinations. This was also pointed out in Section 5.2.1.5. in the previous chapter, where one of the English language teachers from the PM school stressed that if a student fails in English, he/she is considered to have failed in all other school subjects. Thus, it appears as if the teachers’ main focus in PM schools is to help the students to pass the examination. This appears to be why PM students do not have many opportunities to speak in English in school, but are given exercises to enable them to learn for tests, an approach which is called rote memorisation, ‘learning for the test’ (Bhattacharya, 2013) in the Indian context.

Although this method has become very common in the Indian educational context, it also has been condemned because it does not test students’ ‘analytical and creative skills’ (Ninnes et al., 1999). This approach to teaching English seems to impact negatively on PM students’ abilities to create sentences on their own in order to speak in English. This is perhaps the reason why Jugraj differentiated between the English language taught to them in school and the type of language the students need to learn for communication purposes. Considering the importance of English, which provides linguistic capital for higher education, the unequal distribution of English and the differences between English teaching approaches in both types of school could certainly impact on PM students’ self-perceptions in terms of their future possibilities and identities in higher education. It is worth noting that a significant difference was found between PM school students’ and EM school students’ English language speaking skills in a study conducted in the district of Sangrur, in Punjab, (Rani & Thakar, 2014).
6.2.3.1.1. English teaching from 6th grade onwards in PM school

Furthermore, to begin formally to learn English in school from 6th grade onwards, which is very late in comparison to EM students who begin to learn English academically from the beginning of their school careers, adds to PM students’ difficulties with learning English. In the interviews, this was suggested by most of the PM students as a barrier to them developing competence in English. In order to better understand how learning a second language early can make a difference to an individual’s language proficiency, we can look at Cummins’ concept of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). Academic language proficiency as defined by Cummins depends on ‘the extent to which an individual has access to a particular language in school’ (Cummins, 2000, p. 67). Cummins’ (1979) rationale for CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), the concept used in many SLL (Second Language Learning) studies (Berry, 2013; Cummins, Bismilla, Chow, & Cohen, 2005; Tickoo, 1993) appears to support PM students’ claims that their proficiency in English is hampered by a lack of exposure to English in their school. According to Cummins (2008), in order to fully attain academic proficiency and to overcome academic difficulties in a second language, a bilingual learner needs more exposure and time to learn a particular language than PM students in this study appear to have. Thus, the PM students’ anxiety about their lack of proficiency in English in their future academic lives in colleges and universities seems to stem from their own comparisons with their counterparts in EM schools. The unequal distribution of English in the two types of school and the requirement of English for entrance examinations and to study abroad, as noted by most of the student participants, further indicates the hegemony of English in an Indian context. This was presumed by the PM students to have a detrimental effect on their identities in general.

Moreover, the students’ responses to the question ‘How do you evaluate your English? Do you think that it is good, very good, not very good?’ clearly demonstrated that EM school students were more assertive about their competence in English, whereas the PM school students hesitated and
highlighted their lack of competence in English. Notably, three out of the six EM school students stated in the interviews that their English was not bad, but was not very fluent when it comes to public speaking. Despite this, it is important to note that, further into the interview, when comparing themselves to PM school students in relation to public speaking, these students appeared to believe that, because of their knowledge of English, they would have an advantage over their counterparts from PM schools.

This appears to be why the PM school students join private English-speaking centres to improve their English linguistic skills and subsequently their chances to access the highly valued educational courses. This is how PM students appeared to use agentive methods to enhance their linguistic skills which could benefit them in terms of their future possible selves and their identities in general.

6.2.3.1.2. PM students joining English speaking centres

Considering their lack of investment in English and the value of English which carries linguistic capital, most of the PM students stated that they had joined, or were thinking of joining, private English-speaking centres. The reason for joining such centres, as described earlier, appears to be the limitations of the grammar-translation approach to English teaching in PM schools. The PM students pointed out that they did not get to practise English speaking in school and therefore join private English-speaking centres to enhance their English language skills after school in order to avoid future difficulties in higher education.

In the individual interviews, PM students explicitly expressed concerns about their lack of investment in English which they believed could hinder their performance in higher education. This is exemplified in the following quotation from a PM student’s interview:

In colleges or universities, most of the subjects will be in English. I will face difficulty there because I do not know much English (Preet: PM).
The language used in higher education in India is mainly English (Cheney et al., 2005). Ashe National policy of Education in India seems to have made English a prerequisite for accessing higher education, the lack of exposure to English in PM schools can have serious consequences for PM students. For instance, as discussed above, PM students might be denied access to elite colleges or universities to which the relatively privileged EM students have access or, should they manage to gain access to higher education, they may find it more difficult than EM students, as has been described in the quotation above by Preet, the PM student. Thus joining English speaking centres appears to support PM school students in making progress in their English language learning and helping them to cope with challenges arising from the linguistic differences between English and Punjabi medium students (Mohanty, 2010).

Further, in relation to joining English-speaking centres, one of the PM students said:

Those who do not get a chance to learn in English medium, they join English speaking centres which help them to improve their English. So, one can join an English-speaking centre for a few months, even more than that if one wants to. There they teach English speaking, reading, writing and listening. English is important for the future, that’s why there are so many such English-speaking centres in Punjab’. (Aman: PM)

In this extract, Aman reports that PM students rely on private English-speaking centres. PM students do not have many opportunities to speak English in school, therefore, they join English-speaking centres, in the belief that learning English is imperative to their future careers and, in turn, might help them to re-imagine their identity. In this way, they seem to exercise agency and are invested in learning English in private English-speaking centres, in order to acquire linguistic capital which could help them to negotiate their identities in the future. PM students appear therefore to have bought into the ideologies
and discourses of the power of English, which surround them in society and in the socio-political Indian context.

The connection between the knowledge of English and power with which it endows the students in Punjab was frequently reported by the students and is discussed in Section 6.2.3.8. The PM students’ uncertainty about their possible selves in future *imagined communities* (Anderson, 1983), in this case colleges and universities, appears to motivate them to exercise agency by investing in their English language learning in English speaking centres. Here, parents’ agency also comes into play in the form of financial investment of their children’s learning English in the private English-speaking centres in order to accumulate the linguistic capital needed to access the fields dominated by power structures, for example, elite colleges and universities. Hence, this seems to be a self-imposed linguistic imperialism, as Troudi (2009) claims, and also a weak form of agency which reinforces disparities between EM and PM students, rather than addressing them. Hence, the students seem to accept the hegemony of English and, with the accumulation of this particular linguistic capital students, continue to be caught up in this hegemony.

From the discussion above, it seems that students from the two types of school have different perspectives about themselves and their futures in higher education. English medium school students seem to believe that they are in possession of linguistic capital, English, which will gain them access to elite colleges and universities. The PM school students, on the other hand, feel disadvantaged because of the lack of English which is a prerequisite to gain access to higher education. In this way, students from both the schools construct their identities or subjectivities based on the language in which they are learning. From a poststructuralist perspective, ‘subjectivity and language are seen as mutually constitutive’ (Norton & Toohey, 2011) and thus an unequal distribution of English, which is viewed as linguistic capital, appears to have the potential to impact students’ sense of self constructed on the language in which they are learning in school.
6.2.3.2. **English provides students with confidence and a good impression on others**

The themes that English provides students with confidence and allows them to make a good impression on others are overlapping and have emerged as additional findings, and are discussed under different themes in this section. These two recurring themes are reported in the following section under the sub-themes of English associated with intelligence, power, self-confidence. These associations may also have an impact on students’ identity formation. This discussion will then highlight how the knowledge of English can endow EM students with confidence but also how the lack of it can have a negative impact on PM students’ confidence and their impression on others, and subsequently on their identity formation.

Some of the students explicitly stated that their competence in English gives them confidence. For example, Rajan from English Medium school focus group 1 said that ‘speaking fluently in English gives me confidence’. Another participant, Pawan, from the EM school focus group 2, asserted that ‘it brings confidence that we can speak in a language that is spoken by many people in the world. If we know English, it can prevent us from many problems in the future’. On the contrary, Sunny, from PM school focus group 1, stated that ‘we do not feel confident because we are not able to speak in English’. In response to these statements, all other students in the EM school focus groups and PM school focus group 1 agreed with the statements that English provides them with confidence.

Most of the students, irrespective of the language in which they were learning, associated English with gaining confidence. For example, when asked to complete the statement: ‘I want to speak English fluently because…’, the students aligned English-speaking people in Punjab with many positive characteristics but mainly intelligence and confidence. Some of the EM students’ responses to the statement above were as follows:

- Speaking English fluently gives me confidence. (EM1: Simrat)
It provides confidence that we can speak in a language that is spoken by many people in the world. So, we will not have many problems in the future if we know English. (EM2: Muskaan)

The EM students explicitly stated that English provides them with confidence. They appeared to associate English speaking with a level of confidence that could prevent them from encountering challenges in higher education or their future career.

During the interviews, all six EM school students stated the connection between learning in English and improved confidence. The EM students used the terms ‘confident’ and ‘confidence’ quite often, creating the impression that they believe that confidence relates to them because they can speak in English. One possible reason for this might be the usefulness of English for higher studies and future careers which endows them with the confidence that they can achieve their future possible selves. Some comments from the EM student interviews while comparing themselves with PM students indicate their positive perceptions in relation to their confidence. Muskaan’s account given below illustrates such positive feelings of EM students with regard to their confidence because of learning in English:

I think English is everything in a person’s life. Without English, as I said earlier, I wouldn’t have been that confident; I would have been shy, maybe sitting in a corner. I think English gives me an existence. (Muskaan: EM)

This broad statement that ‘English gives me an existence’ concurs with Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas’ (1996, p. 441) statement that ‘It [English] is the language in which the fate of the world’s citizens is decided, directly or indirectly’. It is the strong feeling of self-efficacy gained by learning in English among the EM students which appeared to enhance their ‘linguistic self-confidence’ (Clement et al., 2006). Linguistic self-confidence refers to the learner’s ‘confident and anxiety-free belief that the mastery of an L2 is well within his/her means’ (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005). Hence, proficiency in English,
which carries linguistic capital is thought to generate opportunities for students and provide them with linguistic self-confidence and confidence in general. The perceived relationship between English and the confidence it delivers appeared to create positive self-perceptions among EM students. This indeed would have an impact on their beliefs about their PM student counterparts, as less confident because of their lack of investment in English. This is exemplified in the following extract:

I feel confident that I can speak and express myself in English. But if I think about others, Punjabi medium students, then I understand why this difference exists. Punjabi medium school students feel inferior. (Simrat: EM)

Simrat expressed her concerns about PM students’ lack of competence in English and how this could impact on their beliefs about themselves. Her positive attitude about herself as an EM school student and her belief that PM students might feel inferior reflects the general perception of EM and PM students in Punjab. To a large extent, these are the same views that the other five students expressed when they compared themselves with PM students. This sense of EM students being recognised as superior and confident and their belief that PM students consider themselves inferior to them (EM students), given the hegemonic status of English in Punjab, can be read as EM students drawing comparisons with PM students and positioning the ‘self ‘and the ‘other’ differently. Similar comparisons between EM and PM medium students were made by the headteachers and the teachers.

Another representative example highlighting positive self-perceptions among EM students is provided below:

I think if I had been a PM student, I would not have been this confident. I think confidence level goes up a level if we study in English medium school. I would have been a shy person learning in a PM school. I wouldn’t have been able to express myself the way I am expressing myself right now. So, I think the most important thing in English is
confidence. I don’t think PM students are that confident, so they feel that they are behind us. (Muskaan: EM)

Since learning in English, or knowledge of English, is viewed as an important component of creating confidence in students, it is unsurprising that EM students have more positive beliefs about themselves, which they made explicit by expressing a sense of superiority over PM students. Thus, poor knowledge of English seems to undermine PM students’ confidence and, in turn, influence their identity formation in a context where English is perceived to be the most sought-after language.

There is a sharp contrast between EM and PM students’ views about their confidence in relation to speaking in English. This lack of confidence was reported by Sunny, who further viewed this as a cause of hesitation to speak English:

If I was learning in an English medium school then I would speak to anyone in English without any hesitation and I would be more confident in myself that I know English, so I would not have any problems in the future. (Sunny: PM)

PM students appeared to perceive themselves to be at a disadvantage because they are not learning in English. Such distinctive perceptions of EM and PM school students in relation to their level of confidence seem to be the result of the association of English with different self-related beliefs such as intelligence, hesitation and accumulation of power. Many beliefs highlighting a strong connection between the knowledge of English and positive attributes such as intelligence, lack of hesitation and good manners emerged from the analysis of the students’ interview accounts. The hegemonic ideologies about the relationship between these positive characteristics and the knowledge of English, appear to endow EM students with the feeling of advantage over PM students.
A brief discussion of all these factors, which seems to have deep connection with students’ level of confidence and, in turn, with their identity formation, is given in the following paragraphs.

6.2.3.2.1. English is associated with intelligence

The knowledge of English was hegemonically associated with intelligence which presumably makes EM students feel more confident about themselves. In all four focus groups, students agreed with the statement: ‘I view the people who speak English as intelligent’. Learning in English, therefore, seems to label those who do so as intelligent. Intelligence is also likely to be perceived as an attribute of a person learning in English. Various examples of this were provided by the students. For instance, in the English for job interviews section above, it was noted that in Punjab people who can speak English during job interviews are viewed as intelligent and are recruited for good jobs. Thus, intelligence appears to be one of the characteristics bestowed upon a person who knows English in Punjab. Such discourses related to English and its connection with intelligence could motivate the EM students to consider themselves more intelligent than their counterparts in PM schools. This could certainly have an impact on students’ identity formation.

To explore this further, students were asked during the interviews if they think that people who can speak English are intelligent. Most of the students held the opinion that those who can speak in English are considered as intelligent in general in Punjab. English, as a global language, seems to be perceived as superior to Punjabi because it provides access to opportunities like good employment and access to higher education in India and abroad. It is perhaps for this reason that the majority of the participants, irrespective of the language in which they were learning, felt that those who can speak in English are intelligent.

The desire to be fluent in English among the PM students seems to be motivated by wanting to distinguish themselves from those who cannot speak English and are looked on as inferior to EM students in terms of intelligence, in Punjabi society. The ability to speak in English, thus, is thought to give the
impression that a person is intelligent, and save him/her from being exposed to the humiliation that the lack of knowledge of English can cause. This in turn can boost an individual’s confidence and thus aids students’ identity formation. This was suggested by one of the PM students:

If someone who can speak English speaks with us and we speak in Punjabi then we will feel embarrassed thinking that other person knows English and we do not. (PM2: Aman).

Speaking English fluently, which creates confidence among EM students, is in contrast a protective shield for the PM students, which enables them to avoid embarrassment and to change peoples’ opinions about them. As a result, they assume they will be viewed as intelligent and confident. This finding is in line with Ramanathan’s (2016) study in India, which revealed that knowledge of English is considered an ‘instrument’ by which to assess students’ intelligence. Previous research in the area of language and education has also demonstrated how English language proficiency can serve as a gatekeeper that determines students’ access to specific fields (Chand, 2005; Ramanathan, 2005a). Identifying the significance of English for students in relation to educational achievements, Wells (2009) suggests that it is not only a person’s intelligence but also a difference between the use of a particular language at school and at home which influences their performance. Hence, the lack of opportunity to speak in English in Punjabi medium schools discussed previously may be influencing PM students’ competence and confidence in speaking in English during the job interviews negatively, which creates the impression that they are not intelligent.

Although English in the Indian context is not, due to the hegemony of English and the presumed high status of English in professional lives, used much for integrative purposes, students believe that they will be considered intelligent and confident, if they speak in English. Such ideological underpinnings of English as a dominant and beneficial language reflect Phillipson’s (1992) account of linguistic imperialism. English seems to become a highly-regarded language that people use as a measure of a person’s intelligence in Punjab.
Hegemonic discourses about English in Punjabi society influence students’ perceptions of English and its association with intelligence. As a result, the PM students’ intelligence is questioned due to their limited investment in English. Thus, PM students’ identity construction is influenced by hegemonic ideologies that value those who can speak in English. English thus seems to be viewed as an identity marker in Punjabi society, and imparts EM school students with confidence and distinct identities.

