Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

The role of student-teachers' imagined identities in their investments in English in an "Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education" (ICLHE) Catalan pre-service teacher education context

BERTA TORRAS VILA

Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura,
i de les Ciències Socials
Facultat de Ciències de l'Educació

The role of student-teachers' imagined identities in their investments in English in an "Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education" (ICLHE) Catalan pre-service teacher education context

BERTA TORRAS VILA

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

The role of student-teachers' imagined identities in their investments in English in an "Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education" (ICLHE) Catalan pre-service teacher education context

BERTA TORRAS VILA

PhD Dissertation

Directed by

Dr. Natalia Evnitskaya

Dr. Cristina Escobar Urmeneta

Doctorat en Didàctica de la Llengua i de la Literatura

Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura,

i de les Ciències Socials

Facultat de Ciències de l'Educació

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Bellaterra, September 2016

Dra. Natalia Evnitskaya, investigadora postdoctoral del Departament de Filologia Anglesa, amb seu a la Facultat de Filosofia i Lletres de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, i

Dra. Cristina Escobar, titular del Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura i de les Ciències Socials, amb seu a la Facultat de Ciències de l'Educació de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

FEM CONSTAR QUE:

La Investigació realitzada sota la direcció del signants per a la Diplomada i Màster Berta Torras Vila amb el títol de Magisteri (Especialitat d'Educació Musical) i Màsters en Adquisició de l'Anglès i Comunicació Intercultural i en TESOL/Applied Linguistics, reuneix tots els requeriments científics, metodològics i formals exigits per la legislació vigent per la seva Lectura i Defensa pública davant la corresponent Comissió, per la obtenció del Grau de Doctor en Educació per la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, per tant considerem procedent autoritzar la seva presentació

Bellaterra, setembre de 2016
Signat:

This study has received the support from the following research projects: "GUIDEWAY: Guiatge per a l'aprenentatge integrat de continguts acadèmics i desenvolupament de la competència discursiva" (2014 ARMIF 00009); and "PATHWAY: Avaluació del projecte d'internationalització en el Grau d'Educació Primària - anglès UAB: Procés i producte" (2015 ARMIF 00001). It has also received the support from the research group in Language and Education (LED) (2014 SGR 01190). These projects have been funded by Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (AGAUR) - Generalitat de Catalunya.

Cover Image:

Photograph taken by the author at the "Travel Photographer of the Year" Exhibition, London. August 2015

Acknowledgments

Qualsevol etapa vital esdevé un abans i un després. Per incomptables raons. Cada etapa és una oportunitat per aprendre, per créixer, per desaprendre, per conèixer-nos millor a nosaltres mateixos, per descobrir... Descobrim nous llocs, persones i maneres d'entendre la vida, realitats que et fan replantejar qui ets i què pots aportar al món. Almenys, així visc jo totes les etapes que considero que m'han fet créixer. Durant aquestes etapes passes moments d'alegries, satisfaccions... però també moments de tristesa i de desànim. Això que ara deixo enrere, aquest "viatge" de 4 anys, és ara l'inici de noves aventures, noves oportunitats i nous reptes personals i professionals. Aquesta tesi, però, no hauria estat possible sense l'ajut i el suport d'un gran nombre de persones. M'agradaria molt aprofitar aquesta oportunitat per agrair-los a totes elles l'haver-me acompanyat durant tot aquest temps.

Gràcies a les meves dues supervisores, la Dra. Natalia Evnitskaya i la Dra. Cristina Escobar, per ser les capitanes d'aquest vaixell que he après a pilotar sola i per haver-me guiat en tot moment des que vaig decidir iniciar aquesta aventura. Gràcies també pel suport en els moments incerts i de desànim. A la Dra. Natalia Evnitksaya. Gràcies per la teva professionalitat, la paciència i l'entusiasme que m'has transmès des que tot això va començar. Gràcies, també, per les "abraçades" i somriures virtuals constants des de Madrid. A la Dra. Cristina Escobar. Gràcies per l'ajuda constant, les oportunitats brindades i la teva professionalitat des del dia en que vaig sortir del teu despatx amb la idea de cursar un doctorat.

To Dr. Martin Lamb, thank you for your inspiration, for your interest towards my concerns regarding the education field. Thank you for your suggestions, your help and your time.

Als 14 estudiants que van voler participar en aquesta projecte, amb qui he conversat i de qui he après. De les seves inquietuds, de les seves ganes d'aprendre... Moltes gràcies!

Als i les mestres de l'escola Puigberenguer de Manresa. Als professors i professores de

l'institut Lacetània. Als professors del Conservatori de Música de Manresa, el que em vau ensenyar ho duc amb mi cada dia. A la Pilar Pla, el Jordi Usan, la Fina Alavedra, el Francesc Vallès i el Ramon Estrada. De manera molt especial, a la meva magnífica professora de violí, la Dolors (encara veig el teu entranyable somriure cada dia a l'arribar a classe!). També al meu segon professor de violí, el Jordi Coll, per reafirmar-me la certesa que la música és una eina de vida, t'hi dediquis o no t'hi dediquis. Als professors del Departament de Didàctica de la Música de la UAB, perquè seguiu lluitant pels valors que la música propaga i perquè els pugueu impregnar a moltes futures generacions de mestres. De manera especial, al Joan Casals: gràcies per tanta confiança dipositada en mi! Als professors de la School of Education de la University of Bristol, a la Dra. Frances Giampapa i a la Dra. Helen Woodfield. Als professors d'anglès de Toronto i Nova York, *you taught me far beyond this language*! A l'Escola de Música de Callús, a la Montserrat i a la Carme Botifoll (mil gràcies Carme! Infinitament agraïda).

A tots els raconets de món que he trepitjat. Els seus paisatges, les seves gents, la seva història... tots m'han fet créixer. Especialment, a les persones que he conegut a Irlanda, Anglaterra i Indonèsia, per haver-me donat tantes coses indescriptibles. Han fet que el món sigui un lloc tan petit... i m'han fet adonar de la infinitat de coses que hi ha per aportar-nos els uns als altres.

A Irlanda, per la teva bellesa, la teva música i per haver-me obert els ulls i el cor al món. A la Géaroidin, el Con i l'Aisling *(Aisling, you'll always be my little baby girl!).* A Bristol, per haver estat l'escenari d'un any fantàstic i transformador. A Indonèsia, per la teva acollida, per la teva màgia i per les lliçons apreses. A les mestres-amigues de Bogor i als "meus nens" de l'escola. Als carrers de Leeds i als teus músics que escalfen cors enmig del fred. A la Paulette (*y al pequeño Manuel!*), la JinA, la Lorraine, el Hamood, la Steff, l'Ali i el Nicky: *you've helped me so much just by being there (and sharing food and Omani tea with me!) over these last few months! Thanks a million!*

Als amics i amigues que tinc arreu del món, que m'inspiren i mantenen les meves ganes de veure'l i viure'l a fons. Tinc ganes de tornar-vos a veure. Als que són a prop (sempre!). Als que són lluny, però que no els puc sentir més propers. Als que m'han ensenyat. A la

Lindsey. A l'Alicia i el Jose. A la Hodi, la Silvia, la Yuko i el Jianwen. *Thank you, Hodi, for your time, your words and for being my British sister*. *Thanks CJ, for your humor when I needed it the most.* A l'Helga, perquè ens hem fet costat acompanyades d'olor de cafè i perquè ens queda un petit-gran projecte pendent... A la Laia A. A l'Aliya, *thanks for your time, help and friendship.* A la Marta "groga", per entendre tan bé què signifiquen els reptes. Al David, per ser-hi sempre.

Al meu violí i a la Camerata Bacasis. De manera especial, a la Laia, el David, la Mònica i el Jordi. Quin projecte més màgic... Gràcies per fer possible una realitat tan bonica com necessària al nostre país. He trobat molt a faltar el que em dóna aquesta orquestra i tots vosaltres aquesta última temporada. Sento tant no haver pogut ajudar-vos aquests últims anys... però em sembla que ja sabeu que a qui més ha empipat això ha estat a mi mateixa.

A la música, pel món que crees, el que fas possible i el que fas compartir. A les bandes sonores. A Bruce Springsteen, Eva Cassidy, Chopin i tants d'altres.

A l'extensa família i amics. Pels vostres ànims, el vostre suport i per ser sempre tan i tan a prop meu. Als vuit ulls de mel que m'han omplert de valors i respecte per la natura. Al bosc del Suanya. A l'àvia de camp i a l'àvia de ciutat. Als somriures de la Júlia. A la Laura, tan lluny i tan a prop. A la Marta i el Joan, per ser qui sou, i perquè m'encanta aprendre de vosaltres. A la Montse i el Jaume, aquest foc que m'il·lumina, amb força i vida, quan la flama es debilita. Res del que faig tindria sentit sense tots vosaltres.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES AND FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CoP(s)	Community(ies) of Practice
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMI	English-medium Instruction
FG 1/2	Focus Group Interview (T1/T2)
I1 /I2	Individual Interview (T1/T2)
IaH	Internationalisation at Home
L2	Second Language
NS /NNS	Native speaker / Non-native speaker
EMI-PEBD	English-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree
Q1	Questionnaire 1 (Initial questionnaire)
Q2	Questionnaire 2 (Main questionnaire)
S1 /S2 /S3	Study 1 / Study 2 / Study 3
SA	Study Abroad
SLA	Second Languge Acquisition
SLL	Second Language Learning
TL	Target Language
UAB	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Notes

1. All participants' names are pseudonyms

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The present study endeavours to provide insights into the role of imagined identities and imagined communities which form the basis of learners' interest in English among a group of tertiary learners. It is contextualized within an "Integration of Content and Language in Higher Education" (ICLHE) Primary Education Bachelor's Degree (PEBD) offered by a Catalan Higher Education institution, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

This introductory chapter is structured as following. After a brief comment about the current state of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Spain and Catalonia (section 1.2.), the researcher's personal motivations behind the present thesis are presented (section 1.3.). Then, a short presentation on the main topic this dissertation addresses will follow (section 1.4.), together with the ways in which such reality applies to the context if the study (section 1.5.). Then, the research context and background that frame the study will be provided (section 1.6.). Finally, the structure of the study, its objectives and structure will be presented (section 1.7.), followed by the chapter summary (section 1.8.).