6.2.3.2.2. Lack of investment in English is one of the causes of hesitation among PM students
During the interviews, when the students discussed the English language in relation to higher education, they strongly emphasised the difficulties that a lack of investment in English could cause. One of the often-reported problems was the hesitation PM students may experience while speaking to those who know English which may be one of the factors that could have an impact on PM students’ identity formation. The EM students’ interview account given below exemplifies this:

I feel very well-educated and it boosts my confidence and helps me to speak fluently in English. Punjabi medium students feel shy and they hesitate to talk to English medium school students. (Rajan: EM)

Rajan, in the extract above, clearly stated the difference in levels of confidence between them (EM students) and their counterparts in PM schools that results from differences in their proficiency in English. For instance, EM students are believed to have more oral fluency than the PM students. This further demonstrates that EM and PM students invest differently in acquiring English language skills. As previously described, PM students feel that they cannot communicate in English well because the main focus of their school is to teach English to pass examinations. This is why the PM students felt that they are held back.

The EM students’ perceptions of PM school students, i.e. that they will be ‘shy’ and ‘hesitating’, indicates their positive feelings about their own future
possibilities. This echoes Erikson’s views on identity development in adolescence. He calls it a ‘sense of knowing where one is going’ (1968, p. 165). English medium school students feel assured that they have acquired linguistic capital in the form of knowledge of English, which will help them to meet any academic or social challenges. This is why, as discussed above, students from the EM school appear to feel confident that they will be selected for elite colleges for higher studies in the future. The PM school students themselves reported the feeling of hesitation while speaking to those who know English. This is exemplified in the excerpt below from PM student’s interview:

There is a hesitation. When somebody speaks in English with me, I cannot understand some words. So, I hesitate to answer because of the fear that if I will say something wrong, what other people around will think about me’. (Aman: PM).

Such sentiments, coming from a PM student, clearly highlight the impact of not receiving much exposure to English on one’s views about oneself, and the impact on one’s identity formation, with regard to perceived lack of competence in English. Aman reported that he hesitates to speak in English in order to avoid the embarrassment that might occur because of his poor command of English. Aman’s decision to remain silent because of his perceived limited English abilities further indicates his feelings of being different from others who can speak English confidently.

In some studies in the SLL literature, learner’s silence has been viewed as a form of resistance to unequal power relations (Howarth, 2016; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Trang & Baldauf, 2007). In this study, however, the participants perceived English as linguistic capital and expressed a strong desire to learn English. Therefore, Aman’s reason for being silent could be inferred as his ‘hesitation’ to avoid embarrassment but not his resistance towards English. This inference can be further substantiated with another scholars’ view that English in India is recognized as linguistic capital for communication reasons.
and thus is not resisted for being a British language anymore (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Then again, despite the students’ belief that the use of English creates a good impression on others and thus could endow students with social capital, PM students like Aman prefer to be silent and listen while communicating with someone who knows English well. One possible reason for this could be the fear of being judged as well as to avoid committing any mistakes. This could also be inferred as Aman’s way of exercising agency by pretending to be comfortable and hiding his perceived lack of proficiency in English. Nevertheless, to remain quiet because of the lack of competence in communication skills in English puts PM medium students at a disadvantage as they can be assigned a position as someone with limited English. Such feelings may create a sense of weakness among PM students and they might construct their identities based on how they position themselves, i.e. separate from those who can speak English. Therefore, the hesitation to speak English seems to be an important contributing factor to students’ identity formation.

One of the possible reasons for PM students’ hesitation to speak in English could be the result of a psychological distance\(^{22}\), that is PM school students’ lack of involvement with EM school students, between the students from EM and PM schools, which involves language discrepancies (Schumann, 1976). In a study conducted by Rani et al. (2015), in the district of Barnala in Punjab, a comparative analysis of EM and PM students’ speaking skills also revealed that PM students avoided communicating in English. The anxiety about revealing their lack of competence in English was considered to be a cause of PM students’ hesitation (Rani et al. 2015). PM students may perhaps worry that what they want to say in English would not reflect their ideas accurately, or would be understood differently by the listeners. Such contemplations

\(^{22}\) Psychological distance refers to psychological factors such as language shock.
according to Schumann (1976) could lead to the second language learner’s anxieties about being looked on as comic. Hence, such psychological distances between PM and EM students seem to contribute to constructing their identities. Remaining quiet, and being afraid of being perceived to be comic and made fun by others, was also described by students.

From the discussion above, it is clear that the limited English language abilities of PM students sometimes prevent them from speaking and force them to remain quiet in order to conceal a lack of competence in English which may impact others’ perceptions about them in regard to their English-speaking skills and their possibilities for the future. Again, the poststructuralist view that power relations in discourses have repercussions for learners’ identity (Norton, 2016a; Pavlenko, 2002b), seems to be true in the Punjabi context.

The relationship between the knowledge of English and the power it endows on those who learn in an EM school was another recurring theme in students’ interviews. This belief of empowerment seems to have an impact on students’ identity formation.

6.2.3.2.3. Investment in English extends power to EM students

Given that English is perceived to provide linguistic capital, the advantages attached to learning in English and the dominant ideologies linking English with positive attributes such as confidence, making good impression, and intelligence seem to bring power relations among students from both the types of school and to endow EM students with powerful identities. This further reproduces and maintains the power relations among people in Punjab where the hegemony of English prevails not only in the education system but in general in society and professional lives. Language, in poststructuralism, is viewed as a social practice rather than a phonetic system consisting of grammar and phonology (Pavlenko, 2002b) and thus, how people communicate with each other and who has more power to speak is considered to have an impact on a person’s identity formation (Norton, 2016c).
As a postcolonial language in India, English has long been viewed as a language that signifies accumulation of power (Ramanujam, 2011). A clear indication of this was found in an example given by Muskaan stating how those who know English extend their linguistic power to oppress those who do not:

I have seen many such cases. But I will give you an example of a lady who was in a group of other ladies. She didn’t know much English and there was another lady who was from a very good family. She knew English well. She belonged to a very respected family. I don’t know why she did this; she spoke in English and the other lady who didn’t know English felt left out. I think that the lady did it purposely because she didn’t like the other lady [the one who does not know much English]. This might be because of some personal grudge. It is natural to feel left out if a person doesn’t know English and the entire group of people speak English. (Muskaan: EM)

In the example above, the student described how a person who is well-versed in English can exhibit his or her power by using the English language to speak to a person who does not know English. The general sense that emerges from this quotation is that English is viewed as a language of power in Punjabi society. This might be because of the potential English is believed to have to create opportunities for a person and help him/her to lead a better life. Alternatively, it might be, as noted by Kachru (1976), because English was the language of political power in India during the colonial period, and this has naturally continued to endow those who speak English with power. This further indicates that English, which has become the language of trade, banking, and commerce in India (Jenkins & Leung, 2013) is also preferred socially, where it is not mandatory. This might be because people are able to exert control by engaging the influential power of English and thus oppressing others who do not know English. This kind of use of English is an example of self-imposed linguistic imperialism (Troudi 2009), which, in this case, seems to be employed to silence people who do not know English. In this way, the power of English is employed to exclude those who do not know English and who are thus
oppressed; hence, learning in EM seems to provide a pathway out of such exclusion and can enhance a person’s confidence.

In the literature on identity formation, specifically in SLL, older studies (Cummins, 1979a; Dornyei, 1998; Michell, 1994; Krashen & Gingras, 1978; Schumann, 1986) as well as more recent work (Abraham, 2014; Oral, 2013; Sergiu, 2010) have discussed the influence of power and power relations. Poststructuralist research has identified a strong relationship between power and identity in educational contexts. Most identity theorists, and in particular Norton (1995b, 2000, 2010a), when conceptualising identity formation in association with her theory of investment, focus on the role played by power in the social world which, as Norton argues, if distributed unequally, can impact negatively on individuals’ opportunities to participate in particular contexts, and in turn can affect their identity formation. English, which has been viewed as a signifier of power and wealth in postcolonial contexts (Choi, 2003), can certainly have an impact on people based on whether or not they possess this power. For example, Simrat suggested in her interview that a lack of knowledge of English results in an inferiority complex in PM students:

I think students who are studying in Punjabi medium, they really feel inferior that they can’t speak this language, so they think they are inferior to others. (Simrat: EM)

The fact that English is considered a language of power is, therefore, thought to make the PM students view themselves as inferior to others; or, this perhaps reflect Simrat’s assumption, as an EM student, that she considers herself superior to PM students. Either way, it is evident that the individual’s sense of self in relation to others, in this case, the PM students’ in relation to EM students and others who can speak English well, influences their identity formation. Lack of competence in English can certainly influence PM students’ thinking about themselves and lead them to perceive themselves as inferior to EM students, especially because English medium schools facilitate the development of proficiency in English, which is viewed as an international, and even the most powerful language (Graddol, 1998).
The PM school students extensively expressed their negative experiences because of their lack of competence in English and the power and prejudice associated with learning and speaking in English, in Punjab. Any such negative experiences were notably absent from the EM student interview accounts. For instance, all six PM students shared experiences of being made fun of by others who know English, especially those who are learning or had learned in EM schools. Some of the quotations below from the PM school students reflect such experiences:

In a group of people where most of the people do not know English, the few who know English will always show off and speak more than others. They also sometimes don’t like speaking to others who don’t know English. Some people even pretend that they do not know Punjabi though it is our mother tongue. (Preet: PM)

The perceived supremacy of English over Punjabi is evident in the quotation above. As Preet suggested, people who know English sometimes ‘show off’ and even pretend they do not speak Punjabi at all. This presents another example of self-imposed imperialism and could be understood as a process of linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). This linguistic genocide seems to be enforced through the unequal distribution of languages in schools in Punjab, thereby adding to the disadvantages of PM students.

Another PM student expressed concern about the way in which people who know English can be sarcastic if others make any mistakes in English speaking, and this reflects the way in which they sometimes extend their oppression:

Yes. Suppose you are saying something in English, then if you say something wrong, the person who knows English interrupts you and corrects that, but in a sarcastic way to show that he knows English better. Then the other person feels oppressed and hesitates to say anything in English. (Sunny: PM)
In the quotation below, Taran seems to extend the idea of discrimination exercised by such people, describing how those who do not know English are viewed as uncultured:

People who learn in English medium schools, they think that those who are learning in Punjabi medium schools are uncultured, they do not know anything about fashion; people say things like that. Actually, calling a person who does not know English uncultured or rural is quite common, even in Punjabi movies and other TV shows; people who play characters who did not learn in a good school are often called uncultured. (Taran: PM)

Learning in Punjabi, therefore, seems to be linked with an individual’s lack of knowledge of English and disadvantages. In the quotation above, Taran acknowledges that people’s limited knowledge of English is often made fun of in films and TV shows in Punjab. English seems to dominate in the mass media and this further works to devalue Punjabi-speaking people. This dominance of English in the mass media, education and communication has also been identified in the literature (Crystal, 2005). Lack of proficiency in English in Punjab thus seems to be synonymous with backwardness and being ‘uncultured’, which further subjects PM students to embarrassment and can have a negative effect on their identity formation.

From the quotations above it becomes clear that linguistic inequality, which is institutionalised in India (Mohanty, 2010), is ideologically constructed. In India, two types of ideologies, social and political (Pennycook, 1999), seem to prevail when it comes to language teaching and learning: politically, through the Indian constitution that declares English an official language; and, socially, through people’s ideologies, that is, the way people think and behave in society with regard to the languages used by others.

Thus, from the discussion above it is clear that the consideration of English as linguistic capital allows it to become a means of upward mobility in the Punjabi context, and those who get the chance to learn in EM schools feel more
confident than others in part because of the association of English with positive characteristics such as intelligence, confidence and empowerment. They appear to possess linguistic capital and therefore have less anxiety about their future and imagined identities. The fact that the EM students were clearly more comfortable speaking in English during the focus groups and interviews validates their claim that they feel confident speaking in English. Indeed, learning in an EM school in itself is a factor that has led them to be more confident than their PM counterparts.

6.3. Summary

To sum up, from the student data analysis it appears that English is considered as linguistic capital in Punjab. The hegemony of English in relation to Punjabi, in the academic, professional and social lives of people in Punjab situates EM students as socially higher than their counterparts in PM schools. This is why it seems to be generally believed that speaking in English and learning in an EM school can create a good impression on others. Such ideologies and societal discourses related to the hegemony of English push people to send their children to EM schools. This further seems to perpetuate the power dynamics between the two groups of students and, in general, in society. For instance, those equipped with the tool of the English language use this directly or indirectly to oppress others. This further enforces students’ perceptions of themselves as different from the other. The self-perceived differences and the significance of English encourage PM students to use agentive methods like learning English in private centres. In this way, PM students invest in their learning in English, which, because of its domination in Punjabi society, would provide them with more advantages and opportunities. It is believed that this will enable PM students to construct different and better identities in Punjab. Such differences caused by different languages used as the MOI in school form a criterion by which to recognise students from English and Punjabi medium schools as two different sets of individuals.
Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations.

7.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate to what extent, if at all, high school students’ investment in English by learning in a English or Punjabi medium school affects their identity formation. To explore the participants’ perceptions of their identity construction, I drew on poststructuralist theories of identity formation and, specifically, employed Norton’s concept of investment, which incorporates identity, agency and ideology. The umbrella term 'investment' is intertwined with Bourdieu’s forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1991) and Markus and Nurius' (1986) account of ‘possible selves’, concepts which further allowed me to explore identity formation, a complex phenomenon. Investment is a sociological concept which focusses on the role of power dynamics in a society that could influence an individual’s identity formation. This concept, therefore, was very useful for this study, which was undertaken in a multilingual Indian context, a context which Mohanty (2006) calls the 'multilingualism of the unequals' where languages are associated with a hierarchy of power (p. 262).

The concept of investment has been discussed at length in Chapter 3, Section 3.7.

I recruited the headteachers, teachers and student participants from two contrasting schools in Punjab, an English medium and a Punjabi medium school, in order to gain insights into their experiences in different contexts. All the participants, the headteachers, the teachers and the students believed that students’ investment in English rather than in Punjabi can have a significant impact on their identity formation. The key findings of this study are as follows:

(a) English is hegemonic in higher education and employment in Punjab and (b) there are social advantages to learning in English. Therefore, investment in English by learning in an EM school is significant in relation to high school students’ identity formation.

Other than these key findings, there were some recurring themes which were quite interesting and noteworthy in relation to the high school students’ identity formation.
formation. These were neither new nor original findings and some were only mentioned by a few participants. However, these are important elements which could have a significant impact on students’ identity formation. Therefore, I identified these as additional findings, which were of value to include in the thesis. These additional findings are (a) English provides students with confidence and (b) English speaking creates a good impression.

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of the current study. First, a brief summary is provided of the findings which answer the main research question. Second, focusing on different stakeholders: policymakers, teachers, parents and students, the implications for policy and practice of these findings are considered. Finally, the limitations of the study, its contribution to research and recommendations for future research are outlined.

7.2. Research question: In what way, if at all, does investment in learning in English or Punjabi affect the learners’ construction of their identity?

This research study set out to find answers to this research question. The key findings revealed that the participants from all three cohorts viewed Punjabi as a language to be used at home, whilst English was the language of education and employment. The student participants in this study, regardless of their MOI, displayed a less favourable attitude towards Punjabi as a language to be used as the MOI in school. High school students learning in English and Punjabi medium schools were not found to have the same return on their investment in English. English is taught as a foreign language subject in PM schools. In contrast, it is used as the MOI in EM schools, that is, all school subjects except Hindi and Punjabi are taught in English. Hence, investment in English, which most of the participants from all three groups believed provided students with agentive control to access educational, occupational and social opportunities, appeared to have an impact on students’ identity formation.