1.2. CURRENT STATE OF EFL IN SPAIN AND CATALONIA

The level of English proficiency in Spain has been repeatedly considered as one of the lowest in Europe. According to the Special Eurobarometer on Europeans and their languages carried out in 2006, 56% of Spanish citizens reported not being able to speak any languages other than their mother tongue, and those who could in fact hold a conversation in two other languages (17%) were some of the lowest in Europe (European Comission, 2006). In fact, more recent numbers from the CIS (*Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*) (CIS, 2014) indicated that 61'4% of Spanish adults claim

they are not able to speak ow write English. Furthermore, the economic situation of the country in the last decade has led young Spanish and Catalan generations to work hard on the learning of this language, considering the high rate of youth unemployment caused by the economic crisis. Even though English proficiency among Spanish citizens has grown a 4'5 % between 2007 and 2012, reaching an average level of B1, the level achieved is still moderate (English Proficiency Index, 2014). Likewise, according to the data obtained through The European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC), a survey that evaluated the level of foreign language competence when finalizing secondary education, those students from countries where the best results in listening were obtained had been repeatedly exposed to English outside of school in natural English-speaking environments. On the contrary, those students from countries where the poorest results were obtained (among them, Spanish students), have had limited opportunities for meaningful interactions through this language (INEE, 2012a; INEE, 2012b). The same study also concluded that 63% of Spanish students could not understand oral English after finalizing compulsory secondary education (*Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria*).

In Catalonia several political decisions have been made in order to face this problem. The "Plan to boost the learning of English" (*Pla d'impuls de l'aprenentatge de l'anglès*) aims at improving the level of English competence among students who finish compulsory and post-compulsory education., while, at a university level, the "Training program in foreign languages at university" (*Programa de formació en terceres llengües a la universitat*) was developed (Bayón et al., 2009; DURSI, 2001). At a national level, the "Organic Law on the improvement of the Quality of Education" (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa)* (LOMCE,2013) points at the need to learn a first and even a second foreign language, arguing that it is still a remarkable weakness in the Spanish education system, as well as it highly supports plurilinguism and the need to double the efforts to achieve such a goal.

Similarly, at a European level, several political attempts have been made in order to face such reality (Council of Europe, 1998, 2001, 2011; Eurydice, 2005). One of the most

popular ones was the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, which will be briefly presented in section 1.5. Another one, the European Language Portfolio, was an attempt to promote intercultural awareness and plurilingual practices among all types of foreign language learners (Little & Perclová, 2002).

1.3. PERSONAL RATIONALE

Several reasons led me to embark on this PhD journey. My curiosity to understand what it is that drives people to learn and to grow has always been a very personal motivator in my professional life. I enjoy satisfying my curiosity and taking challenges. I have always thought that those who teach should be the ones who consider themselves "learners" first and foremost. That is how I have always felt and that is what I strive for.

Hence, both personal and professional realities that had been part of my own life and that had been on my mind for a long time are the reasons that led me to pursue a PhD. On the one hand, there was my experience as an English learner. I gradually became more and more aware of the significant differences I sensed between what I had experienced as an English learner within the formal education system in primary and secondary education and what English became later on in my life. I noticed that there was an urgent need to delve into what factors made such realities so different and to bring them to light. On the other hand, my background as a primary school teacher in Catalonia led me to realize that the English Language Teaching (ELT) approaches in primary schools had not changed nor evolved, even though the need for mastering English has been gradually acquiring more and more relevance, both in Catalonia and in Spain, due to the reality of the country and the world in the last few decades. Primary students, in this sense, still tend to consider English as a mere subject and little opportunities are provided to them in order for them to incorporate the target language as a personal communication tool. It is my belief that learning beyond our local cultures, through other languages, can only make us better human beings, helping us to "learn" in the most transformative and transversal sense of the word. Taking these concerns into account, I started to feel an infinite curiosity to delve further into the issues that play a

role in one's interest to learn a language and what it is that drives individuals to decide to "invest" (see Chapter 2) in the learning of English, specifically, as this language seems to have spread all over the world and become a requirement for certain opportunities.

The need to master English is strongly linked to the reality of globalisation. Globalisation is a phenomenon that concerns and catches the attention of institutions, governments and societies. Being an inevitable reality, understanding what it involves and what values, positive and negative, it hides behind is essential. The mastery of English of the Catalan and Spanish society has become a personal and professional requirement that has caught many generations off guard. When it comes to turning our attention to future generations, the local/global dichotomy becomes a phenomenon which is as uncertain as it is fascinating. Delving into the identitary processes that a group of English learners go through and, in particular, a group of individuals who are going to become primary teachers, is something that can offer very enriching insights and something of high relevance when it comes to understanding the role of this language in our present and future society. With such an unceasing curiosity towards realities that evolve and lead to identity changes, both as individuals and as societies, I have faced this academic journey that has culminated in the present doctoral dissertation.

1.4. LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND A GLOBALIZING WORLD

In today's globalised world English is an international language that links people from different sociocultural backgrounds. Travel, intercultural experiences, information and values exchanges, increased mobility and a worldwide global consciousness affect individuals' everyday life. Some factors that have led to its spread have been "increased mobility, multinational business and international co-operation in many diverse fields" (Hoffmann, 2000:2). In those countries in which English has no official status the learning of this language has become one of the most important assets for professional and personal development. English has become a lingua franca that enables both European countries and countries all over the world to interact and exchange

information for a wide variety of purposes: "internationalisation, co-operation and mobility, both within and without (Europe) have led to the expansion in the European use of English" (Hoffmann, 2000:6). As Crystal (2003:13) observes, people have become "more mobile, both physically and electronically", and English has become a global language with a role that is nowadays recognized everywhere.

Globalisation processes are increasingly contributing to important changes, as well as they are shaping countries' cultures, practices, beliefs, behaviours and, last but not least, individuals' identities. Arnett (2002:777) lists two of its common features: an increase in "the frequency and intensity of the contacts that people in various cultures have with the global culture"; and the fact that this process "reaches virtually everywhere". This broad view of the world, people's role in it and their need to take part in such a reality are facts that directly affect one's self-image. According to Jackson, (2008), identity is not static, it modulates as people get involved in different experiences, environments and ideas.

Even though efforts are being made in order to create a multilingual Europe (Council of Europe, 2011a), through principles that aim at preserving and promoting the plurilingual practices in the different European countries, the indisputable role that English has acquired worldwide is a reality (Caine, 2008). More specifically, the Council of Europe (2011:2) notes three basic principles: a) to preserve the rich heritage of the diverse languages within Europe, b) to promote a better knowledge of European modern languages to facilitate interaction among Europeans, and c) that the policies of member states take such issues into account in the field of modern language learning and teaching.

It is argued that, in such international settings, English serves as the symbol of belonging to an international community, and it might eventually lead to a sense of affiliation with "a constantly evolving imagined community of world citizens" (Jackson, 2008:39):

> *International English is used by native speakers of English and bilingual users of English for cross-cultural communication. International English can be used both in a local sense between speakers of diverse cultures and languages within one country and in a global sense between speakers from different countries* (McKay, 2002:132).

The notion of English as an International Language (EIL) (McKay, 2002) has served as a starting point for new approaches to ELT, bringing numerous changes in the language teaching profession worldwide. Drawing on the premise that the amount of non-native speakers of EIL is much larger than the native speakers of the language, several scholars argue for the need to account and adapt to the new necessities surrounding EIL and to the new demands of its learners and users (Llurda, 2004). Cook (1999) has highlighted the need to move beyond the native speaker model in English language teaching, while other scholars, such as McKay (2000, 2003) emphasize the importance of the learners' first language and culture in order to provide them with empowering positions as learners of the target language (for a further exploration of this issue, see 2.4.1 and 2.4.2. in Chapter 2).

Similarly, Giddens (1990:64), defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa". Such global realities seem to be important factors when it comes to understanding one's possible reasons for learning English (Lamb, 2003; Norton & Gao, 2008; Ryan, 2008). In the 21st century, the interest to learn English might probably be very different in nature from the type of motivation that existed 50 years ago. In fact, it has been "retheorised in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity" (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009:1) On this matter, Block & Cameron (2002:5) point out that "globalization changes the conditions under which language learning takes place", while Block (2004a:76) makes an interesting contribution outlining the connections between globalisation processes and ELT:

> *In ELT, until quite recently, a hyperglobalist position dominated discussions regarding the spread of English as a benign outcome of globalizing forces. However, from the late 1980s onwards, Robert Phillipson and others called this view into question (see Phillipson 1992). Their new-Marxist analysis of the spread of English was notably sceptical in nature, positing as it did an English language linguistic imperialism. From the 1990s onwards, new voices, such as Alastair Pennycook (1994) and Suresh Canagarajah (1999) have begun to see the spread of English as altogether too complicated to be considered benign or evil. These authors are part of a growing transformationalist camp who see this phenomenon from a variety of perspectives, ranging from the critical to the postmodern.*

Following Block's argument, while the spread of English has become a reality, the sociological complexities that go hand in hand with the status that this language has

acquired certainly call for the need to study and evaluate all factors that might be playing a role in the unique position that this language occupies, which can affect language learning processes. That might contribute to dynamic reasoning shifts from the "critical to the postmodern" perspectives (2004a). Whether the global status of English is labelled as something positive or negative, the need of many world citizens to master English seems to be a perceived reality.

Progressively, identity became a key construct in the field of Second Language Acquisitions (SLA) as more and more scholars in the field began to follow Norton Pierce's concern when she called for the need to develop "a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context" (Norton, 1995:12). The word "context" in Norton's quote leads to the need to closely look at the new settings in which young generations of English speakers use this language, as they have become immensely varied and frequent. Such is the interest that identity generated in this field of inquiry that, in fact, Norton & Toohey (2011:413) assert that "identity now features in most encyclopaedias and handbooks of language learning and teaching". Thus, the notion "identity" has become a central construct in the field of language learning, even though, according to Block (2007a:72), even in early work on motivation in second language learning, the term was already "seemingly […] lurking in the wings without ever coming out as a full-blown object of interest".

1.5. THE CATALAN CONTEXT: CATALAN IMMERSION, CLIL AND "INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME"

Barcelona is a very multicultural city and it is the capital of Catalonia, a Spanish region where two co-official languages co-exist, Catalan and Spanish. Citizens in this region, thus, grow up in a bilingual context. Catalan had not been used in the school system for forty years due to Franco's regime (1939-1975), during which time it was banned from schools and from society. However, following the Act of Linguistic Normalization (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1983) Catalan was reintroduced and was generalized as the

medium of instruction in all levels of compulsory education (Escobar Urmeneta & Unamuno, 2008).

The Catalan immersion program was designed to allow every citizen in Catalonia to master both languages, focusing specific attention on the majority-language students, Spanish speakers, with the aim to help them achieve bilingualism. The program aimed at going beyond the mere teaching and learning of Catalan, but it aimed at reinstating the normal use of the heritage language in its territory (Artigal, 1991). The immersion program was then followed by the Decree 75/1992, which detailed that Catalan was "to be generalized as a working language in infant and compulsory education" (Escobar Urmeneta & Unamuno, 2008:4). Immersion as a practice was thus successfully achieved in Catalonia (Council of Europe, 2005) and it became an exemplary model throughout Europe (Artigal, 1991). Furthermore, both the *Estatut d'Autonomia* (passed in 1979 and reformed in 2006) and the current language policy act in Catalonia (*Llei 1/1998, de 7 de gener, de política lingüística)* define Catalan as the language of "normal" use "in the public arena, which expanded this language as the language of instruction into Catalan universities (Moore, 2011). Due to the complexity of the sociolinguistic reality in Catalonia, numerous studies on language learning and sociolinguistics have been conducted in the region, leading to interesting findings for language learning methods and policies (Newman & Trenchs-Parera, 2015).

Escobar Urmeneta & Unamuno (2008:1) note that over the last decade the Catalan peculiar sociolinguistic reality has been facing two relevant educational challenges, that is, the "complex linguistic scenario" that has come hand in hand with globalisation processes and increasing numbers of immigrants from all regions in the world. The first challenge they present turns out to be particularly relevant for this discussion: in the same way as it happened around the whole country[1], in Catalonia English has gradually become the main foreign language in the regional education system due to the international role it has acquired and it has progressively been incorporated in many

[1] One of the first initiatives that took place in different regions across Spain was when in 1996 the Spanish Ministry of Education signed an agreement with the British Council with the aim to promote CLIL programmes in both primary and secondary education (Llinares & Whittaker, 2006).

schools as the language through which content is conveyed under the umbrella term. Thus, as Escobar Urmeneta & Nussbaum (2010) argue, there is a strong demand among Catalan society for foreign language learning. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) became one of the most widespread strategies expected to help to beef up students' low command of English (Somers & Evnitskaya, 2014).

In the light of the current state of the world presented in section 1.4., and within the Catalan context, in 2012 the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) offered for the first time the possibility to study an English-Medium Pre-Service Primary Teacher Education Bachelor's Degree (henceforth, EMI-PEBD). Before that, this degree was mostly offered in the official language, as it happens everywhere in Europe. While Spanish is the official language in Spain, Catalonia has its own linguistic specificities (as stated above): universities in Catalonia mainly teach through the language of "normal" use in public institutions, that is, through Catalan. The implementation of an English-Medium degree was in fact a response to a tendency towards the internationalisation of universities that is taking place throughout Europe. What Nilsson (2003) names *Internationalisation at Home* (henceforth, IaH) is in fact taking place in many European universities wishing to internationalise their classrooms and campuses, such as the UAB, where this PhD thesis took place (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017b). When discussing the rationales for brining internationalisation to higher education levels, Knight (2004:22) provides several, such as human resources development; strategic alliances; commercial trade; nation building; social and cultural development. In this sense, internationalisation at a higher education level is considered to be the adaptation of CLIL to a higher education level, which received a name of ICLHE. In order to gain a deeper understanding of what ICLHE is and which benefits and challenges it brings to higher education settings, see section 2.4.3. in Chapter 2.

1.6. RESEARCH CONTEXT

The present PhD dissertation is part of two larger longitudinal ARMIF research projects on pre-service teacher education which have been funded by the Generalitat de

Catalunya: "The Guided way towards the integrated learning of curricular content and the development of discourse competence" *(Guiatge per a l'aprenentatge integrat de continguts acadèmics i desenvolupament de la competència discursiva*, GUIDEWAY, reference 2014-ARMIF00009); and "Evaluation of the UAB's English-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree internationalization project: process and product" ("*Avaluació del projecte d'internacionalització en el Grau d'Educació Primària-anglès UAB: procés i producte*, PATHWAY, reference 2015 ARMIF 00001). These projects are being carried out at the Faculty of Education at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), Spain. More specifically, they take place within the new English-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree, briefly mentioned in the previous section.

In September 2012 the Faculty of Education at the UAB launched an English-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree (EMI-PEBD), parallel to the Catalan-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree (PEBD) offered in Catalan from 2009, where the language of instruction of a large number of subjects would be English. The two assumptions on which the design of the new degree was built were the following: a) Catalan primary education sector needs a contingent of teachers with high general skills in English; and b) the 'Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education' or ICLHE approach is a good tool for achieving this goal (see Escobar Urmeneta forthcoming 2017a & 2016d). The result was a degree with parallel contents in which 160 out of 210 (between 65 and 80% of) core credits required for the degree are taught through English (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017a & 2016d). Due to the aim to provide all students with equal opportunities to access the degree, there are no admission requirements concerning the level of English, although students are strongly advised to have a B2 level when starting the degree. It is expected, though, that the immersion which students experience over the course of the degree will provide them with the capacities to reach a B2 level at the end of the first academic year and a C1 level at the end of the third year (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017a & 2016d).

Drawing on the need to develop a strategy for a comprehensive evaluation of the results of the English-medium degree, the GUIDEWAY project becomes a central element of this strategy (Escobar Urmeneta Ed., forthcoming 2017a; Escobar Urmeneta

Ed., forthcoming 2016b). In broad terms, its ultimate goal is to provide rational reasons for the continuation (or discontinuation) of the program, the introduction of readjustments and, in the long term, the possibility of reporting future teacher training policies for multilingualism (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017a & 2016c). Three different types of results, which are highly interlinked, have emerged from the GUIDEWAY project: those related to the innovation in primary teacher education, a series of studies which closely examine the implementation of the degree, and the coinage in Catalan of international notions and concepts widely used in the field of higher teacher education (Escobar Urmeneta Ed., forthcoming 2017a; Escobar Urmeneta Ed., forthcoming 2016b). Regarding innovation in teacher training, the GUIDEWAY project draws on the design and implementation of a pedagogic device to support the integrated progress of students' discourse competence in English and the attainment of academic / disciplinary content (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming f). Similarly, the project systematically evaluates the effectiveness of the teaching practices in the EMI-PEBD and the results obtained by students in both the English-medium and Catalan-medium degree, as well as in academic content in general (Escobar Urmeneta, 2017a & 2016c). The opinions of the student-teachers and teachers have also been collected and studied (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2016e).

PATHWAY research project is a continuation of GUIDEWAY project which aims at exploring the Internationalisation at Home dimension implemented in the EMI-PEBD. More specifically, it aims at (a) exploring the processes and experiences of content and language integrated teaching and learning that take place within the English-medium degree, and (b) evaluating the results of such processes.

Framed within these projects, the present PhD thesis is one of their multiple case studies and it aimed to contribute to (a) the GUIDEWAY project by providing a small-scale and qualitative exploration of issues related to the identities of EMI-PEBD students as second language (L2) learners and users, and (b) the PATHWAY project by focusing on the evolution of the student-teachers' imagined identities over the course of the EMI-PEBD and the role of the degree in this identitary process.

1.7. DISSERTATION OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

This section provides an overview of the thesis overall objectives and its structure. The overall aim of the present thesis is to delve into the connections between English language learning, students' evolving identities and the effects of such learning processes on students' investments in English. Therefore, two overarching objectives were stated:

Objective 1 (O1): To explore and describe how and why subjective views towards English of a group of EMI-PEBD student-teachers drive them to invest in the learning of English.

Objective 2 (O2): To investigate the extent to which the student-teachers' engagements in communities of practice through English affect their imagined identities and their investments.

Therefore, this PhD thesis aims to examine and provide a thorough and qualitative description of possible sociolinguistic reasons behind the interest towards English of a group of EMI-PEBD student-teachers and the way in which their identities as L2 learners and/or L2 users affect their interest towards English, and their investments in this language. The thesis also aims to delve deeper into the relationship between the student-teachers' reasons behind their interest towards English, their choice of the EMI-PEBD and their evolving identities within the degree and other communities of practice in English, in the context of the globalisation processes taking place worldwide and, in this particular case, at the UAB.

It is expected that this dissertation will shed some light on the attitudes that English learners who are going to become future primary school teachers have towards English and the role that this language plays in their daily lives. It is also expected that it will contribute to the understanding of the way the student-teachers' investments in the target language affect their evolving identities, an issue that might be of notable significance given their future profession. In this vein, understanding what drives

individuals to learn English in Spain nowadays, and, more importantly, what drives future primary teachers to learn this language and to actively engage in the EMI-PEBD practices over the course of their studies as well as understanding of the role of one's (real and imagined) identities in this process might be highly relevant not only for future generations of teachers-to-be but also for the promotion of more positive attitudes towards this language at administrative, political and educational levels.

After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides a thorough revision of the theoretical framework on which this research draws on. Moving beyond the cognitive approach to motivation in SLA, the chapter addresses the identity approach to language learning. Such an approach heavily draws on general postructuralist theories of language, learning, identity and positioning, using key notions such as "investment", "imagined identities" "imagined communities" or "communities of practice". Similarly, Chapter 2 also describes the role that English has acquired worldwide, its importance in higher education institutions, and the impact that globalisation is having on individuals' identities and, specifically, on English language learners.

Chapter 3 presents the objectives and research questions of three analytic studies which constitute this dissertation. Chapter 4 sets out the description of the research methodology, including the explanation of the context and participants, the methodological approach employed, the sampling procedures, the research tools used in the data collection procedures, the analytical tools through which data were examined and ethical issues taken into consideration.

The next three chapters (5 to 7) present an analysis of the data set carried out in three analytic studies with the aim to achieve the overall objectives exposed above, beginning with a broader approach to the collected data to get a general understanding of the sociolinguistic factors that might have led student-teachers to choose the English-medium degree (Chapter 5), moving on to a more focused analysis of the ways in which Communities of Practice (CoPs) through English affect individuals' (in this case, EMI-PEBD student-teachers') real and imagined identities (Chapter 6), and finally closely

examining the evolution of students-teachers' identities as English learners and English users over the course of the EMI-PEBD (Chapter 7).

Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes and discusses the main findings that came to light through the data analysis bringing forward the main contributions of the present PhD thesis, which may render highly significant for millions of English learners and users in Spain and elsewhere, together with its implications for English language teaching and learning.,. Last but not the least, the chapter also comments on the limitations of this PhD thesis and suggests issues and lines for further research.

1.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This introductory chapter aimed at presenting the reader with the general context and the thematic framework that backs up the present dissertation. First, the main topics that this PhD thesis addresses were presented. A brief outline of the research project which this research makes a small contribution to followed. Finally, an overview of the dissertation, its research questions, objectives and structure were presented.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of reference followed in the present study. Following this brief introduction, the chapter also includes three theoretical sections (2.2., 2.3. and 2.4.), with each one of them containing several subsections, and a chapter summary (2.5.).

Section 2.2. presents a brief introduction on the issues that will be presented in this chapter, as well as it includes a research review of the main theoretical approach that Gardner brought to light when studying second language motivation. (2.2.1.) and the criticism that followed the studies falling into such an approach (2.2.2.).

Section 2.3. is devoted to the identity approach to language learning and has the following parts: the theoretical principles underlying the approach (section 2.3.1.) and the main constructs and ideas it takes into account (section 2.3.2.).

Finally, section 2.4. discusses the uniqueness of the situation in which English is nowadays, and delves into how globalisation and the status of English might be having an impact on individuals' identities and their possible interest towards the target language. This section is divided into two subsections on status of English nowadays (section 2.4.1.) and on globalisation, identity and English learning (section 2.4.2.).

Prior to the presentation of the theoretical framework of this study, it is worth mentioning that the literature review put forth in this chapter is very broad and detailed, and it includes many notions and theories that help to frame the present thesis. Not all these concepts are used in the data analysis, but they need to be outlined, as it is considered that the strong notions used in the analysis and the rest of the theories and concepts presented here are inextrisicably bound together. In other words,

the notions used in the analysis exist in relation to the much wider theoretical framework that follows.

2.2.TRANSITIONING FROM COGNITIVE TO SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACHES TO SLA

As opposed to motivation to learn to do other things, motivation to learn a second or a foreign language involves much more complex variables that play an essential role when it comes its full understanding. It is important to highlight, therefore, that learning a foreign language is a highly complex task that widely differs from any other tasks that individuals might seek to acquire, as it involves engaging with a whole different reality.

As Ryan (2008) puts it, "language is at the core of an individual's social identity, therefore learning and using a second language is infinitely more complex than the mere acquisition of another skill". Furthermore, when defending the importance of understanding L2 motivation, Ryan (2008:45) adds that "it helps explain how individuals perceive their relationships not only with people around them but also with others outside their immediate social networks". Acquiring a new code involves a predisposition or an interest in a linguistic community that shares a new culture and new values, and this complex sociolinguistic reality that a foreign language learner finds himself/herself immersed in is a key point in motivation to learn a foreign language.

This PhD dissertation takes a postructuralist and sociolinguistic approach to second language learning. From this perspective, the notion "investment" (Norton, 1995) better explains language learners' desires to acquire a foreign language, as it takes into account issues of power and identity. Thus, the present thesis follows research on language learning that places identity as a key construct and that draws on postructuralist theories of identity, language and learning. Since Norton first began to call for the need to develop "a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context" (Norton, 1995:12), most research on language and identity has followed such an approach, with identity issues gaining a key role in applied linguistics. This perspective criticizes the quantification of motivation,

while it links the process of second language learning to a wide range of other contextual factors. In order to understand what Norton 's (1995) ground breaking work on identity, investment and language learning stands for, it is important to know where we come from. Therefore, in what follows a brief summary on the cognitive approach to SLA (section 2.2.1) and some of its main criticism will be presented (section 2.2.2).

2.2.1. TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO MOTIVATION

Since the late 1950s, many researchers have been trying to come up with theoretical conceptualizations that could enable all those involved in the field of language learning to delve more deeply into the nature of motivation. In the area of SLA, the term "motivation" has been connected to a wide variety of factors. Dörnyei (2001) used the expression "umbrella-term" to show the complexity of such an abstract concept. Motivation is seen as a key factor in the process of language learning. As Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011:39) argue, second language motivation "has evolved as a rich and largely independent research field, originating in a concern to address the unique social, psychological, behavioural and cultural complexities that acquiring a new communication code entails". According to Dörnyei (2005), the history of L2 motivation can be summarized by distinguishing three different phases. The social psychological period (1959-1990), the cognitive-situated period (during the 1990s), and the process-oriented period (the turn of the century).

The social psychological period originated with the work of Robert Gardner and his associates in Canada. Two social psychologists in Canada, Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert, inspired what would later become the dominant model of Second Language Learning (SLL) motivation. It meant the beginning of social psychology's importance to language learning. Until the early 1990s the work done by Gardner and his associates inspired most of the research conducted on this field. Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model of second language acquisition (SLA) discussed what has been considered the most important concept within the L2 motivational field: the "integrative orientation", defined as "reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972:132). It

was argued that the attitudes towards a certain community of speakers influence the attitudes one has towards their language. Thus, they took a social psychological approach to explain the nature of L2 motivation. This approach distinguishes between integrative orientation and instrumental orientation (Gardner, 1985). The first concept "reflects a positive disposition toward the L2 group and the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community", while the second one refers to "the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or a higher salary" (Dörnyei, 2001:16). According to Dörnyei (Dörnyei, 2001) the general idea of "integrative motive" goes beyond the integrative/instrumental dichotomy and it embodies three components: integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation and motivation.

In addition to the three phases listed above, a fourth phase is said to be emerging into what Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011) call a "socio-dynamic period", in which a wide range of theories that tended to challenge Gardner's model have found agreement on new theoretical frameworks that have moved to the domain of the self and identity.

Gardner's work has faced strong criticism. Some voices started to wonder the extent to which the notion of "integrativeness" could also be applied to contexts other than Canada, especially in EFL contexts, where L2 learners were not in direct contact with the target language community. As Dörnyei (2010:75) observes, "in many language learning situations, and especially with the learning of world languages such as English or French, it is not all clear who owns the L2, and this lack of a specific L2 community undermines Gardner's theoretical concept of integrativeness". Even Gardner himself has continued investigating whether integrative motivation might exist in other settings different from the Canadian context (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), although in recent papers the scholar only proposes light adjustments to his original Socio-Educational model (Gardner, 2001; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

Criticism also came from the apparent and insistent determination to quantify motivation. The integrative concept had always faced with its own complexity and with the complexity of the term "motivation" in general. Researchers studying motivation

have always been faced with the complexity of the term itself and with the disparity of different theories. Even Gardner himself argued that "the old characterization of motivation in terms of integrative vs. instrumental orientation is too static and restricted" (Gardner & Macintyre, 1993:4). The main weakness of this model was found in the nature of the integrative concept, according to which L2 learners had to be "willing to identify with members of another ethnolinguistic group and take on very subtle aspects of their behaviour" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972:135). The notion of integrativeness is said to be too simple, as it becomes pointless "when there is no specific target reference group of speakers" (Ushioda, 2006:149).

The dominance of Global English has contributed to what (Arnett, 2002) called the formation of a bicultural identity: people's identities stay close to their local culture while they also feel a strong association with "a global identity" that makes them feel part of an international community. A new theoretical construct, named "international posture" was developed by Yashima (2002:57) with the aim to explain how learners who have no direct contact with the target language (TL) community end up feeling connected to an L2 community:

> *An interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and [...] openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures.*

This notion meant a remarkable shift that was caused by broadening "the external reference group for integrative attitudes from a specific geographic, linguistic and cultural community to a nonspecific global community of English language users" (Ushioda, 2006:150): being part of a global community is not something external, but rather "one's internal representation of oneself as a de facto member of that global community" (Ushioda, 2006:150). Two important empirical studies that proved this theory were carried out by Dörnyei & Csizér (2002) and Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh (2006), who set the basis for the most important reformulation of the notion of integrativeness, since the focus shifted to the domain of self and identity.

Thus, the spread of English meant remarkable theoretical changes in motivation research. Jenkins (2003), as cited in Ushioda (2006:150) puts it very simple: "to what extent is it meaningful to talk about integrative attitudes when ownership of English

does not necessarily rest with a specific community of speakers?". Theoretical constructs such as Yashima's (2002) "international posture" or Arnett's (2002) notion of "bicultural identity" help to explain the changes that have been taking place in the world and the role that English plays in it. Such reality meant a remarkable shift that was caused by broadening "the external reference group for integrative attitudes from a specific geographic, linguistic and cultural community to a nonspecific global community of English language users" (Ushioda, 2006:150). Bearing this reconceptualization in mind, being part of a global community is not something external, but rather "one's internal representation of oneself as a *de facto* member of that global community" (Ushioda, 2006:150). These new motivational theories were still taking a cognitive perspective on motivation, but there was a focus shifted to the domain of self and identity.

The new state of the world and the broadness of the studies presented so far led Dörnyei to reconceptualise L2 motivation within the domain of self and identity. Such reconceptualization was based on three observations (Dörnyei, 2005). Firstly, a foreign language is much more than a communication tool, as it is involved in most mental activities, it is part of our identity. Secondly, the concept of integrativeness should be looked from a much broader perspective. Finally, empirical research carried out by Dörnyei & Csizér (2002) and Csizér & Dörnyei (2005) points out that the variables of integrativeness, instrumentality, attitudes toward L2 speakers and learning behavioural measures were interconnected. Within Dörnyei's theory, possible selves "are specific representations of one's self in future states, involving thoughts, images, and senses, and are in many ways the manifestations, or personalized carriers, of one's goals and aspiration" (Dörnyei, 2005:99), while they "act as future self-guides, reflecting a dynamic, forward-pointing conception that can explain how someone is moved from the present toward the future" (Dörnyei, 2009:11). Such theoretical shifts resulted in what Dörnyei (2005) named "The L2 Motivational Self System". On the one hand, he draws on the work done by Markus and Nurius (1986:954), in which they distinguished between "ideal selves", "selves that we could become" and "selves that we are afraid of becoming". On the other hand, the model takes into account the fact that the integrative concept developed by Gardner does not "offer links with the new cognitive motivational concepts that had been emerging in motivational psychology" and it is seen as "rather

limiting". (Dörnyei, 2009:10.) The L2 Motivational Self System includes three components (Dörnyei, 2009:29):

- Ideal L2 Self: "the L2-specific facet of one's ideal self".
- Ought-to L2 Self: it "concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes".
- L2 Learning Experience: it "concerns situated, executive motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience".