Moreover, most of the participants from all three groups associated social advantages and symbolic capital with knowledge of English in Punjab. Therefore, proficiency in English was linked to students having increased
levels of confidence. The students were also very alert to the fact that the investment in English allowed them to yield rewards in the form of symbolic capital and to make a good impression on others in society. Societal discourses and hegemonic ideologies which associate English with power and intelligence, specifically in Punjabi society where knowledge of English symbolises a higher socio-economic status, appeared to have an impact on students’ perceptions about their social identities. Therefore, the investment in learning in English, in comparison to learning in Punjabi, was believed to be significant in terms of students' future career opportunities and their educational, occupational and social identity formation.

A brief summary of the key findings which revealed the impact of the variation of investment in English on EM and PM high school students' identity formation is given in the following paragraphs.

7.3. Summary of the findings

7.3.1. The hegemony of English and the emerging impact of the students’ investment in English on their future educational and occupational identities in Punjab, India.

The data revealed that English is the primary language required to access higher education and employment in the most desired fields in Punjab, namely medicine, engineering and technology. However, English was not often used at home, so students’ competence in English was entirely contingent on their investment in English learning and use in school. Because of the EM school students’ greater investment in and accumulation of linguistic and cultural capital in English in comparison to that of PM school students, all three cohorts positioned EM school students as advantaged.

7.3.1.1. The hegemony of English in higher education in Punjab

Both EM and PM school students aspired to enter medical and engineering fields. However, the PM school students perceived their lack of knowledge of English as a barrier that would prevent them from gaining admission to these courses. For example, one student from the PM school, explicitly expressed
his helplessness, stating that having been taught in a PM school, he would be left with a limited choice of higher education courses. In contrast, the EM students were clearly very comfortable with their English language skills and thus were confident that they could enter the courses that would lead to the professions they aspired to enter, such as doctors and engineers. Investment in English by learning in an EM school thus appeared to be viewed by EM students as an investment in their future possible selves and their imagined future selves as medicine or engineering students in higher education. Such differing opinions concerning EM and PM students’ proficiency in English, and the impact that such proficiency would have on their higher education and career choices, emerged clearly in the data (see students’ accounts given in Chapter 4). PM students’ awareness of their lack of ability to exercise agency to achieve certain goals, therefore, could have an impact on their identity formation.

Moreover, PM school students revealed significant levels of anxiety about the challenges they may face in their daily lives in colleges and universities because of the dominant use of English, in students’ daily communication. Consequently, they may become quiet and be identified as introverted or shy, as was the case for some of the immigrant participants in Norton’s (1995) study. PM students appeared to feel that they lacked the power or agency to enter a community of practice, in this case, college or university, which comprised mainly and was dominated by English speaking EM school students. PM school students, therefore, did not recognise English as part of their linguistic identities and they identified themselves most closely with Punjabi, the language in which they learned at school.

7.3.1.2. The hegemony of English in employment in Punjab

A reason given by all the participants, including the headteachers and teachers, for the significance of high school students learning in English, was to gain access to good employment in the future. This was the case whether the students had high aspirations for future possible selves, for example, becoming a doctor or an engineer, or they simply believed that English would
provide them with good occupational opportunities. The market returns on investment in English, which works as linguistic, cultural and symbolic capital to access good employment in India, is perceived to be higher and thus increases EM school students’ competitive power in the employment market place. EM students, therefore, imagined their future identities as skilful professionals, confidently perceiving their future possible selves as successful doctors and engineers. In contrast, because of their lack of investment in English, the PM students were anxious about the possibility of achieving their desired future selves in employment.

One possible reason for such feelings is that English has become a corporate language in India and, because of the privatisation of many work departments, English is the most sought-after language for most occupations (Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2006). It is this environment of guaranteed future employment for those learning in EM schools that appeared to create marked differences between the self-confidence levels of students learning in EM or PM schools in relation to their future identities.

Furthermore, occupational identity has been considered a core element, along with other components, contributing to the development of the general identity of an individual (Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997). A person’s occupation in Punjab is not only a source of income; it appears to have become a mechanism for social integration and a means of expressing one’s identity, in which the use of language plays an essential role. Thus, the policies which afforded English a dominant position by unequally distributing English in government and private schools, appeared to make PM students feel unworthy in comparison to EM school students. The hegemony that English enjoys vis-à-vis Punjabi further extends to diminishing the use of Punjabi in higher education and workplaces in Punjab. Hence, the unequal accumulation of linguistic capital has implications for students’ wider social participation and their social identity formation.
7.3.2. Social significance of learning in English and students’ identity formation

As discussed above, most of the participants from all three cohorts emphasised the educational and occupational benefits of learning in an EM school. However, they specifically focussed on the social advantages in relation to their identity formation, which emerged as another key finding. The participants from all three cohorts viewed English as the language of power which, in turn, gave English speakers a higher socio-economic status, both of which brought them more respect and a higher social status in Punjab. One possible reason why English was linked with powerful and well-off people could be because those who can afford to pay the fees for EM schools can send their children to learn in an EM school. Additionally, knowledge of English offers economic benefits in the form of well-paid employment. Consequently, skills in English in Punjab appeared to result in increased linguistic capital, which agentively increases economic and social capital of those who learn in EM schools. Investment in English was thus viewed as an investment in an individual’s social identity formation as a socially and economically empowered person. PM students are therefore in danger of being stuck in permanent poverty and identified as belonging to the poor section of Punjabi society.

Some of the student participants from both the EM and PM schools and the EM school headteacher referred to the lack of knowledge of English as a ‘social stigma’ for an individual in Punjab. Therefore, in Punjab, investment in English, and its accumulation as linguistic and symbolic capital that develops the social status of an individual, appeared to have an impact on students’ social well-being. The inequity associated with learning in English or Punjabi, which extends the proficiency of English to some but not others is indeed about establishing differences among students. This imbalance effectively reproduces social inequality in Punjab by advantaging EM school students at the expense of PM school students. The students in this study signalled such dissimilarities by using ‘we’ and ‘they’ to refer to the students from another group that is learning in the other language. In addition, to emphasise EM
school students’ higher social positioning, the PM school student participants, when referring to EM students in their interviews, used words such as ‘respectable’ ‘role model’ etc. Alternatively, students learning in the PM school were described by some of the EM students as ‘illiterate’ and ‘uncivilized’. This is how students from both the EM and PM school were comparing self with others. These comparisons were an example of measuring their level of competence in English and evaluating their social recognition and identities. Thus, the students learning in EM schools appeared to hold a prestigious social status and they were perceived by PM students as such. Conversely, PM school students have conferred upon them an inferior social status.

Investment in English, which results in increased linguistic capital, therefore, leads to realisation of students’ possible selves, social status and more respect. The proficiency of English among some (EM students) walls out or excludes another group (PM students) by othering them. The power relations determined by learning in English or Punjabi languages each of which holds a different social status in Punjab, develop social distance between the students. It makes PM school students feel completely othered or alienated in a group of English-speaking people in their society. The PM school students’ accounts given in different sections in Chapter 5 clearly illustrate their feelings of alienation when they come across students/people speaking in English. These feelings among them were the result of either negative or positive experiences in Punjabi society. They clearly stated that the social ideologies attributing value to English as a powerful language in Punjabi society creates an imbalance of linguistic power.

Additionally, the beliefs that English is the language which aids in socio-economic development of a person extend further inequalities in students’ access to social power and stigmatise the PM students. This is how PM school students are sometimes excluded and othered by people/students who can speak English in Punjab. The beliefs that PM students hold about their linguistic capabilities or limitations may consolidate their views about
themselves and their identity formation when they reflect on their future possible selves and socio-economic status in society.

Social discrimination based on students’ learning in a Punjabi medium school further appeared to reduce the PM students’ confidence while speaking in English to EM school students. Lack of confidence among PM school students in communicating with a group of English-speaking people was one of the most prevalent themes from all four data sets (student focus groups, individual interviews with the headteachers, teachers and students).

7.3.3. Further insights from the study

7.3.3.1. English provides students with confidence:

While making comparisons between EM and PM school students, most of the participants from all three cohorts, including PM school students, expressed the view that the PM school students’ lack of investment in English leads to the lack of confidence among them. This lack of self-confidence in general in their daily lives, especially where English is required was believed to have an impact on students’ personal development, linguistic proficiency and subsequent professional and social lives, all of which affect their identity formation. It appeared from the data that self-confidence in students was not viewed as their personality trait as has been discussed in the literature in psychology (Clement et al., 2006; Schwartz et al., 2009). However, the feeling of lack of confidence among students was believed to be socially constructed in the inequality of power relations between EM and PM school students, based on their level of investment in English. All such feelings among students appeared to be caused by the prevailing societal ideologies that English is the language of power and status which extends EM school students with cultural, social, economic and symbolic capital and thus instils in them a sense of empowerment.

This discrepancy among students appeared to create anxiety amongst PM students. For example, one of the PM school students (Sunny) stated how people in society underestimate their capabilities and judge them from the
language in which they were learning in their school and question their competence in English. This was of great concern and appeared to have a negative effect on students’ self-confidence. Despite feeling confident in their abilities in general such unfavourable comparisons could perhaps decrease their self-confidence which can have serious implications for their future lives and their identity formation. It is likely that people’s judgemental attitude impacts students’ self-confidence and eventually their social identity.

7.3.3.2. English speaking creates a good impression

Many participants from all three cohorts felt that speaking in English can create a good impression in general and particularly among those who are in positions of power, such as at job interviewers and with employers in Punjab. Most of the EM school student participants in the current study were found to be confident that they would secure good employment because of the positive impression that their English language speaking skills would create in interviews. However, the PM school student participants expressed negative feelings, such as hesitation and anxiety about attending job interviews in the future, because of their lack of competence in English, which in turn may affect their identity formation.

The terms ‘impress’ and ‘impression’ were frequently used by the participants in this study to suggest that knowledge of and skills in English are essential for having an impact on others in Punjabi society. For example, in one of her accounts in Section 5.2.2., Anjali, an EM school teacher, stated that to attract the attention of others and to create a good impression most Punjabi people, especially those who had their learning in English or who have some knowledge of English, prefer to speak English (some use English in codeswitched form) at social gatherings such as school functions. The higher status that English enjoys because of its hegemony in higher education and employment together with social advantages attached to English in Punjab, which have been discussed as key findings in earlier paragraphs, could possibly be a reason why the participants believed English speaking creates a good impression.
Moreover, as discussed in the literature, the language which is associated with political, economic and social domination, is given a dominant status (Shannon, 1995). Like many other developing countries, proficiency in English in India is discursively linked to global competence and modernisation. The hegemony, or in Phillipson’s (1992) words, the imperialism of English which is supported by government policies in India, however, creates difficult living conditions for those who do not get the opportunity to learn in English and this can, therefore, have a negative impact on their identity formation. This linguistic imperialism highlights tensions on the respective social standing of both the English and Punjabi language, which may provide EM students with a more sophisticated position in society and contribute to their positive identity formation. Hence, learning in English in India has become a significant feature in shaping students’ – both those learning in English and Punjabi – identities.

Through the discriminatory practice of teaching English as a foreign language in PM schools while English is the MOI, in EM schools, the government is not only restricting PM students’ access to valuable personal, educational, social and career opportunities but also increasing their vulnerability. Moreover, EM school students usually belong to either the middle or upper class i.e. rich families. Their investment in English, which provides them with better opportunities, again reproduces power structures and imbalances in society by creating social structures that hinder PM school students exercising agency and widen the gap between EM and PM students. Hence, the government and the policymakers in India must consider the negative consequences of the unevenness in the delivery of English in schools in Punjab and in other states like Punjab. They must provide equitable access to highly valued English language education so that students have an equal opportunity to participate more widely in a local and global context.

These two additional findings from the research may not be as significant as the key findings which highlight English as social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital which students require to achieve their desired possible selves and thus for their identity formation. However, it cannot be denied that
these general insights may have a great impact on students’ identity formation especially when English is considered to be one of the powerful and influential languages in Punjabi society. These additional findings, which a reader could argue are very common or general insights, run as a common thread across the key findings of this study therefore could not be ignored in a qualitative study the aim of which is to co-construct knowledge by adopting a holistic approach to investigating students’ experiences with a particular focus on their everyday lives in relation to the language in which they were learning in school and their identity formation.

### 7.4. How significant is EMI in India?

Before discussing the implications of EMI and making any recommendations about EMI policy in India, it is essential to reflect on how compelling the case for EMI is in India. Owing to linguistic diversity in India, English has been widely accepted as a ‘neutral language of unity amid the apparent chaos of the multilingual world’ (Mohanty, 2017, p. 263). Indeed, English in India is viewed as a liberator from castes and race; it is considered as an unbiased language in India, whilst many local languages are associated with different cultures and religions. For example, many languages in India have been inherited from Sanskrit, the language of Brahmins (caste) and they are thus related to Brahmins. Jalal (2000) has highlighted that languages spoken in India form the basis of people’s religious identities. For example, in the case of the state of Punjab in India, Punjabi is linked to Sikhs; Hindi to Hindus; and Urdu to Muslims (Jalal 2000, p. 124). Significantly, none of the participants of the current study described English as a post-colonial language which could have a negative impact on students’ personal or national identity. English in India is used prestigiously, and it is not seen to bring any cultural devaluation (Kachru, 1986). The significance of English in Indian education also has to be seen in light of the fact that completely reverting to local languages in the education system – the practice attempted by some countries– is not feasible for multilingual India.
EMI in Punjab appeared to be the most sought-after because of the economic and social upward mobility associated with it. From the participants’ interview accounts, it became evident that English provides students with symbolic power and was viewed as a linguistic, cultural and social capital which leads students towards their desired future possible selves. In addition, as discussed earlier in the findings’ chapters, everything from the entrance exams, delivery of the curriculum, MOI and communication practice in higher education courses in medicine and technology is carried out in English. English in Punjab appeared to be viewed as a qualification which can be agentively used by the students to access opportunities. English, therefore, is placed at the top of the hierarchy of languages and is viewed as a means to socio-economic progress and so is EMI. Thus, the language ideologies associated with the supremacy of English over Punjabi, the regional language, is the evidence of how significant EMI is in Punjab, in India.

As discussed above, the dominant use of English for educational, occupational and socio-economic purposes in Punjab legitimises its power. The data from this study appear to support Crystal’s (2005) views about the significance of English as a global language which is thought to be required by all to gain upward mobility in social and economic life. However, a major problem is that English, the global language, works by default as linguistic capital and has taken over space previously occupied by regional languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The unequal distribution of English in schools in Punjab thus leads to broader concerns about equality, power and, ultimately, students’ identity formation in Punjab. EMI in India is an indicator of division and is responsible for positioning people differently, which perpetuates social inequality in Punjab and appears to have an impact on students’ identity formation. Consequently, the introduction of EMI into government schools is seen by some as discriminatory, and has therefore been condemned by various contemporary educators in Punjab.
7.4.1. Protesting against the dominant use of English and EMI in Punjab

To combat the risk of Punjabi being overpowered by the English, a Punjabi language convention was recently held in Patiala, a city in Punjab, at which well-known Punjabi scholars protested the introduction of EMI in government schools in Punjab23. They argued that the promotion of Punjabi in education would help to combat the adverse effects of the spread of English, such as linguistic imperialism and linguistic genocide. At this convention, Punjabi scholars put forward five resolutions to the Punjab government to promote Punjabi language usage in the state of Punjab which were reported in the media as follows:

The first resolution states that putting education in the Concurrent List of the Constitution (meaning that both the Centre and the state can make laws for it), has weakened the states’ control over education. This has damaged Indian federalism, the education system and has also eroded the mutually-agreed concept of unity in diversity, and so they propose that education to be made a state subject in the constitution.

The second resolution was to impart school education through mother tongues.

The third resolution said that the mother tongue needed to be the basis for tests, education and functionality in states in the country.

The fourth resolution demanded that Punjabi needed to be kept at the top in all signboards in Punjab.

The fifth resolution condemned the filing of police cases against lovers of Punjabi and demanded an immediate withdrawal of these cases. It

23 The Punjab government has planned to introduce EMI in government schools in Punjab.
also demanded that people showing disrespect to the Punjabi language needed to be made accountable.

The members of the convention stated that this (resolutions) is essential to fulfil the economic, cultural, emotional and political aspirations of the Punjabi population.