Overall, this model stands for the idea that L2 motivation will come from the possible vision about oneself as a future proficient L2 speaker. This identification with one's own possible version of themselves in the future might be "the motivational basis for learning the L2, rather than identification with (or integrativeness towards) a particular group of target language speakers" (Ushioda, 2006:150).

In this section a brief summary on L2 motivation history has been presented. Let us know turn to some of the first strongly critical responses to Gardner's model and to the cognitivist view on language learning in general. In next section, some of the first studies that called for the need to reconceptualise the field of second language learning will be examined.

2.2.2. A BREAKDOWN WITH COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF SLA AND MOTIVATION

In his book titled *"The social turn in second language acquisition"* (Block, 2003) summarizes the state of SLA, the most relevant concepts and perspectives towards the acquisition of language and the learning processes it entails. The thoughts, arguments and discussion he provides in this book lead him to call for the need to, at least, consider social context in the field of SLA. Similarly, Block (2007b) discusses the rise of identity in SLA research and provides very interesting insights into the connections between what had been done in SLA research up until then and the new direction that this field of inquiry is taking by focusing on identity as a main construct in the field.

In the field of SLA, applied linguists started to wonder about the possible role of social context in the process of learning second languages, although it opened a deep debate on whether it was possible to consider psycholinguistic, cognitive and social factors at the same time (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Kasper, 1997; Long, 1997; Poulisse, 1997).

Breen (2001), specifically, called for the need to emphasize and consider issues related to the language learner's culture and identity. Without leaving behind the traditional and cognitive aspects in the field, the scholar supports the need to look at learners as "sociohistorically situated human beings" (Block, 2003:124). In fact, a different approach to SLA that was already consistent with Breen's call had already started to expand and develop, namely, the learner identity approach and accounts of language learning experiences (e.g. Bailey & Nunan, 1996; Goldstein, 1996, 2001; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton, 2001; Norton Pierce, 1995; Pavlenko, 2000; Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko, 2002). As Pavlenko and Blackledge argue:

> *Recent research in second language acquisition clearly demonstrates that the relationship between individuals' multiple identities and second language learning outcomes is infinitely more complex than portrayed in the sociopsychological paradigm and cannot be reduce to a few essentialized variables* (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004:6).

Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004b) are very straightforward and highly support the need to leave behind cognitivist perspectives on language learning. According to their perspective, research following a sociopsychological approach ignores "power relations and complex socio-political, socioeconomic, and sociocultural factors which shape interactions between various groups in multilingual societies" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004b:6). The new learner identity approach and research following accounts of language learning experiences draws on the work by many social and cultural theorists, but very specifically on the influential work by (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986) (see section 2.3.1.1.).

What needs to be highlighted here is how this new approach to SLA that placed identity in its core was "more informed by social theory than applied linguistics" and

how it "represented a shift from seeing outcomes of encounters with languages only in linguistic or meta-cognitive terms to seeing them in sociohistorical terms" (Block, 2003:131). This new approach to the study of SLA, which was basically socially-inflected, was criticized by those who censured the fact that it left "the linguistic side of SLA completely marginalised" (Block, 2003:133).

In the following section the identity approach to SLA, a field of research that has caused a great impact on the study of language learning and on which the present study mainly draws on, will be presented.

2.3. THE RISE OF IDENTITY

In this section, the arguments behind the rise of the identity approach to SLA will be presented. First, an introduction to such an approach will be outlined, and this will be followed by the main postructuralist approaches on which it draws (section 2.3.1.).

With the following assertion, Norton signals the beginning of a period in which language learning will be examined at from a totally different perspective, as she aims to delve into the powerful relationship between identity and language learning:

> *SLA theorists have struggled to conceptualize the relationship between the language learner and the social world because they have not developed a comprehensive theory of identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context. Furthermore, they have not questioned how relations of power in the social world impact on social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers* (Norton, 2000:4)

Issues related to identity in language learners had not yet been fully investigated and they seem to be key factors that contribute to the understanding of language learners' behaviour. As Norton (2000:5) argued, “SLA theory needs to develop a conception of identity that is understood with reference to larger, and frequently inequitable, social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction”. In fact, Pennycook's call had already pointed at the "need to rethink language acquisition

in its social, cultural, and political contexts, taking into account gender, race and other relations of power as well as the notion of the subject as multiple and formed within different discourses" (Pennycook, 1990:26). The need to incorporate such conceptualizations into SLA led Norton to propose a theory of sociocultural identity with the aim to contribute to discussions in the language learning field, presented in her paper titled "Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning" (1995).

Norton's attempt to develop a more complex theory in SLL meant a remarkable shift in the SLA research field. Norton's work started to look for inspiration from sociocultural theorists that could provide the SLA field with a more identity-oriented approach. Thus, researchers in this field borrow and cite numerous scholars in the social sciences. The identity approach to second language acquisition that springs from Norton's concerns is heavily based on postructuralist theories of identity, language, positioning and learning (see 2.3.1.).

Since then, this postructuralist approach to identity in second language learning has influenced a wide range of studies and researchers, while this new field itself has significantly grown and expanded as changes in the world were taking place. In fact, in Block's (2007a) book titled "Second Language Identities", he argues that things have actually considerably changed since Norton first began to call for the need to incorporate identity issues into SLA research. The rise of studies dealing with identity as an essential concept has grown hand in hand with the rise of "extensive borrowing from contiguous social sciences fields of inquiry" (Block, 2007a:2).

Therefore, the identity approach underlying this thesis heavily follows the pioneering work carried out by Bonny Norton, (Norton & McKinney, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2002; Norton, 2001; Norton, 1995), while it also draws on the work carried out by other scholars in second language learning research who regard identity as a central construct in their studies. The reason why I decided to take such an approach and to leave behind psychological and cognitivist views on identity is because I strongly consider that language is not a mere communication tool, but it encompasses a wide

range of social meanings that inevitably shape a learner's sense of self. As Norton (1995:13) puts it:

> *It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to -or is denied access to- powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak.*

Overall, this approach highlights the dynamic, unstable and multiple nature of language learners' identities; the role of power and inequality in the formation and social valuing of such identities; and the social structuring of language learning opportunities. It is argued that researchers in the field of second language acquisition should bear in mind the complexity of the process of acquiring new languages and its connections to power and identity (Norton and McKinney, 2011). Broadly speaking, the postructuralist view towards identity has become very influential in the social sciences with its critique to the conception of identity as either being defined by biological factors or by social structure (Block, 2007a). According to Block (2007a:12), both perspectives follow an essentialist ideology, in that both share the assumption that "individuals are formed and shaped [...] by formations which precede them, be these biological or social in nature." Aiming to leave behind structuralism and in response to such positions, many social theorists and researchers began to take a postructuralist perspective to the study of social phenomena by leaving behind the rigid and inflexible conceptions underlying structuralism. (see section 2.3.1.) While being very critical with the quantification of motivation, the identity approach to SLA draws the attention to the relationship between language learning and a wide range of contextual factors, as language "is understood with reference to its social meaning" (Norton, 1995:13). Norton argues that language learning behaviour depends on issues related to power relationships between speakers and that, consequently, issues related to language learner' identities should always be considered taking into account the language learning context (Norton, 2000).

The main theories that guided and shaped Norton's theory, together with the work by other scholars in the social sciences that have inspired second language researchers up until now, will be presented in the following section. As we will see, a wide range of

social science research theorists have strongly and positively contributed to the growth and development of this approach. Four fundamental research areas serve as the theoretical basis of the current identity approach to SLA: postructuralist theories of language, subjectivity and identity theories, postructuralist theories of positioning and postructuralist (or sociocultural) theories of learning.

Thus, in the following sections, the theoretical principles that led to the identity approach to SLA (section 2.3.1.) and the key concepts that shaped and which are associated to this "postructuralism-inflected approach to identity" (Block, 2007a:14) (section 2.3.2) will be presented.

2.3.1. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF THE IDENTITY APPROACH TO SLA

This section is devoted to the postructuralist theories of language, learning, identity and positioning that lie behind the identity approach to SLA and its main constructs.

2.3.1.1. Postructuralist theories of language

Saussure, a Swiss linguist and semiotician, came to be considered one of the fathers of the linguistics of the 20th century. Saussure, (1966) argues that language is a system of signs which organizes the world and makes it intelligible to us. Each sign comprises a form (the "signifier" or "sound-image") and a specific meaning (the "signified"). The association between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary, it is based upon an agreed on convention. Each element of a language can be determined by its dissemblance from other elements within the same language. Meaning, therefore, arises from differences from other signs. The social part of language, from a Saussurian perspective, was limited to the underlying structure and codes that constitute language: "the whole domain of meaning made possible by the language system could be systematically mapped" (Radford & Radford, 2005:67). As Radford & Radford (2005:67) point out, though, "this could only be done if one ignored the realities of actual language use and the manner in which language and meaning shift and change over time".

Building on Saussure's theory of language, postructuralism continues but also questions some of the principles of structuralism: "while structuralism posits that the language system can be described in an objective and scientific manner, post-structuralism suggests that such descriptions are themselves always highly contextual". (Radford & Radford, 2005:61). Saussure's capacity and intention to describe the "state" of language at one specific moment in time limits the validity of his theory of language. Radford & Radford (2005:67) challenge Saussure's view by claiming that "the interpretive nature of language can never produce a final moment of absolute truth":

> *If Saussure is able to describe scientifically the "state" of the language frozen at time X, what is the validity of that interpretation at time Y?* (Radford & Radford, 2005:67).

The understanding of language from a structuralist perspective cannot account for "struggles over the social meaning that can be attributed to signs within a given language" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:77). Therefore, postructuralist theories of language draw on the idea that "language learning engages the identities of learners because language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols, but also a complex social practice through which relationships are defined, negotiated, and resisted" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:77). The latter assertion is strongly relevant to the present investigation.

The present study heavily draws on postructuralist theories of language which have shaped and defined the role that this communication tool has in the formation of identity and, overall, in the social world.