(Hindustan Times, 2017)

There have also been campaigns launched against the predicted eradication of the heritage language Punjabi; for instance, in situations where private schools are promoting English by asking students to communicate in English in school and where English is written first on public signboards. As part of a protest against the marginalisation of heritage language – Punjabi – one of the protesters and the leader of an organisation named the Malwa Youth Federation, Lakhbir Singh LakhaSidhana, was arrested for painting over the signboards on which English was written above Punjabi. This arrest was criticised by many people in Punjab, and the chief minister of Punjab was condemned for not ensuring the primacy of Punjabi language (Singh, 2017). This is an example of English linguistic imperialism in Punjab, where, because the elites occupy influential political positions, such campaigns and resolutions demonstrating a social gesture of resistance to the hegemony of English do not have many practical outcomes.

However, it is important to note that EMI policy in India is not just a top-down approach, i.e. a policy made by the administrators. There is also bottom-up pressure from parents as well as students. A clear example of this is an incident which involved parents in Goa blocking roads and buses to protest against the government for not introducing EMI in government schools (NDTV, 2015). The results of previous research concur with the findings of the current study that students favour EMI and that their parents want them to learn in EM schools because of its occupational and utilitarian purposes (Bhattacharya, 2016; Ramanathan, 2005a; Singh, 2017).
In fact, students’ proficiency in English is essential to provide them with literacy skills that will be useful for them to use nationally and internationally. However, the societal ideologies and attitudes towards the position of English as a language of power and dominance in the economic and social lives of people in Punjab consolidate Philipson’s (2017) idea that English does not serve all equally well. In the context of Punjab, the uneven development of two languages – English and Punjabi – often at the expense of one over the other, has divided students into two groups: one distancing themselves from English, the language that can provide wider life opportunities, and the other distancing themselves from their heritage language, thus leading the two groups to develop different identities from each other. To counter this, I believe affirmative action should be taken to increase the use of Punjabi in education, as well as in wider fields: socially and politically. Such measures will then change and improve peoples’ general attitude towards Punjabi and could help in making Punjabi attractive as a school subject and a MOI.

To combat the linguistic discrepancies between the students learning in different languages and to overcome the social injustice that this can cause, government policies to encourage the equal use of Punjabi, the heritage language, and English, the global language that operates as linguistic capital in Punjab, need to be developed. So, English must grow together with Punjabi but not at its cost. In multilingual societies like India, an egalitarian language perspective needs to be employed to prevent domination of one language over the other. The policymakers should consider the implications of different languages as MOI in schools and their possible impact on students’ development overall, especially on their identity formation. According to (Spolsky, 2018b), three interrelated components: ‘language practice (what people actually do), language beliefs and ideology, and language management’ need to be reconsidered to modify the dominant beliefs and practices in any country’s language policies (p. 87). It cannot be denied that the policy of introducing EMI in some (private) schools, which serve the elites, but not in all schools in India, has not been considered properly. It is unlikely
in the present situation in India that a full-scale open review of the school education policy and its implementation will be conducted. This is desirable, however.

Based on the current study findings, some policy and practice implications, which could help to improve the effectiveness of EMI in relation to the students’ identity formation in Punjab, are given in the following section.

7.5. Policy and practice implications of the study

7.5.1. Implications for policymakers:

The main aim of the Government of India’s educational policies has long been to increase the number of students in formal education and to fill in the gaps related to gender and caste (Kochar, 2008), thus providing education to all. To some extent, the Indian government has succeeded in attaining this objective, by reducing the gender gap and raising the number of students enrolled in schools. However, research in the field of EMI in India indicates that students are not getting an equal school education when it comes to the languages used to teach in schools (see Bhattacharya, 2013; Dash & Senapati, 2014; Ladousa, 2016). Despite the constitutional right to education for all, in practice, students from regional language medium schools generally lack opportunities to access higher education because of their limited English. The policymakers should note that the ultimate objective of educational policies is not only the enrolment of students in schools but also ensuring them better opportunities in life. Some of the suggestions discussing the significance of equal investment in English and Punjabi, which might prevent the challenges faced by the students learning in EM and PM schools with regard to their identity formation, are given in the following paragraphs.

7.5.1.1. Policy for equal investment in both English and Punjabi in schools

The policymakers’ decision to approve the use of different languages as the MOI in schools in every state in India is one of the main contributors to differences in the post-school opportunities open to students learning in different type of schools. Hence, the introduction of EMI in some schools but
not in all needs to be questioned and how it may affect students’ identity formation on the whole needs to be problematized. The current educational and linguistic policy in India, which introduces English as a MOI in some schools, but not all, suggests that there is a ‘hidden curriculum’\(^2\) (Jackson, 1968) that perpetuates linguistic inequality and socio-economic differences between students learning in different types of schools. This language-related hidden curriculum in the education system fosters linguistic discrimination between groups of students while appearing to be open and fair for all. Therefore, the government should consider who is gaining and who is losing from the current language in education policy in India. They need to bring balance in the use of these languages in education. Considering English as one of the most significant languages for accessing better opportunities in India, as well as abroad, the policymakers should attempt to provide equal access to English for all. Although English, as a declared lingua franca, is required internationally, policymakers should also consider how far English is used in local areas which could be served by the heritage language. Along with this, other advantages and disadvantages of using one or other language, together with the high fees for EMI, should be investigated.

The idea of introducing EMI in private schools was, for example, a timely decision in response to globalisation. However, the fact of its implementation only in private schools and not all schools seems to be one of the main reasons of social inequality in India and is therefore another matter of concern that policymakers should consider. English in the Indian context is regarded as a language that represents modernity, development and technology, whilst local languages are seen as ‘instruments that fulfil emotional needs’ (Annamalai, 

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\(^2\) Hidden curriculum refers to the unintended and unwritten lessons such as values and perspectives that students learn in school along with the course and lessons in the formal school curriculum. Providing English medium of instruction in some schools, but not all, is an example of a hidden curriculum. Instruction in English in EM schools is not only preparing students to achieve their educational goals, but since English is the most sought-after language in Punjab, it is also preparing them for better social and professional lives in the future.
2004, p. 190). Similar feelings were expressed by the participants in this current study when they identified Punjabi as a language in which they can talk to their parents and grandparents who cannot speak English. The use of different languages in learning also further enhances socio-economic inequality as EMI seems to promote and benefit the students from well-off families by providing them with access to English. Most students from the lower socio-economic class, most of whom are from rural areas, are marginalised (Ladousa, 2016; Sandhu, 2014b). Thus, the negative impact of promoting English on the basis of people’s socio-economic conditions and their cultural language should be noted.

The government of Punjab is adopting an initiative to introduce EMI in 400 schools in Punjab (Singh, 2017). However, many schools will still be using Punjabi as a MOI. I believe that this proposal will not help much in eliminating the differences between the students and indeed it may divide further the PM students into two groups: those who can and those who cannot access the EMI schools. I would like to propose some realistic suggestions to address the dissatisfaction caused by a lack of uniformity and unanimity in the language used as a MOI that was identified by students in this study. These students were fully aware of the growth and popularity of EMI in India and that the prestige attached to English language proficiency is what makes it more likely to facilitate access to good employment. I would suggest that by encouraging the use of Punjabi in government and private employment sectors in Punjab, and thus by making sure that Punjabi is not socially insignificant, the best motivational environment for students learning in PM schools can be created. This change would further help in transforming PM students’ perceptions of themselves and they may then consider themselves as equal if not superior to EM students. Such practical measures should be taken to raise awareness of the significance of heritage languages and thus to make them attractive to future generations.

Moreover, it is a big jump from PM instruction in school to EMI in university, so better language provision should be made in colleges and universities for PM
students who may find themselves unprepared to learn in English. Therefore, policymakers should attempt to provide some feasible solutions through the policies they make. An example of this may be the introduction of bilingual education in which students’ mother tongue can be used as a MOI in the early years of schooling, and instruction in English in elementary school, for example, from sixth grade onwards in all schools. Language education policy in South Africa is an interesting example to consider. South Africa is promoting new educational and language policies to help much of the population with indigenous languages, which were previously suppressed.

Given the amount of exposure to English that EMI provides some students with, it is not surprising that there are differences between the students from EM and PM schools when they consider the value given to the language in which they are learning. For example, all science-related subjects – physics, chemistry, biology, medicine and engineering – that lead to valuable future careers, are taught in English at university level. Moreover, English is considered as a ‘skill’, ‘key’, ‘ladder’ and ‘passport’ for upward mobility and this can also influence students’ thinking when they consider their future possible selves. If all the students start out in a similar linguistic environment, there will be less difference in their views of themselves and they may all identify as equal.

7.5.1.2. Policies regarding the use of language in an educational context

In his discussion about current language policies in post-colonial contexts like Hongkong, Malaysia and India, Pennycook (1995) suggests that policymakers need to investigate carefully whether all pupils’ interests are being served by the language policies they make. It is insufficient to simply give weight to one language over another; instead, the broader social-political, educational and economic structures of the context must be considered. The entrance tests to access good courses and occupations should be designed considering all students’ language for learning, rather than just students who possess the linguistic capital of English, which is currently the situation in India. In the entrance exams to access higher education and employment, PM students are
assessed using the same criteria as EM students, which creates a feeling of under-achievement among PM students who are inadequately supported in learning English. This has clear implications for PM students in the process of their identity formation.

Moreover, the policymakers, and college and university administrators, should ensure that there is a compulsory language-related foundation course. This would provide students from regional language medium schools with the support required to attain adequate English language proficiency to learn academic content in higher education. As a result, they will not end up dropping out of their higher education studies and they will ultimately be indistinguishable from their peers who had their school education in English. This would be a means of facilitating equal educational opportunities and, it is hoped, would ensure social justice by supporting academically able students to overcome the complexities of their identity formation based on their learning in English and Punjabi.

Furthermore, the board of education should come together with the educators and prepare a curriculum to suit students’ needs and change their focus from teaching English to pass examinations, to teaching English as a language to aid students’ future careers and employability. This may unburden the students and bring them all to an equal level. The research shows that many teachers are aware of the importance of English communication skills; however, the reality of the classroom teaching is more focussed on completing the syllabus and this blocks teachers from implementing their ideas (Singh & Sarkar, 2015). Experiments could be done by adopting different syllabi and assessment criteria in examinations for students learning in different languages. This, however, might lead to discrimination against some.

The students should not simply be taught English to pass examinations, but to understand, speak, read and write English for use, if they need it, in their future careers. In this way, they could also be encouraged to use their native language, which can also have many advantages and thus can make them take pride in their language. Policymakers should understand that the
promotion of regional language instead of a dominant language, or the development of a dominant language like English at the expense of Punjabi, can have both a negative and positive impact on students’ identity formation. So, the policymakers should become more aware of what possibilities they are denying when encouraging one language over the other.

7.6.2. Implications for teachers
As a result of the findings from my research, I intend to propose some pedagogical suggestions specifically for language teachers teaching English in PM schools. It was noted in this study, that PM school students attributed their lack of knowledge of English to various factors, one of which was the teacher-dominated teaching of English as a foreign language in school which provides limited opportunities to students to speak in English in the classroom. This, however, contradicts the PM school teachers’ accounts in which they reported that they ask students to communicate in English in the classroom but that students remain quiet. PM students, on the other hand, felt that their hesitation and lack of competence in English caused them anxiety, which resulted in them remaining quiet in the classroom and hinders their learning. This indicates that, despite their desire to speak in English, students experience emotional struggles in the English language classroom in the PM school.

Moreover, both PM and EM students in this study explicitly stated that the English taught in their school is not of much use for them in their daily lives. This is why many PM school students have joined and expressed their interest in joining English speaking centres to learn English for communicative purposes. A good proportion of students take private tuitions in English in India (Kingdon, 1996). Data from the PM school teachers and PM school students in the current study also indicate that students are taught English for only 45 minutes a day and that is during the English language class which they think is very little time to learn English. However, it is not only the exposure to English in terms of time allocated which matters; high-quality language teaching in teaching English in all the government and private schools is what
could make a difference especially in bringing equality in English language competence amongst students.

Many students and English language teachers, particularly from the PM school, blame the examination-based system of Indian education in which the focus remains on teaching English to students to pass the examination. Therefore, covering the syllabus seems to leave teachers with no time to focus on students’ proficiency in English. The pressure from the school administrators to teach students in English leave teachers a little room to make any changes in language teaching even at the most basic level. Students, on the other hand, do not find it very easy to learn the content in English which is not their mother tongue. Students, therefore, want their teachers to explain the content in their mother tongue. Teachers in such a situation experience a top-down (from management) and bottom-up (from students) pressure which leaves them with tensions between policy and practice. Quality language teaching, therefore, seems to be a major challenge for English language teachers to help them to fulfil the EMI policy objective which is to teach English to all. It is commonly believed that the students’ proficiency in English is the job of English language teachers. Given the important role of English in Indian education, this responsibility appears to be an extra burden for English language teachers who also have to focus on covering the syllabus for the examination.

Furthermore, English is considered as the language of power owing to the commodification of English across the globe which renders English as the most aspired-to language. EMI, therefore, is in great demand by the parents in developing countries like India. This could also be one of the reasons why teachers often are pressurised from school management to use English in the classrooms, which is believed to be important to enhance students’ English language competence.

In her ethnographic study conducted in India based on classroom observations and interviews with teachers, Bhattacharya (2013) found a lack of sufficient
English language skills among teachers and claimed that forcing them to use strategies such as grammar-translation resulted in many critical issues. For example, in Bhattacharya’s (2013) study teachers ‘translated and paraphrased texts from English into Hindi without pointing out which syntactic and lexical items were being introduced or excluded in the translation process [which] affected students’ ability to identify the meaning of individual words’ (p.173). The main difficulty seems to be the use of grammar-translation in English language teaching in education in many of the English as Second Language contexts. In grammar-translation, reading and writing are the main focus and listening and speaking are not emphasised which may impact negatively on students’ proficiency in speaking in English.

According to Bhattacharya (2013), teachers in India acquired the English language through rote memorization and translation methods and they applied the same in their teaching. This approach is more focussed on memorizing than comprehension and alienates students from the language (Bhattacharya, 2013). Students are expected to memorise large chunks of content and to reproduce that in the exams. This teaching practice creates little or no opportunities for students to become creative thinkers and learners. Researchers argue that to use English for communicative purposes skills in English speaking and listening are required more than grammar and reading comprehension (Park, 2011b).

The findings of the current study show that practices and factors like: teacher dominated teaching of English; students’ hesitation to speak English; fewer communicative activities; teachers’ lack of training; the use of grammar translation method and examination-based assessment hinder the quality of English language teaching and learning in classrooms. Various factors noted in the literature, including a lack of confidence to speak English (Islam, 2013; Mlay, 2010); rote memorisation to pass the examination (Dutta & Bala, 2012; Kannan, 2009); fear of being disrespected (Mlay, 2010; Tamim, 2014); and being viewed as inferior in the classroom (Gill, 2017; Rahman, 2006), could be the reason for the students’ lack of communication in English in PM schools.
Hence, students’ lack of agentive power in the form of knowledge of English seems to affect their investment in English language learning and, in turn, may have an impact on their identity formation. The conventional teaching method of one-way communication between teachers and students in which the focus is on rote learning in preparation for written examinations is a major issue. A challenge for English language teachers is to develop students’ English language skills and cover the syllabus on time. To overcome this, teachers should focus on meaning rather than grammar. Language cannot be taught effectively by using traditional methods such as using textbooks and employing grammar-translation rules. This can be achieved by creating opportunities for students through collaborative learning tasks. There is an immediate need to bring innovation to teaching methods. Below are some suggestions about pedagogy which could help the English language teachers overcome the challenges of teaching English language to their students.