> *While structuralists conceive of signs as having idealized meanings and linguistic communities as being relatively homogeneous and consensual, postructuralists take the position that the signifying practices of societies are sites of struggle, and that linguistic communities are heterogeneous arenas characterized by conflicting claims to truth and power* (Norton, 2000:14)

Norton's assertion is in line with the work developed by scholars who take a postructuralist approach to the study of language and who frame their studies in connection to such postructuralist theories of language (Bakhtin, 1981; Bourdieu, 1977;

Derrida, 1980; Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 1996; Kramsch, 2010; Kress, 1989; Luke, 2004). These theorists discuss and, at the same time, disapprove of, structuralist theories of language, which had been mainly reflected by the work of Ferdinand de Saussure.

The role of language in individuals' identities is a key issue in the identity approach to SLA: language is understood as a social practice that directly affects and engages the identities of learners. In the identity approach to SLA, the postructuralist theories of language of Bourdieu (1977) and Bakhtin (1981) are specifically relevant, as they strongly highlight the relationship between language and identity. Furthermore, scholars who have specifically focused on the notion of "discourse" provide further insights into the understanding of the role of language from a postructuralist approach: Fairclough (1992), Blommaert (2005), Du Gay (1996); Kress (1989), Layder (1997). Whereas all share a postructuralist view, the specificities of each one should be highlighted.

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist, political activist and intellectual. He developed a sociological theory that focuses on the connections between identity and symbolic power, while he emphasized the role of language in the formation of identity, to the extent that his theory has been repeatedly cited as a key postructuralist theory of language on which the identity approach to language learning has found profound insights.

Bourdieu (1977) determined that language and social life are "inextricably bound together" (Jackson, 2008:22) and he claimed that language should always be studied taking into account the social, historical, and political contexts in which it is used. Bourdieu's work (1977) has relevant implications for the identity approach to SLA. His postructuralist theory of language clearly suggests that the process of learning a language and the language learners' identities are related to each other. As Norton & Toohey (2002:115) put it, "language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols, but also a complex social practice in which the value and meaning ascribed to an utterance are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks it". Bourdieu refers to "legitimate" and "illegitimate" speakers, arguing that

language competence is attributed in relation to the speaker's "right to speech" or his or her "power to impose reception" (Bourdieu, 1977:648).

Bourdieu (1977:652) argues that "speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it", as linguistic exchanges are always encounters that should be seen as situated, as the agents involved are bound to socially structured resources. Bourdieu refuses structuralist theories of language, the theorists of which "conceive of signs as having idealized meanings and linguistic communities as being relatively homogeneous and consensual" (Norton &McKinney, 2011:77). He highlights the importance of power issues between the interlocutors involved in speech and he makes clear that the value someone's speech is always strongly connected to the value ascribed to the person who speaks, who is, at the same time, part of larger social networks and relationships that define him/her. Language is not seen as a mere communication tool, but as a mechanism of power that positions speakers in the social space where they belong. Such power relations determine the individuals' "right to speak" and, as a consequence, their legitimacy as speakers. With his own words, "utterances are not […] signs to be understood and deciphered; they are also *signs of wealth*, intended to be evaluated and appreciated, and *signs of authority*, intended to be believed and obeyed" (Bourdieu, 1991:502). In his paper titled "The economics of linguistic exchanges" Bourdieu (1977:646), summarized the importance of the shift his theory contributed to:

> *A sociological critique subjects the concepts of linguistics to a threefold displacement. In place of grammaticalness it puts the notion of acceptability, or, to put it another way, in place of "the" language (langue), the notion of the legitimate language. In place of relations of communication (or symbolic interaction) it puts relations of symbolic power, and so replaces the question of the meaning of speech with the question of the value and power of speech. Lastly, in place of specifically linguistic competence, it puts symbolic capital, which is inseparable from the speaker's position in the social structure.*

The importance of power issues in linguistic exchanges leads us to another key concept in Bourdieusian theory: the notion of capital. The position that an agent (an individual) occupies in a certain field, depends on the agent's capital. Bourdieu distinguishes various forms of capital, arguing that "it is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all

its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory" (Bourdieu, 1986:46). He numbers various types of capital: economic, social, cultural, linguistic and symbolic (Bourdieu, 1991). Economic capital is "immediately and directly convertible into money" (Bourdieu, 1986:47). Social capital is "made up of social obligations ("connections")" and it is "convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility" (Bourdieu, 1986:47). Cultural capital "is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications" (Bourdieu, 1986:47). As Jackson (2008:26) specifies, "fields, and the actors located within them, determine the value of this capital". Linguistic capital refers to "the mastery of and worth of a language in a particular sociocultural context" (Jackson, 2008:26), while it can be considered as a form of "embodied cultural capital" (Jackson, 2008:26). As stated above, language is not only a communication tool, but also a form of positioning within a certain field. Finally, symbolic capital represents a general framework for all the above forms of capital. The notions of cultural and symbolic capital are specifically important for the theoretical framework underlying this dissertation, and, thus, it will be further discussed in section (section 2.3.2.2.). The fact that Bourdieu extends the concept of capital beyond the material and economic assets is significant, in that it underlies the assumption that other forms of capital have a lot to do with power relations and inequality. According to Gaventa (2003:6), cultural capital plays a key role in societal power relations, as this "provides the means for a non-economic form of domination and hierarchy, as classes distinguish themselves through taste".

Bourdieu developed a series of conceptual tools that are strongly connected to the postructuralist notions of language and identity. I will now aim to delve into such notions in order to grasp a wider view of the Bourdieusian framework. His *theory of practice* includes relevant notions such as field, habitus, capital or symbolic violence, which turn out to be basic theoretical grounds for the approach taken in this study. Field is defined as follows:

> *In analytic terms, a field may be defined as a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence, and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation... in the structure of the distributions of species of power (or capital)whose possession commands access to*

> *the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.).* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:97).

While the notion of field refers to the settings, the social and institutional arenas where social agents (individuals) interact, habitus refers to the "non-discursive aspects of culture that link individuals to particular social groups"(Jackson, 2008:23). Simply put, agents' daily practices or learned habits prompt individuals to act in certain ways or, as he puts it, to develop a set of practices that follow certain socialised norms which guide their behaviour and thinking. Thus, habitus is defined as follows:

> *The way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them (Wacquant, 2005:316; as cited in Navarro, 2006:16).*

Habitus are influenced by field and, at the same time, fields are influenced by habitus. Habitus "is not fixed or permanent, and can be changed under unexpected situations or over a long historical period" (Navarro, 2006:16). Therefore, for Bourdieu, possibilities of agency can be found within "the bounded structures of society and self" (Jackson, 2008:25), although in Weedon's feminist postructuralist theory individuals are accorded "greater human agency" (Norton, 2000:8). Bourdieu recognizes that habitus is neither a result of free will nor something totally regulated by structures, and that it is reproduced unconsciously, "without any deliberate pursuit of coherence... without any conscious concentration" (Bourdieu, 1984:170).

In some situations, individuals might have to face a certain "lack of congruence" between habitus and field: "when people enter new fields, they naturally bring with them sets of dispositions (habitus); these behaviours and worldviews may not be a comfortable fit within the new field" (Jackson, 2008:24). In such situations, Bourdieu's view sustains that it is not possible to fully adapt to the new field. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and practices have faced criticism due to the strong emphasis on structures (Sealey & Carter, 2004). Bourdieu's conceptualization of society and its structures provides a very relevant and interesting approach to the study of language, as it turns out to be affected, as all forms of habitus, by the social structures that shape fields and individual's practices. As Norton & McKinney (2011:78) highlight, "Bourdieu's foregrounding of power relations in language use has important

implications for how language learners are positioned by others, for the opportunities they get to speak, and for the varieties of language that we teach and that they use".

Particularly relevant to the identity approach to SLA is also the theory of language developed by Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986). Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a Russian philosopher, literary critic and cultural theorist who developed a theory that aimed to find the connections between identity, culture and language. He took a sociological line by arguing that speech is always situated and directed at someone. Hence, language needs to be looked at taking contextual factors into account and in relation to one's dialogue with others and the meanings that arise in such a dialogue. Language, according to his vision, is much more than grammatical structures and it can never be detached from ideology. Beyond the aim of getting a message through, the speaker "presupposes not only the existence of the language system he [or she] is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances -his [or her] own and others- with which his [or her] given utterance enters into one kind of relation or another" (Bakhtin, 1986:70). The listener gains understanding through active response to the speaker's utterance. Thus, Bakhtin argues that meaning always surfaces within the dialogue itself. The meaning found in a dialogue, in this sense, emerges on the basis of the interlocutors' socio-cultural background and their understanding of the world. Norton & McKinney (2011:77) draw attention to the author's social standpoint: "finding answering words for others, joining the chain of speech communication is as much a social as a linguistic struggle".

Bakhtin viewed identity as a non-fixed attribute and followed postructuralist views towards the formation of the self. Dialogue, from a Bakhtinian perspective, constructs a sense of self and shapes one's identity. Through a creative process, identities are formed and shaped in a dialogical relation with other selves and it is only through and because of these relations with the "other" that self-awareness arises and opens up to the possibility of expansion: "I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another" (Bakhtin, 1984:287). This author investigated "how the self emerges in a moral and creative act; how it manifests itself in a dialogical relation with other, equal selves; and how it rebels

against the constraints imposed on it by official sociocultural hierarchies" (Marchenkova, 2005:183).

Culture is understood as the result of human interaction and social relations. Intercultural communication is something necessary in order to gain a sense of self-awareness and in order to comprehend one's own culture, as it is only through interaction with other ways of life that we as individuals get a sense of who we are.

Postructuralist theories of identity have been also framed from a discourse point of view. Firstly, in his book titled "Consumption and Identity at work", Paul du Gay refers to a "linguistic turn" in cultural analysis, by arguing that "language is assumed to be subordinate to and in the service of the world of "fact"" (Du Gay, 1996:41). From his perspective, discourse is considered concurrently the language itself and the process of knowledge generation. Du Gay's linguistic turn acknowledges the fact that language is no longer looked at from a simplistic perspective, but it is "shaped by the environment within which we live" (DuGay, 1996:43). The author emphatically reveals that many scholars in various fields "have declared language to bring facts into being and not simply to report on them" (DuGay, 1996:42). His definition of "discourse" is the following:

> *A group of statements which provide a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. Thus the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representation and the way that knowledge is institutionalized, shaping social practices and setting new practices into play* (du Gay, 1996:43).

Secondly, Derek Layder's, a British sociologist, adopts a similar position. In his book "Understanding Social Theory", (Layder, 2006: 199) highlights the fact that language is never "innocent": "discourses are expressions of power relations and reflect the practices and positions that are tied to them". With the help of a clear example involving a doctor and a patient, discourse is understood by Layder as all that can be "thought, written or said about a particular thing such as a product […], or a topic or specialist area of knowledge"(Layder, 2006:199).

Thirdly, one of the broader interpretations of such a term was provided by James Paul Gee (1996, 2004), an American linguist who has worked on several areas within linguistics. Gee emphasized the role of semiotics in language and he distinguished between "discourse" (little "d") and "Discourses" (capital D and plural form). While the former refers to language-in-use, the latter concerns the combinations of both language and other social practices (e.g. values, food, ways of thinking, behaviour). Gee defines "Discourses" as follows:

> *Ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes. A Discourse is a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk and often write so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize* (Gee, 1996:127).

Finally, Jan Blommaert, a Professor of Language, Culture and Globalisation at Tilburg University (The Netherlands), dedicated an entire book ("Discourse") to the definition of his understanding of the term "discourse" (Blommaert, 2005). Blommaert follows Gee's broad conception of discourse, arguing that it "comprises all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns and developments of use" (Blommaert, 2005:3). For Blommaert, there is no such thing as "a non-social use of discourse, just as there is no such thing as a non-cultural or non-historical use of it" (Blommaert, 2005:4). As Blommaert puts it, "discourse is what transforms our environment into a socially and culturally meaningful one". However, this "meaning-construction" process, as he calls it, is dependent on social differences as it takes place under certain conditions which cannot be used by everyone in the same way (both linguistic and sociocultural conditions).

According to Block (2007a:16), putting together the work undertaken by du Gay (1996), Layder (1997), Gee (1996) and Blommaert (2005), "discursive activity means any semiotic behaviour on the part of an individual which counts as the expression of a subject position (or subjectivity)". Block (2007a:16) summarizes the contributions of the authors cited above by arguing that all their definitions point to the assertion that "D/discourses may be seen as resources of identity construction". It was necessary to look at the work undertaken by these scholars in order to understand the importance of discourse and its relationship with identity construction. As it will be further discussed

in section (section 2.3.2), the identity approach to SLA analyses language learning from a critical discourse perspective (Norton, 1997), where discourses are " the complexes of signs and practices that organize social existence and social reproduction" (Norton, 2000:14). In Table 1, the concepts addressed in this section that are especially relevant for the present study are summarized:

Table 1. Postructuralist theories of language

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Postructuralist theories of language: key concepts and ideas</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">✓ Language is socially-inflected.
✓ Language learning and learners' identities are inextrinsicably bound together (Bourdieu, 1977; Bakhtin, 1981).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bourdieu (1977)
✓ Role of power issues between interlocutors.
✓ Notions: legitimate speaker, illegitimate speaker, cultural capital, symbolic capital, right to speech</td><td>Bakhtin (1981)
✓ Dialogue shapes one's identity.</td></tr>
</table>

2.3.1.2. Postructuralist theories of identity

Defining identity seems to be a complex task. Bearing in mind all the definitions and theoretical frameworks that have attempted to define such a term, being these very complex and subject to a wide range of sociocultural contexts, it is worth mentioning that we should always be aware of the conflicting nature of identity, which makes it extremely difficult to define who one is, a task that constantly changes over time and space. Block (2007a:20) seems to provide us with a meaningful attempt to define what identity is:

> *The ongoing push and pull and give and take of discursive activity translates into the constant positioning and repositioning and the constant definition and redefinition of who one is* (Block, 2007a:20)

Research on language learning that follows the approach to identity, which Norton brought to light, has been influenced by the work of theorists such as West, Bourdieu, Weedon and Cummins (Norton, 1997), or Hall and Bhabha (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Working he the feminist postructuralist tradition, Chris Weedon's theory of subjectivity is often described as the principal base for most attempts to describe something as vague as the term "identity". In spite of the fact that she hardly uses the notion "identity" (she refers to "subjectivities"), this social theorist does a great job in developing a theory of subjectivity in which she includes individual experiences and relations of social power. She defines "subjectivity" as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (Weedon, 1987:32). Overall, Weedon considered the need for a "theory of the relation between language, subjectivity, social organization and power" (Weedon, 1987:12).

Weedon outlines three main defining characteristics of subjectivity (Norton, 1995) : the multiple nature of the subject; the subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time. First, Weedon's conception of identity (the notions "subject" and "subjectivity") is here understood as the product of our relations with other subjects: either one might be subject *of* a set of relationships or subject *to* a set of relationships (Norton & McKinney, 2011). Following this perspective "postructuralism depicts the individual as diverse, contradictory, and dynamic; multiple rather than unitary, decentered rather than centered" (Norton, 1995:15). Second, social identity is "multiple and contradictory" (Norton, 1995:15), as subjectivity is considered to be a site of struggle. Finally, the third defining characteristic of subjectivity is its changing quality, which has relevant implications for educational intervention (Norton, 1995).

Individuals are socially constructed and their subjectivities are constantly changing and being formed through "thought, speech and other forms of communication" (Block, 2003:79). As opposed to humanist/structuralist views towards identity, the notion of identity, far from being a simple term to define, is no longer seen as "unified, internally completely coherent and uncontested, and stable over both time […] and space […]" (Block, 2003:79). Subjectivity is constantly constructed and socially produced, it is

"precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly reconstituted in discourse each time we think of speak" (Weedon, 1987:33). Thus, Weedon put her line of argument further by highlighting the role of language in the construction of individuals' subjectivity. According to her, "language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested", while it is also "the place where our sense of selves, our subjectivity, is constructed" (1987:21). Moving beyond Saussure's theory of language (see section 2.3.1.1.), Weedon proposes "to question the location of social meaning in fixed signs" (1987:24-25).....:

> *How we live our lives as conscious thinking subjects, and how we give meaning to the material social relations under which we live and which structure our everyday lives, depends on the range and social power of existing discourses, our access to them and the political strength of the interests which they represent* (Weedon, 1987:26).

Weedon's notion of discourse and its role in the construction of the self heavily draws on the work of Michael Foucault (1981, 1986, 1988). With the aim to uncover the connections between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power, Foucault had already brought into play the concept "discursive field". Weedon (1987:35) follows his work and defines such a term as "competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes", while she argues that discursive fields "offer the individual a range of modes of subjectivity". The church, the education system, the media, the family... All these institutions are placed in and also structured by a specific discursive field. Let us now delve into this notion further.

Within Weedon's conception of social identity, she emphasizes that subjectivity is "constantly reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak" (Weedon, 1987:32). Weedon's conception of "subjectivities" is directly linked to her understanding of language in the social world. Language is seen as an essential representation of subjectivity, as part of who we are as individuals. Very interestingly, Block (2007a) highlights Weedon's use of the term discourse to emphasize the role of language in the social world, arguing that its interpretation in the social sciences goes beyond the written and spoken text.

West connects desire with identity: "the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation and the desire for security and safety" (Norton, 2000:8). According to West, desires cannot be detached from a society's distribution of material resources. Depending on how accessible such resources are to individuals, they will understand their relationship with the world one way or another, as well as their possibilities for the future. As Norton (2000:8) puts it, "it is a person's access to material resources that will define the terms on which desires will be articulated", while a person's identity "will shift in accordance with changing social and economic relations". West argues that the question "Who am I?" is inextrisicably connected to the question "What am I allowed to do?". The latter question, at the same time, is inevitably related to the possibilities of desires' realizations that one's resources afford.

Cummins (1996) discusses the role of power in interpersonal and intergroup relations, arguing that it can be mutually generated when interacting with others. He distinguishes between coercive and collaborative relations of power arguing that the former refer to the power exercised by a dominant individual, group or country, while the latter serves to empower rather than to marginalize. Both dominant and subordinate groups are able to exercise power, even though the realm of influence of such groups will embrace more or less depending on their capacity to exercise such power. Coercive relations of power tend to create situations in which resources are inequitably divided in our society. The scholar points out that "the power relationship is additive rather than subtractive. Power is created with others rather than being imposed on or exercised over others" (Cummins, 1996:15). From his perspective, the notion of power seems to be very relevant in language learning classrooms and communities, since through such relations of power language learners' range of possible identities are enabled or constrained.

Overall, Weedon's theories of subjectivity have been paramount for most identity theorists in the field of SLA. Her postructuralist view of the world and identity was just a starting point in the social sciences research world, as other scholars in the social sciences have also greatly contributed to recent approaches to theorizing identity, which have greatly contributed to the expansion of the identity approach to SLA.

Even though most research on identity considers its construction in relation to power issues, there are different approaches to theorizing identity depending on where scholars place their emphasis. However, as Norton (2000:19) argues, referring to social identity and cultural identity, the commonalities between such standpoints have become less and less marked, while she has come to see the difference between them as more fluid. In fact, in Norton (2006), she argues that the limits between the two concepts have become less and less marked, leading her to reconceptualise her initial Social Identity Theory to a Sociocultural Theory of Identity.

Hall (1997,1992) and Bhabha (1994) are two cultural theorists who contributed to the conception of identity of the SLA's identity's approach. Stuart Hall (1992, 1997) and Homi Bhabha (1994), two post-colonial theorists, also based their work on postructuralist identity theory, moving beyond essentialized categories.

Nowadays, the borders of our countries and cultures have become blurred, leaving room to greater mobility and active exchange of views and ways of seeing the world. By developing a theory of cultural identity, the cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall (born 1932) also contributed to the attempts to conceptualise identity. Hall's position emphasizes that "identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (Hall, 1996a:4). Identity is seen as dynamic, subject of power relations and more clearly defined by the marking of difference, a position that aims to leave behind the naturally-constituted unity that was traditionally attributed to this term:

> *Above all, and directly contrary to the form in which they are constantly invoked, identities are constructed through, not outside, difference. This entails the radically disturbing recognition that it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its constitutive outside that the "positive" meaning of any term -and thus its "identity"- can be constructed* (Hall, 1996a:4-5).