To help PM school students to overcome their hesitation to speak English, rather than assuming that PM school students hesitate to speak in English, the teachers should encourage them to speak in English. For this, as suggested by Norton, they (teachers) should ask themselves: ‘To what extent is the learner invested in the language and literacy practices of my classroom?’ (Norton, 2016, p.476). The poststructuralist concept of investment used in my research may draw the teachers’ attention towards the level of investment in language learning that students are making in their school and may influence their consideration of how to balance students’ investment in different languages. Moreover, English teachers should focus on the reasons behind the students’ hesitation to speak in English. This could probably be due to a lack of knowledge of recent or emerging pedagogic approaches (for example, use of collaborative learning, use of translanguaging and codeswitching) or teachers’ pedagogical understandings.

The goal of language teaching is to develop students’ communicative competence and to equip them with the ability to use the language for their communication, and collaborative learning develops learner’s communicative
competence (Nguyen et al., 2014). Collaborative learning is a student-centred approach in which collaborative activities like pair work or group work are used and students get an opportunity to share their ideas, information and experience; and get to discuss and debate with each other (Gokhale, 1995). Using such an approach reduces teacher’s talk or teacher dominance and enhances students’ critical thinking (Jacobs & Hall, 2002). Additionally, the use of audio-visual aids for language teaching is believed to help students learn a language effectively as it can help in pronunciation and conversational skills (Berry, 2013). Textbooks and chalkboards are dominant methods in English language classrooms in India (British Council, 2018). Teachers should, therefore, employ modern media such as audio and visual aids, computers and language laboratories.

Furthermore, pedagogical techniques such as codeswitching (the alternate use of two languages) and translanguaging (use of two or more languages) can improve teaching and learning English and, in turn, can increase students’ engagement in their learning. While using translanguaging techniques, the teacher can teach something in English and the pupils would respond to teacher’s questions in their mother tongue or it could be reversed when the pupils will read something in English and the teacher would explain in their mother tongue. Such practices may help in maximizing the teachers’ and the pupils’ linguistic resources, and translanguaging may prove to be effective pedagogical practice (Wei, 2018). Furthermore, as Wei (2018) claims, “translanguaging empowers both the learner and the teacher, transforms the power relations, and focuses the process of teaching and learning on making meaning, enhancing experience, and developing identity (p. 15)”. Considering the significance of English, the teachers could use such techniques in the classrooms to provide students with exposure to English, especially in PM schools where students do not get much time to learn in English. Those teachers, however, would have to be careful that they do not support the dominant ideology that English is the only language that can help in students’
upward mobility while checking that their students are not denied a basic knowledge of English which could help them to access good opportunities.

An important point that needs to be considered by policymakers and school administrators is that obliging English language teachers to focus mainly on students' English language competence and skills force them to stray away from exploring the strengths of bilingualism, translanguaging and codeswitching; the strategies in which students and teachers could use shared languages and enrich learning. An important point to consider is that teachers can adopt codeswitching and translanguaging techniques provided they have a thorough knowledge of such pedagogical methods. Teachers should not be blamed for their lack of training in teaching English which is a foreign language to most of the teachers in schools in India. Most of the teachers in India, as was the case in Bhattacharya’s study, are not professionally trained as English language teachers and are without proper training in the constructive or communicative task-based approaches. Teachers need to have sound understanding of language pedagogy for example techniques like translanguaging, codeswitching and communicative approaches to English learning. For this, a comprehensive training programme focussing on English language pedagogy for teachers to understand aspects like multilingualism and bilingualism needs to be developed. English language textbooks and English language teaching methodology needs to be redesigned focussing on a collaborative language teaching approach.

Additionally, CLIL, with its dual focus on language and content, offers some techniques to develop EM school students’ engagement and language competence (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Coyle, 2001, 2007). For example, teachers may create discourse together with students to co-construct knowledge. Increased interaction between the teachers and students may enhance students’ communicative skills. Teachers could work closely with institutions to develop projects with teachers and students to include CLIL techniques to enhance students’ engagement and communication in English, as has been proposed by Coyle (2001).
Moreover, considering the examination-oriented Indian education system the assessment of English language as a subject should not be based on testing of traditional grammar and memorized content in the name of communicative testing. The current assessment system is heavily focussed on written exams. There are no marks assigned for listening and speaking skills assessment. Therefore, the assessment system seems to be at odds with the aim to follow a communicative approach to language learning.

In addition to reforming the system of summative assessment, formative assessment techniques can be applied by teachers to assess students’ performance. These include oral questions and evaluation during pair work or group work. Teachers may give group tasks and after completion of the task students can be asked to present their work; they can be asked questions, or they can be involved in writing. In this way, teachers can assess their speaking, listening, writing and reading skills.

Garcia (2009) argues that good teachers do not blindly follow the recommended policies but draw on their own knowledge and consider the realities of the context in which they are teaching. However, the teachers’ opportunities to influence and respond creatively to any language policy depends largely on the amount of freedom they get at an institution level (Sutton and Levenson, 2001). In the Indian educational context, the pressure from school management to get good results leaves teachers with no freedom to make any pedagogical changes and they are required to follow the traditional English language teaching methods (Ramanathan, 1999). Teachers’ lack of voice; the absence of agency to make any changes to the prescribed language policy; and deficits in their training prevent them from using any of their own ideas regarding language pedagogies which may enhance students’ learning.

In short, despite the teachers desire to teach the English language to students there are a number of challenges which appear to from the top-down approach in Indian school education policy. For example, teachers are not completely
involved while making any reforms in the language in education policy. Additionally, the lack of application of policies like codeswitching and translanguaging in Indian education indicates that the policymakers have failed to reach the grassroots situation and to implement language education policy successfully. To introduce changes in the English language teaching pedagogy and assessment practices teacher training courses need to engage teachers meaningfully which in turn is likely to have an effect on their attitude and beliefs towards their practices in classrooms. The findings of the current study indicate that teachers could make some changes to their practice. However, what the future of language teaching in school education in India holds is uncertain, and much depends on government policies. Although, EMI policy requires all teachers to be responsible for students’ proficiency in English (La Prairie, 2014) the perceived lack of responsibility among teachers teaching subjects such as science, mathematics and social studies to develop the English language proficiency of students has been highlighted in the literature (see Sah and Li, 2018; La Prairie, 2014). The lack of training in the English language teaching among teachers in contexts like India further highlights negative outcomes of EMI which need critical attention on the part of policymakers who are involved in the planning of EMI (discussed in detail in Chapter 7).

In conclusion, a number of recommendations to improve the quality of English language teaching particularly in Government schools in India where English is taught only for a limited amount of time in a day are:

- There must be an increase in the time allocated for English teaching that would help in developing students’ skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- The assessment criteria need to be revised. They should involve the assessment of all the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- There needs to be an application of language teaching methods like collaborative learning, translanguaging and codeswitching.
Teachers’ professional development programs focussing on developing language teaching pedagogy need to be implemented.

Research shows that greater psychological well-being allows individuals to acquire multiple and confident role identities agentively (Stets & Burke, 2003). Teachers hold powerful and influential positions, and they may need to consider to what extent students’ investment in English can be productive in their language development and their identity formation. In this way, the teachers can create conditions for students to feel that they belong to multiple linguistic groups both inside and outside the school campus. This may provide students with opportunities to reconsider their identities and develop their interest in new areas through interacting with people from different groups, but without imposing fixed identities on them. Teachers can thereby help students to create multiple identities for themselves.

Any positive change in the language in education policy, however, cannot be achieved in the absence of societal support. Therefore, it is not enough to look at education managers; according to Spolsky, ‘the influence of managers at levels ranging from the family to international organizations’ must also be considered (Spolsky, 2018, p. 62). I hope a middle path can be found between people from all sectors of society – upper and lower socio-economic sectors – whereby everyone, including parents, has a say in what language their children learn in. In this way, discourses at the micro level can feed into understanding the importance of a particular language and how it can be initiated or amended through language in education policies.

7.6.4. Implications for students learning in different languages

The EM students in this study appeared to be very clear and confident about achieving their aspired-for possible selves. They were also found to be aware of the positive characteristics that are socially attributed to them, such as the general assumption that EM school students will be educationally and professionally successful. Conversely, there was enough evidence in the data which highlighted the negative results of not learning in an EM school. As expressed by most of the PM students, there was the psychological trauma
caused by feelings of inferiority, low social respect and lack of confidence (see Section 6.2.2.2). EMI in Punjab appears to only favour some students' (EM) linguistic and educational accomplishments, but the psychological trauma that other students (PM) face as a result of this inequality should also be considered. Linguistic changes that occur when students move from school to university can lead to difficulties with learning as well as in students' identity negotiations as the learners come from two different school contexts.

There is a real danger that students learning in different languages will ultimately be classified into two groups. Different terms have been used in the literature to refer to these language-based differences, such as self-other (Hamid & Jahan, 2015; McKay & Wong, 1996; Pennycook, 1999a) centre-periphery (Canagarajah, 1999b; Ladousa, 2016). Knowledge of English in the context of Punjab seems to work as identity capital that provides EM students with a different but superior identity. The difference in the level of investment in English in the different school contexts of EM and PM schools, appeared to influence the students' perceptions of their identity capital and thus their identity formation.

Many students said they felt that the examination-based education system, in which teachers mainly focus on completing the syllabus, is one of the perceived obstacles to gaining good communication skills in India. In practice, in Punjab, the focus is on the academic success of the students enrolled in school. From the results of this study, it appears that students' social and emotional development is overlooked. Parents also want their children to attain opportunities that can provide them with their best possible future careers. Students, therefore, work hard in school to please their teachers and make

25 Identity capital refers to the sources that people use to define themselves and others in different contexts (Schwartz & Cote, 2002).
their parents proud. During the interviews with students, it emerged that they wanted to feel competent in English so they could avoid the sense of humiliation that incompetence would cause. With such feelings, students cannot develop productive minds and positive identities. Students learning in PM schools, thus become less motivated because of the lack of importance given to Punjabi in their future careers, while the students learning in English may position themselves as superior to their counterparts because of the linguistic capital that English carries. Such feelings may have far-reaching consequences for students’ identity formation.

In the market-oriented Indian education structure, English appeared to work as a commodity and private schools providing instruction in English seem to generate the products that are most in demand, for example, doctors and engineers. Students’ success is thus measured by their competence in English. Since the lack of competence in English may impact on their access to employment in the future, this unequal distribution of languages in education leads to social injustice and inequality in a society in which only a privileged few can access opportunities.

High school students are at the adolescent stage of life and are developing their identities through the lens of social identity, i.e. how they are viewed in the social world. Parental pressure, together with the popularity of EMI due to its links with upward mobility and better life chances in India, has naturally pushed the population towards English. Therefore, the negative attitudes of parents, employers and people in society towards learning in Punjabi need to be changed. Since attitudinal change towards English and Punjabi is not possible overnight, encouraging the use of Punjabi is a small step that can be taken towards altering the peoples’ outlook towards learning in these languages.

I am not in favour of either completely promoting or removing EMI; the advantages of English as the lingua franca of globalisation for international trade and technology need to be considered but so too do the detrimental effects of the spread of English for local languages. The language shift from
Punjabi to English in higher education is, for example, an extra burden for PM school students. Consequently, I believe in encouraging linguistic democracy and raising awareness of how the unequal distribution of access to English can have an impact on people’s ideologies and hence on students’ identity formation.

From the findings of this study, it appeared that English has been legitimised as the language of power and domination in the Indian context. Despite the suggestions made by renowned linguists like Cummins (2001) about the usefulness of the mother tongue, the trend of its application seems to be decreasing in the educational context of Punjab. One of the reasons for this could be that in recent years English, as a global language, has spread across India and it is in high demand not only in medical and engineering fields but also in general occupations. For example, many international companies are recruiting Indian labour for worldwide customer services in areas such as call centres, health insurance firms, preparing tax returns, handling telephone calls, airline services and much more (Cowie, 2007). Additionally, English is mandatory for study abroad, which most of the EM students aspired to. English, therefore, seems to enjoy mass appeal in India.

However, the increasing demand for EMI in India reflects the colonialist belief that English is the only language that can serve the purpose of development. The belief, which prevails internationally that English is the language of science and is the only language that can serve such purposes, damages the linguistic human rights of people speaking other languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). This outlook towards the spread of English has been regarded as a ‘myth’ (Phillipson, 2017) and also has been labelled as a ‘conspiracy’ to actively impose English (Spolsky, 2009).

With the increasing demand for English, the long-term impact on the position of the Punjabi language is in question. The common belief that English is a superior language, coupled with the belief that knowledge of English leads to better opportunities in academic and occupational contexts, allows EM students to be identified as those with valuable linguistic and symbolic capital.
In such ideologies, the construction of self and others occurs in relation to learning in English or Punjabi. It is important that we do not exaggerate the position of English and undervalue the significance of regional languages.

It requires a major battle against such beliefs and practices to bring about any change. Language in education policy needs to be tailored and shaped to suit the students’ situation and meet their needs in the current socio-economic Indian context. Indian government reports suggest that most of the students in government schools are from socio-economically poor families (Government of India, 2008). In present-day Punjab, access to the best education is available only to a small elite population who have enough wealth. Therefore, poor people may not reap the benefits of education in English, which is considered superior. The government, therefore, seems to offer the least help to those who are least able to help themselves. These matters, however, are not free from political influence. National and state government have a shared responsibility to understand and identify the problems faced by students and to provide students with equal access to both languages.

From the research implications given above, it is hoped that all the stakeholders could work collectively and may succeed in destabilizing the rigid identity categories which are usually socially constructed and imposed on students. Consequently, the students may develop their fluid and multiple identities challenging the stereotyped student identification processes that prevail in Punjab.

7.6. Limitations

In total, 30 people were involved in the study, including 24 students, four English language teachers and two headteachers from the two schools. While small in number, the schools and the participants selected for this study were purposively chosen to provide a representative sample of two contrasting school contexts, where two different languages – English and Punjabi – are used for instruction. The purposive sampling approach used in this study allowed me to access participants whose knowledge would provide me with an
in-depth understanding of, and insights into, the experiences and views of students learning and teachers teaching in both an EM and a PM school. As noted earlier on (p. 177) no claims can be made that the findings from this study are generalizable to the wider population. However, the findings have provided interesting and important insights into the impact of the language of instruction on the student participants’ identity formation which may be of interest to both future researchers and practitioners working in similar and different contexts in other states throughout India.

To maintain a balance, I chose only schools that are affiliated with the educational boards in India. There is also another category of schools: non-affiliated and so-called English medium schools that do not charge very high fees. I did not gather data from this type of school because some of these schools provide instruction both in English and Punjabi, and some use Hindi as the MOI. It is likely that had data from such schools, which fall in between the two types of school – elite and non-elite – been collected, this study might have generated different results. In some respects, this can also be considered a strength of this study. I limited the participants to the two types of schools, which are distinct from one another in terms of the language used for learning in school, which allowed me to draw comparisons between the students learning in these two schools. In this way, the results of this study are likely to be similar should the research be replicated in similar types of schools: EM and regional language medium, in the Indian context.

Moreover, this research had to be completed in a limited amount of time; therefore, it mainly focussed on the high school students’ perceptions of the language used as a MOI and its impact on students’ identity formation. Because of this time limit, I could only contact headteachers and teachers, and I was unable to involve many other significant stakeholders such as parents, who ultimately decide the type of school they want their children to learn in. Parents in India generally prefer to send their children to EM private schools, perceiving these schools to be superior to government schools in terms of the quality of education and the level of English teaching their children would
receive (Harma, 2009). It is important to explore parents’ perceptions about the significance of the language chosen as the MOI because they are the ones who financially invest and ultimately make the choice to send their children to EM private schools or PM government schools.

Furthermore, teachers and other stakeholders, such as parents, are heavily involved in the students’ teaching and learning and it can be argued that these stakeholders have a better knowledge of the students’ feelings about their language of learning in relation to their identity formation. The policymakers, such as the education managers and other people in promoted and influential positions in the education field, who do not have direct contact with the teachers and students, cannot do justice in making educational policies that have a direct impact on students’ learning and their identity formation. Analysis of how far the teachers and other stakeholders are involved in constructing the school language education policies in India would have helped in better understanding: how the language in education policy in India is constructed; whether its influence on students’ overall development is taken into account; and whether educators, such as teachers in schools, are contacted by the policymakers. The answers to all such questions could have helped me to gain a fuller view of the development of language in education policy in India. However, this was totally a different subject on which a completely new study needs to be done.

7.6.1. Methodological limitations

Although I chose the research design and methods very carefully, no single research design or method is without its limitations. Creswell (2014) emphasised that neither qualitative nor quantitative research methods can lead to a full understanding of a phenomenon. The use of a mixed methods study design for the current study, therefore, could be argued to have allowed for the participation of a larger population; for example, by distributing questionnaires to students in more than two schools. However, data gathered through questionnaires would not have helped much in studying the perceptions of the participants, which was ultimately done by conducting focus
group discussions and interviews (Lisle, 2011) (a detailed description of the rationale for the methods chosen for the study is given in Section 4.6 in Chapter 4). In addition, this would have been very time consuming and it was not practical to distribute and collect the questionnaires while I (the researcher) was in the UK with very limited time to undertake focus groups and interviews in schools in India. A ‘thick description’, of the data collected from the participants and purposive sampling, however, helped to provide in-depth information and to answer the research question (Geertz, 1994).

Additionally, the data consists of participants’ self-reports, which may not reflect their actual behaviour and practices. If I had had more time to spend in the research field, I could have used the observation methods, which would have enriched the data and helped me to identify the relationships between students’ own views and their actual practices in the classroom. This might also have helped me further in my analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the interviews (Uribe-jongbloed, 2014). Despite these possible limitations, the data gathering methods employed in this study allowed a fine-grained analysis of the data (Golafshani, 2003).

This is a qualitative study; the results were limited to my analysis and interpretation of participants’ interviews and my readings of their transcriptions. I tried to ensure that my interpretation of the interview accounts was not influenced by my insider status and preconceptions. The rationale behind this was to prevent the risk of affecting the data and its interpretation with the preconceived ideas of the researcher (Charmaz, 2006a). I employed a reflexive stance towards this research through the documentation of the research process, which is one of the significant elements of Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT), and by following many other steps which I discussed throughout the thesis (Charmaz, 2014). Nevertheless, additional readings of the transcriptions by other researchers may have resulted in different interpretations and in the identification of different themes. To allow for this, some of the interview transcriptions were read by my supervisors, and I also tried my best to be reflexive throughout the research process, which I believe...
helped to combat the impact of my position as both an insider and outsider on the research results (Charmaz, 2017).

7.7. Challenges encountered during the research

In general, I did not encounter many challenges with contacting the participants and collecting data during my research. However, there were some minor difficulties that I had to face. For example, when I went to collect data the students had just returned from their summer vacations and their mid-term school exams were taking place, so the schools were finishing earlier than normal school day timings. It was difficult to gather the students together for the focus groups because some of them were coming to school from far away and so they had to leave straight after school to get their coaches home. This was why some of the students were reluctant to take part in the study. As a result, in the first two days of my visit to the school, I did not get to meet the students for the focus groups. However, I asked the headteacher if the students could be allowed to leave their classrooms early, once they finished their exams so I could do the focus group discussion with them. This was how I finally managed to conduct the focus groups with the students in both the schools. This was not an issue when I did individual interviews with the students because by that time the examinations were over and there were normal school timings. The students were asked to come for the interviews during school time. These challenges were all related to the lack of time. If I had more time, I would have waited for the examinations to be over. Although it took more time for me to gather the students for the focus group discussion, this ultimately did not have any adverse effect on my research process and data gathering.

Although I did the initial data analysis when I was collecting the data, after transcribing the data and analysing I also had to contact some of the participants to confirm the validity of my interpretations of their accounts. I had all the participants’ email addresses and contact numbers. Since most of the participants do not have the internet at home, I had to contact some of them by phone for member checking. I found it difficult to re-connect with some of
the participants because of different timings in India and the UK. This took me a long time. However, I eventually managed to get in touch with the participants from whom I needed further information.

It would have been very helpful for me to understand the linguistic environment and policies of both types of school if there had been specific documents stating the school language policies. However, when asked about language policies, both headteachers stated that they follow the instructions from the school education boards their school was affiliated to. Although documentary analysis of the ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) and PSEB (Punjab School Education Board) education board’s rules and regulations related to languages in the schools was carried out before entering the research field (to understand the context and develop interview questions for the headteachers and teachers), these documents do not contain any specific language policies that schools must follow. Both types of school are expected to adhere to the *Three Language Formula* (1968). Consequently, there are no documents outlining the differences between the languages used in the two types of school. In practice, however, both English and Punjabi are used at very different levels of frequency in each school. For example, Punjabi is used more frequently in PM school and English in EM school.

7.8. Recommendations for future research

This study responds to what a number of other researchers have focussed on in their studies with students at the tertiary level (e.g. Ramanathan, 2005; Sandhu, 2010). This research suggests that simply increasing the number of students enrolling in schools is unlikely to change the education system in India in a meaningful way unless significant changes are made in terms of the language used as MOI. For example, the suitability of teachers’ grammar-
translation pedagogy within India, which was discussed by the students in this study and has also been revealed in many studies in India, requires continuing attention from scholars and policymakers (Bhattacharya, 2016; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Ramanathan, 1999).

As discussed in the literature review, most of the studies, whether conducted inside or outside India, have involved adults and students from universities as the participants, while high school students' voices have remained unheard. Ninth and tenth-grade high school students are approaching a crucial transition point at the end of their school education, which is likely to have implications for their future possible selves. So, more studies recruiting high school students as participants are essential to investigate the relationship between their identity formation and the languages used for learning in their school. In short, future research involving a larger population, especially with high school students, should be conducted.

Further research could also be carried out in workplaces to find out if people’s learning in different languages impacts on their chance of obtaining better-paid occupations and on their subsequent performance at work. This was what most of the participants, including the headteachers and teachers, reported in this study. Comparative case studies could also be undertaken to capture a holistic picture and develop a deeper understanding of the connection between learning in different languages and its impact on students’ identity formation.

Furthermore, face-to-face interaction between EM and PM students could help in gaining insights into their feelings when they confront each other. Although I have observed occasional interactions in English with their teachers, their real interaction with the students from the other group could have provided a

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26Grammar-translation methods rely heavily on teaching grammar and practicing translation and focus in teaching English tends to be on reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening which enables a person to use English for communication purposes.
more holistic picture. So, in the future, research combining EM and PM students to observe their interactions could be conducted. In addition, visiting students' families and direct interaction with the parents could add more in-depth information.

If this study had been conducted in another part of the country, for example, in urban areas where English is used more in public and at school in metropolitan cities, it may have yielded different results in terms of the impact of learning in a specific language on students' identity. Therefore, more qualitative studies with larger populations are required in Punjab and other global contexts to develop a more in-depth understanding of the diverse context-specific perceptions of the students about language and identity formation.

Indeed, a longitudinal study with adolescents or high school student participants, using the same or different research methods, could be conducted by recruiting other schools in Punjab state and in other states which are like Punjab. Alternatively, states which are different from Punjab in terms of the languages used in education in schools could be recruited. Future research, I hope, could be done in other postcolonial contexts where English is used as a MOI in schools and is considered as a dominant language. In this regard, a comparative longitudinal study reflecting on high school students' experiences in developing and developed geographical areas may not only provide an in-depth and dynamic understanding of the learning environment, but it could also help policymakers develop comprehensive strategies catering to the needs of learners from varying regions of the country.

**7.9. Contribution to research**

This research has contributed theoretically as well as methodologically to the research in the area of SLL and EMI. My research framework is a distinctive contribution to the empirical research on EMI in Punjab. The poststructuralist concept of investment has been used by researchers in other contexts to investigate people's identity formation, for example, the first time it was used
with immigrant participants in Canada by Norton (1995a). To my knowledge, this is the first time this concept has been used for a study of this kind in Punjab. Along with this, a combination of theories, such as Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital, Anderson's (1991) concept of ‘imagined communities’ and Markus and Nurius’ (1986) ‘possible selves’, have enriched and added breadth to my study. Prior to this study, most research conducted in language learning in Punjab concentrated on students' motivation – which is a psychological concept – but not on investment – a sociological concept – and this study thus complements the existing research theoretically (Kaur & Sharma, 2015; Rani et al., 2014, 2015; Singh, 2006).

Despite a thorough search of the published literature, no studies were found that employed focus group discussions with high school students on this topic in Punjab. Focus groups can help researchers gather data from many participants at the same time, and these participants’ ideas and perspectives can be challenged by other members of the group. Focus groups are, therefore, a very useful method for collecting qualitative data. Focus groups, in comparison to individual interviews, which were used to collect data in a small number of studies (e.g. Ramanathan, 2003; Sandhu, 2010), encourage discussion amongst the participants and widen the range of views gathered and the knowledge obtained. The use of focus group discussion in this context has therefore contributed methodologically.

Moreover, identity formation in language learning has been one of the most popular topics of research in social sciences for the last few decades. This, however, is an under-researched area in India (Sandhu, 2010), especially in relation to high school students in Punjab. This study is the first in Punjab to explore critically students’ perceptions of the language used in learning and its impact on their identity formation. By using accounts of students’ personal experiences, this study gave voice to students who are otherwise voiceless, even though they are an important group to listen to when constructing the language in the school education policy. The voice of students is not merely represented in this study, but by adopting a poststructuralist perspective, the
influence of critical issues, such as power, social justice and marginalisation, have been critically analysed, thereby adding relevant dimensions to analysing the relationship between language and identity formation. The current study has therefore filled a significant gap in an area of research that I believe requires increased attention in Punjab, where different languages are used for teaching in schools.

This research was carried out with the intention of informing educators, and helping them to create positive language learning environments for students in schools; encouraging researchers to explore the results of the study further in a wider context in Punjab, in other states in India and in other postcolonial contexts; and alerting policymakers to the findings which would hopefully inform subsequent policies regarding equal distribution of English and Punjabi in schools in Punjab. The current research might draw the policymakers’ attention to this significant matter, and thus they may work closely with language departments and educators to develop policies that include techniques to enhance students’ equal engagement in all languages, whether in private or government schools. This could help in getting all the students to the same level linguistically. Considering the significance of English, a global language, policymakers could encourage the equal distribution of English as a MOI in all schools in India. While further research studies like this are necessary, this study may raise awareness among different stakeholders, including the policymakers, about the unequal distribution of languages and the influence of this on students’ identity formation. Overall, I believe that the findings of this study are worth transferring to other geographical and linguistic contexts like India to explore further on the topic of identity formation. In this way, the current study contributes to the existing body of research on language and identity.

This study provides empirical data on students’ feelings about learning in different types of school. This information is important given that no other study has examined students’ perceptions of themselves based on the language in which they are learning in school. The results of this study would therefore not
only help teachers and policymakers but will also help parents to understand the importance of their children learning in a certain language. Their decision to send their children to a specific type of school may be influenced by the findings of this study.

In short, the aim of this study was to gain insights into participants’ perceptions of the impact of language learning on their identity formation. Having undertaken this study there are very interesting insights that have emerged which may be of interest to teachers, management in schools, education departments within individual states and policymakers in India. The findings of this current study have highlighted significant issues in relation to the students’ identity formation. This research, therefore, can help policymakers in India and in wider contexts to develop policies that support teachers and students in the different types of schools.
8. Glossary

Agency: From a poststructuralist perspective, agency is the socio-culturally mediated capacity or ability to understand and act in an agentive way. It can be used to accept or reject the potential impact of power and power relations.

Agentively: To use an agentive manner or source that could work as an agency to enable one to accomplish specific goals.

A Local Body School: A Local Body School is a school which is run by Panchayati Raj and a local body institution such as Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporation, Municipal Committee, Notified Area Committee or Cantonment Board.

Beliefs: Assumptions and thoughts of people regarding concepts, events and people that are held by an individual or a group to be true.

Capital: Capital includes material things which have symbolic value. It also includes intangible things, for example, attributes like prestige, status and authority.

Codeswitching: Codeswitching refers to the practice of moving back and forth between two languages in a spoken or written communication.

Community of practice: A group of people with common concerns, sets of problems or areas of expertise.

Cultural capital: Cultural capital consists of the personal and social assets of an individual such as knowledge, skills, academic qualifications, intellect, professional certificates and credentials that advantage a person and promote his/her social mobility.

Discourses: Discourse in general means talk. Discourses, in the particular context of language learning as defined in the literature on identity and language, are the ways of interacting, thinking, believing, speaking, and sometimes reading and writing.
Discursive practices: Discursive practices refer to communicative practices and social interactions in which individuals engage and draw upon in order to position themselves.

Economic capital: Economic capital refers to one’s financial assets such as material goods and resources that can be exchangeable for money, e.g. a salary.

English speaking centres: Private institutes or centres which provide a basic course on English speaking skills to help students with the correct usage of tenses and the formation of cohesive sentences to enable them to converse fluently.

Entrance Examination: Entrance examinations are the tests that gatekeep admission to higher education courses and into professions which control entry strictly through entrance examinations.

Government school: A Government School is a school which is run by the State Government or Central Government or Public Sector Undertaking or an Autonomous Organisation completely financed by the Government.

Grammar translation: A language teaching strategy known as "Grammar Translation Method" which relies heavily on teaching grammar, vocabulary and practising translation. It tends to focus mainly on reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening which skills enable a person to use the language being learned more effectively for communicative purposes.

Hegemony: Hegemony refers to an individual’s or a group’s dominance over another individual or group to oppress them and, over time, to gain their consent by forcing them to view themselves according to the differences imposed on them, thus legitimating the differences between themselves and others.
**Higher education:** Higher education is tertiary education leading to the award of an academic degree. In India, the higher education system consists of Central and State Universities, Institutions established under States’ legislation, and Open Universities established under State Legislature. The University Grants Commission is the umbrella body which looks after the higher education system in the country.

**Identity:** An individualistic perspective to differentiate self from other. It is underpinned by recognition i.e. the way one recognises oneself and is recognised by groups or other individuals. Identity can be determined by different attributes (class, religion, language, caste, gender, and so on).

**Identity formation:** A process of exploring one’s thoughts to differentiate self from other, and vice versa, and thus to cognitively construct one’s and others’ identity.

**Ideologies:** Ideologies refer to the shared beliefs or attitudes of members of particular social groups.

**Ideological hegemony:** Hegemony refers to the domination of a powerful group to oppress a subjugated group. Ideological hegemony is the hegemony developed through the medium of ideology. People from marginalised groups are not usually forcefully oppressed but give their consent in the belief that they will have some benefits after giving consent to or becoming the part of the dominant group. Ideological hegemony is thus created with the consent of people in the marginalised group.

**Imagined communities:**

are the communities of imagination i.e. the communities which people envision and desire to enter in the future. People often connect to these communities through their imagination and hence these are called imagined communities. These communities may differ from people’s present communities geographically, socially or linguistically.
**Investment**: To invest means in general to allocate, time, money, energy or any other resources in the expectation of some benefit in the future. Investment in relation to identity in language learning is the learner’s choice to invest in language learning to fulfil his/her desire or expectation to progress linguistically and, in turn, economically and socially.

**Language policy**: Policies pertaining to the teaching and learning of languages which are developed to determine the status of languages. These policies determine how languages are taught and used particularly in the educational context.

**Linguistic capital**: Mastery of a language which serves as a form of cultural capital in a particular sociocultural context and provides an individual with social capital.

**Linguistic Imperialism**: The process by which a particular language is supported and empowered in comparison to other languages. In addition, methods such as institutional support are provided to maintain the dominance of this particular language at the cost of other languages. For example, because of globalisation, English nowadays is supported in many countries but that also brings cultural and structural inequality between English and other languages. Linguistic imperialism thus is an imposition of a particular and, in most cases, the most powerful language on other language/es.

**Linguistic genocide**: The unequal power relations between different languages which result in the loss of a particular language.

**Linguistic diversity**: The use of several languages in a particular context or region as a result, for example, of immigration or the co-existence of multiple cultures.

**Motivation**: Motivation refers to internal and external factors that drive an individual to action to move towards his/her goals and desires. Motivation in language learning is a fixed characteristic of individual language learners’ desire to learn a language.
**Multilingualism:** The use in any sociocultural context of more than one language by an individual or a group.

**Positioning:** The social standing or ranking of a person accorded to them by others or by themselves which is referred to as interactive and reflexive positioning, respectively.

**Possible selves:** Possible selves are the future-oriented component or thoughts of self-image or identity according to which individuals view their future identities. Possible selves include cognitive elements such as fear and hope about what one may or may not become in the future.

**Power relations:** The distribution of power between individuals or groups. Power disparities can be caused by how social, educational, economic or linguistic power is employed and exercised through the social structures of the society.

**Private aided school:** A *Private Aided School* is a school which is run by an individual or a private organisation and receives a grant from the government or local body.

**Private unaided school:** A *Private Unaided School* is a school which is managed by an individual or a private organisation and does not receive any grants either from government or local bodies.

**Resistance:** The act of refusing to accept something. Resistance further helps to combat oppressive power and prevent its passive acceptance. In relation to identity formation, learners can exercise agency to show resistance and may resist the identities assigned to them and establish new identities for themselves by using the resources available to them.

**Self-confidence:** Feeling of self-assurance and trust about oneself. Confidence in relation to language learning is self-assurance about one’s proficiency in a particular language which also brings the feeling of competence.
School board: Bodies governing school education in India. Secondary schools are affiliated with Central or State boards which administer examinations at the end of grade 10 resulting in the award of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC), the All-India Secondary School Certificate or the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education. School boards are also responsible for approving curriculum and language of instruction to be used for schools.

Social capital: Social relations and contacts which are important for social development and career advancement and can provide access to social and cultural groups and institutions are defined as social capital.

Social class: A group of people within a society classified on the basis of their socio-economic status, caste, religion, etc.

Social inequality: Inequality between different people and groups in society based on differences in their class, colour, religion, language, gender and so on.

Stereotypes: Generalised beliefs, often negative, about groups of people who share particular characteristics such as nationality, religion or language spoken.

Subjectivity: Subjectivity, is the personal feelings of an individual pertaining to their sense of self and understanding of the world.

Symbolic capital: Symbolic capital is a crucial source of power which encapsulates almost every other form of capital which brings a person fame, reputation, prestige and honour. Bourdieu states that sometimes people use their symbolic power to force their will on others in subordinate positions which he calls symbolic violence.

Tuition fees: Fees paid to universities, schools, colleges, or other regular educational institutions in India.

10+2+3 pattern of education: The numbers 10, 2 and 3 denote the number of years children spend at different stages in their education. In the first stage, 10 years is the minimum number of years required to complete general school
education. Students spend 5 years of the ten in primary school, 3 years in elementary school and 2 years in high/secondary school. At the end of 10 years, children take a secondary school certificate examination (Vyas, 2005). In the second stage, young people spend 2 more years to get a Senior Secondary Certificate from school/college and then 3 years attending undergraduate courses at university to gain a degree.
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10. Appendices:

Appendix A: Information sheet for student participants.

The title of my research project: What matters most is how you see yourself: perceptions of high school students on identity formation and language as a medium of instruction in the context of Punjab, India.

My name is Jagdeep Gill, and I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, UK. I would like you to take part in my research study. Ethics approval for this study has been obtained from the Moray House Ethics Committee (The University of Edinburgh). Before you decide to participate in this research, it is important for you to know why this research is being done and what it would involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask questions if anything you read is not clear, or would like more information.

What is the purpose of this study?

This research aims to find if there is a connection between the language used for learning in schools and students’ identity formation (how students view themselves). My purpose is to explore in detail the impact of the language used for teaching in schools on high school students' beliefs about how they see themselves.

Why have I been invited to participate in this study?

You have been asked to take part in this research because you are a high school student of one of the two schools selected for this research.

What kind of things will you ask me?

I will ask you simple questions about the language used for learning in your school and your experiences related to that. I would like to tape-record what you say, with your permission.

Do I have to participate?
The information for this study will be collected in two phases: focus group discussion and individual interviews. It is completely up to you to participate only in the focus group discussion or in both. In the focus group discussion participants will be asked to join for about one-hour discussion in a group of not more than six students. Each focus group will comprise of 9th and 10th-grade students (age 13-15 years), with an equal gender split i.e. three boys and three girls. I may wish to follow up some areas of interest that arise from the focus group discussion in more detail. So, I may invite some participants to take part further in an individual interview which you are free to say no. You may decide to take part only in the focus group discussion.

Even if you choose to take part, you can tell me to stop your participation at any point of the research. I will not use the information you have already given and will destroy that in front of you.

**Where would I come to participate?**

The focus group discussion and the interviews will be conducted in your school with the permission of your headteacher (principal).

**Who will know what I will say?**

What you say will be confidential and private. If it is ok, using your words, I will write some points down in my doctoral thesis. I will not use your real name.

**What will you do with the information you collect?**

The tapes and notes will be stored in a safe, lockable place and will be destroyed when the research is finished. The final results will be used in my doctoral thesis.

If you would like to participate, please fill in the enclosed consent form, and return that to your headteacher. If you have any questions about this research project, I would be happy to answer.
Appendix B: Information sheet for the headteachers and teachers.

The title of my research project: What matters most is how you see yourself: perceptions of high school students on identity formation and language as a medium of instruction in the context of Punjab, India.

My name is Jagdeep Gill, and I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, UK. I would like you to take part in my research study. Ethics approval for this study has been obtained from the Moray House Ethics Committee (The University of Edinburgh). Before you decide to participate in this research, it is important for you to know why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please read the following information carefully and ask questions if anything you read is not clear, or would like more information.

What is the purpose of this study?

This research aims to find if there is a connection between the language used for learning in schools and students’ identity formation (how students view themselves). I am planning to conduct some focus groups and individual interviews with high school students (age 13-15 years) to explore in detail the impact that the language in which students are taught, has on their beliefs about how they see themselves.

Participation in this research

If you choose to participate, you will be invited for 30 to 45 minutes interview that will be tape-recorded. Your participation in this study will be entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate in this study, you can still withdraw from...
it at any stage of the research, and the data already supplied by you will be destroyed in front of you. Interviews will be conducted in a quiet room allocated by the headteacher, in the school. Your involvement in this study will be kept anonymous and confidential. Your name or any other information about you will not be stated in the thesis of this research.

**The preservation of research data**

The tapes and the notes will be stored in a safe, lockable place and will be destroyed when the research is finished. I would like to assure you again that you will not be identified in any publication emerging from this research even after the completion of my PhD.

I hope that you will agree to take part in this research. If you would like to participate, please fill in the enclosed consent form, and return it to the headteacher. If you need any further information or there are any other questions you would like to ask, please contact me.

Jagdeep Gill

Email: s1476451@ed.ac.uk
Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

The title of my research project: What matters most is how you see yourself: perceptions of high school students on identity formation and language as a medium of instruction in the context of Punjab, India.

Please read the statements below and tick the box next to each if you agree with it.

I have been given enough information about this research. □

I give permission to the researcher to record what I say. □

It has been explained to me how the information I give will be used. □

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can leave at any time and do not have to answer a question if I don’t want to. □

I understand that if I withdraw at any stage of the research, the data already supplied by me will be destroyed in front of me. □

I give permission for what I say to be included in the research report, but understand that my name will not be mentioned. □

I agree to take part in this research. □
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of the researcher</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</table>
Appendix D: Information sheet and parental consent.

The title of my research project: “What matters most is how you see yourself”: perceptions of high school students on identity formation and language as a medium of instruction in the context of Punjab, India.

My name is Jagdeep Gill, and I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, UK. I am doing research in your child’s school and would like to invite your child to participate in this study. Ethics approval for this study has been obtained from the Moray House Ethics Committee (The University of Edinburgh). Before you agree for your child to participate in this research, it is important for you to know why the research is being done and what it would involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask questions if anything you read is not clear, or would like more information.

What is the purpose of this study?

The aim of this study is to find if there is a connection between the language used for learning in schools and students’ identity formation (how students view themselves). My purpose is to explore in detail the impact of the language used for teaching in schools on high school students’ beliefs about how they see themselves.

Participation in this research

If you agree, your child will be invited for a focus group discussion followed by a 30 to 45 minutes interview that will be tape-recorded, with your child’s permission. Participation in this study will be entirely voluntary. Your child can withdraw at any stage of the research, and the data already supplied by him/her will be destroyed in front of them. Your child’s involvement in this study will be kept confidential.

The preservation of research data
The information gathered from this research will be used in my doctoral thesis. The tapes and notes will be stored in a safe, lockable place and will be destroyed when the research is finished.

I hope that you will agree for your child to take part in this research. Please fill in the attached consent form and return it to the headteacher. If you need any further information or there are any other questions you would like to ask, please contact me or your child’s headteacher (Principal).

Jagdeep Gill

Email: s1476451@ed.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet.

Consent Form

I have read the Letter of Information. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child may participate in this study.

Name of child (please print): ...............................................

Name of parent/guardian ...............................................

Signature: ..................................................................

Date: .....................................................................
Appendix E: Statement for Interview Consent (provided and collected after the focus group).

Would you be willing to participate in the second phase of this research involving 30 to 45 minutes interview?

Yes............ No............

If 'Yes', please write your contact details here:

Name: .................................
Contact number (Mobile/ Landline) ________________________
Email address_______________________________
Appendix F: Focus group tasks.

Task 1. Complete and discuss the following statements with a partner.

Language background.

1. I speak ............ language at school.
2. I am expected to speak ............... language at school.
3. I speak in .................language at home.
4. I began learning English in school/at home.
5. I began learning English at the age of:
   - 1-5 years
   - 6-12 years
   - 13-15 years.
6. I rate my English speaking as:
   - Good
   - Very good
   - Not very good
7. How often do you speak English in school?
   - All the time
   - Very often
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Not at all.

Beliefs about learning in the English and Punjabi language.

1. I view the people who speak English as:
   - Intelligent
   - Confident
   - Rich
   - Successful
2. I feel more comfortable in social groups that are mostly composed of .......... language speaking people because ..........

3. Learning in English is important for me because ............

4. Learning in Punjabi is important for me because ............

5. My parents want me to learn all the subjects in English because ............

6. My parents want me to learn all the subjects in Punjabi because ............

7. If given a choice, I would like to learn all the school subjects in .......... language because ...............

8. I want to speak English fluently because ............

---

**English in everyday life.**

1. I need to learn English to be able to:
   o Read medical prescriptions
   o Medicine labels
   o Fill official forms
   o Study and travel abroad (tick all that apply)
   o Other ............

2. When I think about my future it is important that I study in ............... language because ............

3. I feel confident enough to choose to study at the college/university where all courses/subjects are taught in ............... language because ............

4. I would like to become a/an ................. (profession).

5. I think the most important skill/s for my desired profession is/are ...............
Task 2: To what extent do you agree and disagree with the following statements.

Beliefs about the language to be used to learn in school

Learning in the mother tongue should be given more importance than the learning in English in schools.

English should be the language for learning in all the schools in Punjab, India.

Punjabi should be the language for learning in all the schools in Punjab, India.

Learning in the English language creates equal opportunities for everyone in the competitive world.

English language used in teaching in some schools in Punjab brings class differences among people.

I must study in English to be successful in my future career.

Learning in English is important to me because it will bring more respect to me and my family.

A person who can speak English is viewed as an educated and intelligent person.

People who know English are rich.

Learning in English can help students get a good job in future.
Learning in Punjabi can help students get a good job in future.

English provides chances for overseas (foreign) education.

I am often told by my parents that English is important for my future.

English is the most suitable language for the study of science, medical, technology, and commerce.
Appendix G: Topic sets and Interview questions for the headteachers.

**Topic sets:**

Demographic questions: languages known, years of work, language educated in

Language as MOI in the school

Implementation of language policy in the school

Guidelines for the teachers

School curriculum

The importance given to the English language

Authorisation to amend and interpret the education board rules

Importance of English and Punjabi languages in students’ daily lives

Opportunities for students learning in EM or PM school

Comparisons between EM and PM school students

Parents’ attitude towards students learning in EM or PM school

Societal discourses about students learning in EM or PM school

**Interview questions:**

Personal profile:

Name of the headteacher.

Name of the school

The number of years of work experience.

What languages can you speak?

**Language practice in school**

1. What language is used as a medium of instruction in this (your) school?
2. Who decides which language should be used as a medium of instruction in the school?

3. How has this been implemented/carried out in this school? When and how is English used at your school? (Amount of time, tasks, school language policy)

**Students’ exposure to English**

4. What language does student use inside and outside the classroom, and why?

5. In which language most of the academic resources to teach students are available in this school? For example, library books, audio-visual aids, etc.

6. Do the students take private lessons in English or Punjabi other than at school? if yes, why?

**Attitude towards English and EMI:**

7. What language do you think is more important to be used as a medium of instruction in schools in Punjab, and why?

8. How important do you think the English medium of instruction in schools in Punjab is, and why?

9. At what stage of learning do you think students need to be taught in English?

10. Does the difference based on the language used as a medium of instruction foster social inequality and contribute to the reproduction of elite?

11. In general, what role does English play in a person’s everyday life in Punjab?

**EMI and the students’ access to opportunities.**

12. To what extent do you think the language used as a medium of instruction in school could impact students’ future hopes and aspirations?
13. To what extent do you think that learning all school subjects in English could help raise the students’ chances of employment in future?

14. To what extent do you think that studying all school subjects in Punjabi could affect students’ chances of employment in future?

15. What problems a student might face if Punjabi is used as a medium of instruction in school and English as a medium of instruction in further studies in college/university? (Anxiety in speaking English, feeling of empowerment/disenpowerment, positioning).

16. How would you rate the students’ preparation in English in this school? Is it adequate for dealing with English in college/university?

17. Do you see the English medium of instruction as a barrier or opportunity for successful learning?

18. Do you see the English medium of instruction as a barrier or opportunity for successful learning?

Are there any other comments in this area that you would like to add?
Appendix H: Topic sets and interview questions for the teachers.

Topic sets:

Bio data: languages they speak, years of teaching, the language in which they learned at school.

Views on MOI in the school

Language syllabus

The language used in student-teacher interaction

Students’ exposure to and understanding of English

Students’ linguistic skills

Students’ communication initiatives in the class

Pedagogical practices

Importance of English and Punjabi language in students’ daily lives

Impact of learning in EM or PM on students’ future lives in higher education and employment

Social perspective and societal discourses about students learning in EM or PM school

Interview questions:

Personal profile:

Name of the teacher

Name of the school

The number of years of work experience

Languages they can speak

Students’ exposure to English

1. In which language do you teach in class and why?
2. In what language do you interact with students inside and outside the classroom and why?

3. In what language/s do the pupils interact with each other inside and outside the classroom? Why?

4. Do the students take private lessons in any language subjects, for example, English or Punjabi other than at school? Why?

5. In general, what role does English play in a person’s everyday life in Punjab? (When do you think one needs to read or interact in English in daily lives?)

**Attitude towards English:**

6. Do you encourage usage of English among the students? Why/why not?

7. How important do you think the English medium of instruction in schools in Punjab is, and why?

8. How important do you think Punjabi medium of instruction in schools in Punjab is, and why?

9. At what stage of learning do you think students need to be taught in English, and why?

10. What beliefs do you think students have about learning in or not learning in English in their schools? (students’ beliefs)

**Students’ access to opportunities.**

11. To what extent do you think the language used as a medium of instruction in school could impact students’ future hopes and aspirations?

12. To what extent do you think that studying all school subjects in English could help raise the students’ chances of employment in future?

13. To what extent do you think that studying all school subjects in Punjabi could affect students’ chances of employment in future?

14. What problems a student might face if Punjabi is used as a medium of instruction in school and English as a medium of instruction in further studies in college/university? (Anxiety in speaking English, feeling of empowerment/disen empowerment, positioning).
15. How would you rate the students’ preparation in English in this school? Is it adequate for dealing with English in college/university?

16. What other benefits and challenges students might experience because of the language used as a medium of instruction in this school?

17. Do you think using English as the language of instruction affects the students' identity in general?

18. What are the effects of using Punjabi as a language of instruction on students' identity formation?

Are there any other comments in this area that you would like to add?
Appendix I: Topic sets and interview questions for the students.

**Topic sets:**

Their personal beliefs and experiences of their MOI language  
Correlation between language as a MOI and identity  
Attitude towards the MOI language  
What they like and dislike about the language  
Exposure to English  
Importance of English and Punjabi languages in their daily lives  
English for their future selves  
EMI and students' access to opportunities  
Difficulties they may face due to learning in EM or PM school in their future professional career and life experience

**General questions about the language usage.**

1. What languages can you speak?  
2. Which language do you like more - English or Punjabi and why?  
3. How do you evaluate your English? For example - good, not very good, fluent - etc.  
4. What language is used in your school for teaching?

**Students' exposure to English.**

5. How long have you been using English in speaking? (from which grade or year)  
6. Do you use English outside the classroom? (watching TV, reading newspapers) When?  
7. How would you rate your high school preparation in English? is it enough for dealing with English in the college/university
8. What are other ways you use to learn English outside school?
9. When do you need to read English in your daily life?

**Attitude towards English and Punjabi language.**

10. How important do you think English is in your life?
11. How important do you think Punjabi is in your life?
12. If you could choose, what language would you choose as your language for learning in school and why?
13. How do you feel being taught or not taught in English in your school?
14. How do your parents feel about you learning or not learning in English in your school?

**Learning in English or Punjabi and students’ access to opportunities.**

15. Do you have difficulty speaking in English? How do you overcome this? Can you give me specific examples showing your struggles with English, if any?
16. What profession do you aim to enter in the future? Why?
17. How will English/Punjabi medium of learning help you in your future profession and general life?
18. What difficulties do you think English/Punjabi medium of learning might bring to your future profession and general life?
19. What problems you might face if the language used in college will be different from the language being used for teaching in your school?
20. Is there anything else you would like to add about the language used for learning in your school and its impact on you? (personally, socially, your hopes for future)
Appendix J: Ethics committee approval letter.

[Image of the approval letter]

Jagdeep Gill
ETL

29 August 2017
Our Ref. 1165

Dear Jagdeep,

"What matters most in how you see yourself": perceptions of high school students on identity formation and language as a medium of instruction in the context of Punjab, India

The School of Education Ethics Sub-Committee has now considered your request for ethical approval for the studies detailed in your application.

This is to confirm that the Sub-Committee is happy to approve the application and that the research meets the School Ethics Level 2 criterion. This is defined as "applies to non-intervention research where you have the consent of the participants and data subjects. This may include, for example, analysis of archived data, classroom observation, or questionnaires on topics that are not generally considered 'sensitive'. This research can involve children or young people, if the likelihood of risk to them is minimal".

A standard condition of this ethical approval is that you are required to notify the Committee, of any significant proposed deviation from the original protocol. The Committee also needs to be notified if there are any unexpected results or events once the research is underway that raise questions about the safety of the research.

Should you receive any formal complaints relating to the study you should notify the MHSE Ethics Committee immediately by email to Shona Cunningham at s.cunningham@ed.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr Ailsa Niven
Convener, School Ethics Sub-Committee

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Appendix K: Example of the interview transcript coding.

Students' pseudonym: Muskaan

Language used for the interview: English

Thank you so much for your consent to participate in this research. As I have already mentioned that my research is about English medium and Punjabi medium students I am looking to explore how learning in English medium or in Punjabi medium could impact students' identity in general.

Researcher: So, I would like to know what language is used for learning in your school?

Muskaan: Okay.... My school education board is in English. So, our language for learning is English as well. So, we study in English and we speak in English and everything is in English.

Researcher: what do you mean by everything here?

Muskaan: Everything in English, by that I meant .... when we do general discussion about the school subjects we speak in English. All the extra-curricular activities in school are also performed or conducted in ENGLISH, in all school activities.

Researcher: Okay. What language do you like the most to learn school subjects in?

Muskaan: I think English is very interesting ...... it .... (helps us in everyday life. So, I think English is the best language.)

Researcher: Is this just because English is an interesting language that you want to learn in English in school or is there any other reason for that?

Muskaan: No. It is not that just because this is an interesting language. It helps us in many ways. It helps us to overcome the difficulties which the students from Punjabi medium schools or Punjab board might face.

Researcher: OKAY....

Researcher: Can you please explain this further, what difficulties do you think students from Punjab board or Punjabi medium might face because of learning in Punjabi medium?

Muskaan: As we know English is a universally accepted language. It helps us to communicate with other people, for example, ... people of other countries. They might be not knowing the language that we speak but English is accepted everywhere. So, it helps us to communicate and interact with other people, the people of other countries.

Researcher: So, you mean that students from Punjabi medium schools they find it difficult to communicate with people who speak in English?
Muskaan: Yes.

Researcher: How do you evaluate your English? Do you think it is good, very good, or not very good?

Muskaan: No, I won't say that my English is not good or not very good. I think it's good enough to help me communicate with everyone who knows English and I think they understand me as well.

Researcher: Yes. I too think that your spoken English is very good.

Researcher: What language do you speak at home?

Muskaan: I speak Punjabi with my parents at home.

Researcher: Why not English?

Muskaan: It's not possible that everybody knows English. My parents speak Punjabi. My mother tongue is Punjabi. So, I feel more comfortable and expressive with my parents, in Punjabi.

Researcher: Do your parents occasionally use any words or phrases of English while talking to you?

Muskaan: Yeah ... obviously, at times. As we are so used to speaking in English in school, so sometimes with the flow we speak in English with our parents as well.

Researcher: Ok. What about your parents, do they use some words of English?

Muskaan: Yes... (laughed). They get inspired by us and they try to use some words of English.

Researcher: Why do you think that they try to use English?

Muskaan: Different people have different views. I think my parents use English because they want to learn something new.

Researcher: Is there at any particular situations your parents use English? For example, when you are with your relatives, in the market, with your or their (parents) friends?

Muskaan: No, it's not in any particular situation. It's just with the flow when they speak they just use some words.

Researcher: Thinking about the society in Punjab, is it quite common that people use some words or phrases of English in their daily conversation?

Muskaan: Yes, I think it's quite normal. Because most of the children are learning in good schools. So, parents want their children to know English. As English is very
important so they try to be at the level of their children to teach them and learn from them. So, it is quite normal to speak English with Punjabi.

**Researcher:** What is good or bad about speaking pure Punjabi, that is not using any words of English language in the daily conversation?

**Muskaan:** I think it can be taken from two different point of views. If we think they are speaking pure Punjabi, it might happen that children become use to Punjabi only and they don’r or are not able to follow the instructions in school, such as rules and the stuff like that. On the other hand, if a child is mature he will speak Punjabi at home but not in school. So, it depends.

**Researcher:** Do you think that people use English with Punjabi in daily conversations because English is associated to status?

**Muskaan:** Ummm... I think there are some people who do that. They try to become over smart (laughed). They just use English to impress others and to show how educated they are.

**Researcher:** So, English is also used to impress others?

**Muskaan:** Yeah, I think so. Or maybe in suppress the weaker one.

**Researcher:** Ok. That’s quite interesting. Could you give me any example related to that, when you found that somebody tried to impress or even to suppress the weaker one by using English language?

**Muskaan:** Yeah... sure. I have seen many such cases. But I will give you an example of a lady who was in a group of other ladies. I was at my mum’s kitty ladies get together at home. There was a lady who didn’t know very much English and there was another lady who was from a very good family. She knew English well. She belonged to a very respected family. I don’t know why she did that, she spoke in English and the other lady who didn’t know English felt left-out. I think that lady did it purposely because she didn’t like the other lady (one who does not know much English). That might be because of some personal grudges.

**Researcher:** Keeping this in mind that people who do not know much English they feel left-out or are suppressed by others, do you think at some situations Punjabi medium students feel left-out or suppressed?

**Muskaan:** Yeah... it’s obvious to feel left out if a person doesn’t know English and the entire group of people speak in English. He might feel left-out because he cannot understand what others are saying, and cannot express himself.

**Researcher:** Ok, since you have already said that the language that is used in your school for teaching and learning is English. So, I suppose that you get a lot of exposure to or experience in English listening and speaking.
Researcher: Do you speak in English with your friends when you are out of the classroom or school?

Muskaan: Yes, we do. Obviously when we go to a place which needs etiquettes and all, then we should be in etiquettes or in discipline. So, English is the language that helps us to maintain discipline. So yes, we do speak English not only in school but at our homeplace as well.

Researcher: In the class, you said that English helps to maintain discipline and you also related this to etiquettes, which I am not saying is wrong. Could you please explain this further with an example?

Muskaan: Yeah.... Sure..... I will give you an example of a religious place which is a church. When we go to a church the sisters (nuns) and fathers (priests) are conversing in English. So there the environment is so full of etiquettes or discipline. Another example, I will give from my tuition centre there also teachers converse in English and students speak to them in English in a disciplined manner.

Researcher: Just to make it clear that I am understanding what you said, do you mean to say that there is a connection between learning in English or speaking in English and the etiquettes?

Muskaan: Yeah, to some extent there is a connection. Hmmmm....English can also help..... Yes, of course, But there are some people who speak in a rude way in English as well. But...yes if a person is... I mean disciplined he will speak in a disciplined manner, which English helps in,..... everywhere.

Researcher: So, do you mean to say that those who speak in English are considered as the one with etiquettes. Is this so?

Muskaan: Yeah.... to some extent yes.

Researcher: As you mentioned that sometimes people speak English in a rude way so could you please explain this further?

Muskaan: Yes, by that I mean that some people are in the habit of suppressing others. Which I have already explained

Researcher: Ok. Could you give me any example when from a Punjabi medium student's etiquettes, you were able to tell that he had his learning from a Punjabi medium school?

Muskaan: Umm... I think from the way a person speaks to others or from his power to connect with others we can judge if he had been to English medium or Punjabi medium school. I can share with you an incident, there was a new girl in our class who came from a Punjabi medium school. Earlier she used to be very quiet she could not express herself and was always speaking with us in Punjabi. Most of the times she was speaking in Punjabi with the teachers as well. While all other students were conversing
Researcher: Could you explain this further what do you mean by the power to connect with others?

Muskaan: Yeah... sure... by saying this I mean that a person learning in Punjabi medium school would not know English. Students learning in English medium school will obviously speak in English with each other. If the person is learning in Punjabi medium how will he express himself to or can understand who are speaking in English. So, again he will feel left out. I mean keep away from all others. So, it's just that he will have less power to connect with others.

Researcher: Right. Do you have any friends learning in Punjabi medium school?

Muskaan: Not at present. But I do have some friends who are from Punjabi medium school and are now learning in English medium school.

Researcher: So, you might be knowing if they had any difficulties after transiting from Punjabi medium to English medium school?

Muskaan: Yes, personally she told me that she felt very left out and she practised for hours so that she could just get one level up. So, I think she faced a lot of difficulties.

Researcher: Is she now with you in your class?

Muskaan: Yeah, she is my class mate.

Researcher: Can you tell me about any situation where you think she found hard after joining English medium school?

Muskaan: Yeah, she could not catch what the teachers say. She had to get that translated to Punjabi to make herself understand. She had to do excess of hard work than other students in the class.

Researcher: How is she in her general communication or interaction with others in the class or with the teachers?

Muskaan: Initially, as I mentioned earlier she was very shy in expressing herself but as she has improved herself in English. Now she is becoming confident day by day because she can express herself.

Researcher: Ok. What do you think about yourself in comparison to her? Do you feel yourself privileged of learning in English medium school?

Muskaan: Yeah, obviously I do feel privileged because I have been learning in English medium school since the starting. So, I think I did not have to face all that hardships.
Researcher: As you mentioned that in your school teachers use English and you also speak in English with your friends. So, how do you think that your preparation in English is? I mean, if it is sufficient to go to a college or a university for higher studies?

Muskaan: Yes. I think it is good enough, because I have been learning in an English medium school since my birth (the beginning). So, I think as the years passed it became better and better. So, I think now my English is good enough to go to a college or university for higher studies.

Researcher: Can you tell me how learning in English medium will help you in the higher studies in a college or university?

Muskaan: I think the college I want to go in considers the students with very good percentage (academic percentage of marks) and not the one who have not good percentage. So, I think learning in English medium will give me privilege to go to one of the best colleges where I think people with very good English language skills will be.

Researcher: Do you think that students from Punjabi medium can manage to get admission in such good colleges?

Muskaan: Yes, if they can fulfill the percentage requirement then they can. Because if they have obtained good percentage so they might have good English, or they might work hard to improve their English.

Researcher: So, you mean to say if a student’s English language skills are not very good and he/she have good academic percentage then they can manage to get admission in that college?

Muskaan: Yeah, I think so because most preference is given to the percentage of marks obtained. If one has fulfilled that requirement it would be easy, and rest depends upon his/her hard work to learn English.

Researcher: Okay. What, if in case you have not had this chance to study in English medium school or if you had studied in a Punjabi medium school, what differences there might have been in you, in what you are now and what you would have been?

Muskaan: (LAUGHED) If I think if I had been a Punjabi medium student, I would not have been this confident. I think confidence level comes one level up, if we study in English medium school and if I would have been the person... I wouldn't have been able to express myself the way I am expressing right now. So I think the most important thing of English... or English is confidence. I don’t think Punjabi medium students are that confident. As I have talked to you earlier that English is universally accepted language, I would have faced difficulty going or when I go abroad...
### Appendix L: Example of Focus group Transcript and coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Topic</th>
<th>Participant A</th>
<th>Participant B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can they be smart by just knowing English?</td>
<td>Sometimes try to be clever</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about knowledge?</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all students learning in English medium school do not know English?</td>
<td>Disagree with C</td>
<td>They do not get the right knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes try to be clever</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge is absolute</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not such (All agreed)</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments**
- Sometimes try to be clever
- Disagree
- Disagree
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>In Punjabi speaking group</th>
<th>In English medium school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jagdeep Gill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I feel more comfortable in Punjabi speaking group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People because...</th>
<th>Language speaking mostly comfortable of the social groups that are Arc of.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jagdeep Gill</td>
<td>s1476451</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the participants: Because Punjabi is our mother tongue.

I think if a child is hard working he/she can get good education in Punjabi medium school as well as in English medium school. They say there is a good education system in English medium schools. They don't get the same in a Punjabi medium schools. I think they know better English than me. So I think we know Punjabi more than them. Many people believe they know very good English. (All are educated)

No. I think if a child would have on us (very educated). Their parents can afford so they are going to English medium school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant A</th>
<th>Participant B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, if someone asks something in English we will not be able to answer them.</td>
<td>Yes, English has another benefit for example if there is something wrong with someone's health, they will not need to seek someone's help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: English is important because we need it to read from the newspaper.</td>
<td>A: Learning English is important because it helps with communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Even on the roadside, most of the roadboards are in English. So, English is important to learn so that we do not get confuse.</td>
<td>A: Even on the roadside, most of the roadboards are in English. So, English is important to learn so that we do not get confuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: We assume we are taking to a student from England.</td>
<td>A: We assume we are taking to a student from England.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill application forms and job interviews. Then we need to read from the newspaper.</td>
<td>To fill application forms and job interviews. Then we need to read from the newspaper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: As English is important to learn so is English is important everywhere if we want to go to other state or country. English is important English has more value.</td>
<td>A: Because English is important everywhere if we want to go to other state or country. English is important English has more value.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They expressed the use of English for more general things like to play games, music, and computers.

D. To use the computer and the Internet.

C. In most of the foreign countries, everything is written in English, so we do not know English for anything about the country.

Participant F: A nervousness as hesitation to speak any English medium student.
Jagdeep Gill

s1476451

411


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F: They will send their children to English medium schools as well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E: &quot;I grew up speaking Hindi at home, so my children will also grow up speaking Hindi.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D: &quot;Our parents preferred sending their children to medium schools in Punjabi. So, in the beginning, our parents taught us from the beginning, so we learn Punjabi.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: &quot;Both of our parents prefer sending their children to English medium schools.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: &quot;I can't speak to them in English at home.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A (all ages): &quot;Their parents worked in Punjabi.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>