Hall regards identity as in-process, as endlessly active, as the constant interweaving between the "inside" and the "outside", between the personal world and the public world, as each of them are formed in relation to the other. Hall uses a medical word to

express such an idea: identity "sutures" the subject into the structure, "making both reciprocally more unified and predictable" (Hall, 1996b:598).

In his book "The Location of Culture" (1994) Bhabha discusses the emergence of new forms of culture, basing his work on interculturality and multiculturality. From a postmodern perspective, Bhahba intends to break the pure and traditional dichotomies such as West/non-West, as well as he calls for the need to understand cultural differences as being based on hybridities created in moments of historical transformation.

The state of the world in modernity creates intercultural spaces, what he names "third space". "third spaces" could be described as these new realities that emerge from these new forms of hybrid life. Identity, from his perspective, is seen as "socially constructed, hybrid, fluid, plural and relational" (Jackson, 2008:39).

Before concluding this section, it is important to take into account that the work developed by the scholars listed above complements each other and it is interweaved in terms of how they define and see the relationship between identity, language learning and power. Specifically, insights from West (1992), Weedon (1997) and Cummins (1996) are very relevant when it comes to the understanding of such relationship. Similarly, Bourdieu's work (1997) also takes part in such complementarity of theories, although it was not cited in this section, as his work was already presented in section 2.3.1.1. In the same line, such views are extended and enriched by the work developed by cultural theorists such as Hall or Bhabha. Furthermore, social theorists such as Giddens (1991), Beck (1992) and Bauman (1992) also provide interesting insights into the conceptualization of identity, while they emphasize the impact that modern life has on individuals' identities. In sum, the work of these scholars turns out to be extremely intertwined when it comes to the understanding of a postructuralist view on identity and the current state of the world. Such postructuralist view on identity is the framework in which the present study builds on. In Table 2, the key concepts and ideas behind this section are summarized:

Table 2. Postructuralist theories of identity

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Postructuralist theories of identity: key concepts and ideas</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">✓ Key authors: Weedon (1997), West(1992), Cummins (1996), Bourdieu (1997), Hall (1996a), Bhabha (1994)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Weedon (1997)
✓ Weedon's theory of subjectivity (identities = subjectivities): she develops a theory of subjectivity including individual experiences and relations of social power.

✓ Three defining characteristics of subjectivity: the multiple nature of the subject; the subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time (Norton, 1995).

✓ Language is seen as a representation of subjectivity.</td><td>West (1992)
✓ West: identity = desire
✓ “Who am I?” = “What am I allowed to do?”

Cummins (1996)
✓ Role of “power” in interpersonal and intergroup relations

Hall (1996a)
✓ Hall’s conceptualisation of “identity”: multiply constructed, dynamic, fragmented and subject of power relations.</td></tr>
</table>

2.3.1.3. Postructuralist theories of positioning

Subject positions adopted by individuals when communicating have also been analysed and discussed in the social sciences. Several scholars interested in discourse and identity have focused on how individuals position themselves in front of others and how they are positioned by others.

In his “Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”, Goffman (1959) discussed how individuals present themselves, drawing on dramaturgical metaphors. Face-to-face interactions come hand in hand with theatrical performance, as, when facing such interactions, individuals will always try to control and guide what others think of them, according to the different settings in which they engage with. In sum, the author argued that when interacting in different social contexts, there is always something that individuals “give” (they consciously present) but he also adds that there is something that individuals “give off” (what the audience imagines and the conclusions they get from a certain performance).

> *The first involves verbal symbols or their substitutes which he uses admittedly and solely to convey the information that he and the others are known to attach to these symbols. This is communication in the traditional and narrow sense. The second involves a wide range of action that others can treat as symptomatic of the actor, the expectation being that the action was performed for reasons other than the information conveyed in this way* (Goffman, 1959:2).

Judith Butler (Butler, 2004), an American philosopher, develops a performative theory of gender, in which she states that gender representations are day-to-day "acting" or performances. Being applied to identity in general, Block (2007a:17) comes to the conclusion that "if Butler's views on gender are expanded so that they refer to identity in general, then it is easy to see identities and subject positions as performances, that is bodily and linguistic enactments of discourses at particular times and in particular places".

Davies and Harré (1990, 1999) took a slightly different perspective by interpreting individuals' communicative processes through the notion of "discourse positioning". They argue that "a subject position is made available within a discourse" (Davies & Harré, 1990:53). Davies and Harré's (1990) notion of "discourse positioning" refers to how people conceive themselves and others, not only through the use of language, but also through other semiotic behaviour (practices, body movement, clothing, etc.). They define "positioning" as "the discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines" (Davies and Harré, 1999:37). In Block's (2007a:19) words "all actors will position themselves and others according to their sense of what constitutes a coherent narrative for the particular activity, time and place".

Following this assertion, Davies and Harré (1999:45) are critical with Goffman's work, in that it "takes for granted that alignments exist prior to speaking and shape it, rather than that alignments are actual relations of jointly produced in the very act of conversing". Positioning Theory (Davies & Harré, 1990) looks at the discursive construction of self and other, as well the adoption of subject positions for self and other constantly occurs in individuals' daily lives, each time they speak and/or interact with others. Subject positions are articulated and connected with individuals' discourses,

that is, discourse enables and allows certain subject positions. In other words, positioning helps to "locate" individuals within the social world, at the same time it provides people with ways to look at this world. I shall quote Davies & Harré (1990:3) in order to clarify this point:

> *We shall argue that the constitutive force of each discursive practice lies in its provision of subject positions. A subject positions incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular positions as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned.*

Davies and Harré's positioning theory is directly connected to the formation of individuals' identity through the adoption of certain discourses. Identity and the self are discursively constructed in the course of communication. Such identity is constructed by positioning oneself and also by being positioned by others. Moreover, positioning takes place in the present, but also in the past and in the future. Norton's work on "imagined identities" and "imagined communities" (see section 2.3.2.3.), is also based on positioning theory, in that such notion is used to explain how learners adopt "imagined" positions in "imagined communities" constituted by other speakers of the language they are learning. Table 3 outlines the main ideas presented in this section.

Table 3. Postructuralist theories of positioning

Postructuralist theories of positioning: key concepts and ideas
✓ Key authors: Goffman (1959), Butler (2004), Davies & Harré (1990, 1999)
Davies and Harré (1990, 1999) ✓ "**Discourse positioning**" (how people conceive themselves and others, through language, practices, clothing…). ✓ **Positioning** helps to "**locate**" individuals within the social world, as well as it provides individuals with ways to look at this world. ✓ Individuals' identities are formed through the **adoption of certain discourses.** ✓ Identity is constructed by **positioning oneself** and by **being positioned by others**, in the present, in the past or in the future.

2.3.1.4. Postructuralist theories of learning

Postructuralist theories of learning have been crucial to the understanding of SLA from an identity-inflected point of view. From this perspective, acquiring a second language is no longer considered an individual and mental process, but it is explored bearing in mind the sociocultural context in which speakers are immersed in. The acquisition of languages is researched and analysed within a social and historical background. The fact that the main objectives of the present study are strongly linked to learning processes, namely, the learning of English among student-teachers at the UAB, cannot be left aside. The expansion of these student-teachers' English mastery is key in the present investigation and, thus, in this section the key learning theories which this thesis draws on will be presented.

Learning encompasses much more than the acquisition of new knowledge. It is situated and, as it involves social participation, it also involves the construction and shaping of one's identity. Identity is shaped within and is shaped by communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where individuals interact, live and build their self-concept. Block (2007a:26) emphasizes the fact that this "two-way action" perspective is also shared by sociologists such as Bourdieu (1977) or Giddens (1991).Rather than regarding SLA as an individual and mental process, postructuralist theories of learning consider sociocultural variables of paramount importance. Language learners are members of communities and their learning processes are understood as a relational activity. Following this idea, Norton and McKinney (2011:79) point out that "a shift from seeing learners as individual language producers to seeing them as members of social and historical groups calls for an examination of the conditions for learning, or the appropriation of practices, in any particular community".

Evnitskaya (2012:28) refers to Lave and Wenger's (1991) *Community of Practice approach* as "one of the recent Neo-Vygotskian socioculturally-oriented perspectives on learning". Vygoskian Sociocultural theory of human learning and development was considered the first attempt to incorporate social variables in learning research. Such

theory of learning drew the attention to the relationship between mental functioning and cultural, institutional and historical contexts:

> *The basic goal of a sociocultural approach to mind is to create an account of human mental processes that recognizes the essential relationship between these processes and the cultural, historical, and institutional settings* (Wertsch, 1991:6)

Thus, it is important to introduce some of the key concepts of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT), as the notion of "community of practice" is consistent with its main assumptions. However, it is worth emphasizing that the present study does not aim to analyse how English is learned, but it aims to delve into the connections between the learning of this language, identity and their effect on students' investments in English. More specifically, it aims to investigate student-teachers' investments in the target language (see section 2.3.2.2.) and the symbolic and material resources they associate with its learning process.

Whether language learning had to be considered as a cognitive process or had to be looked at from a more sociolinguistic view has been widely discussed in many occasions, especially at the beginning of what Block (2003) called "the social turn in second language acquisition". Recognizing the fact that psycholinguistics had dominated most of the research in SLA for many decades, (Lantolf, 2002; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Pennycook, 2001), sociocultural dimensions of language learning became a serious issue in research in this field. Firth and Wagner (1997), for example, discussed and made a critique on the individual psycholinguistic bias in most of the research in SLA up to that time, while they suggested to incorporate a more sociolinguistic perspective into second language learning. While some authors neglected such a suggestion (Long, 1997; Poulisse, 1997), others began to consider the possible gains of incorporating sociolinguistic views of language behaviour into language acquisition research (Kasper, 1997). Following such debates, Sociocultural Theory offered a practical framework in which many research in the SLA field seemed to fit in (Lantolf, 2000a, 2000b; Lantolf & Appel, 1994).

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) was a Russian developmental psychologist who developed a cultural-historical approach to human development. The importance of Vygotsky's theories lies in the fact that, for the first time, the sociocultural context is regarded as a key element in human development processes (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Vygotksy emphasized "the uniqueness of the social milieu", as "he conceived of the sociocultural setting as the primary, and determining, factor in the development of higher forms of human mental activity and called for the redefinition of development from a quantitative to a qualitative problem" (Lantolf & Appel, 1994:6).

As far as the role of language in his developmental theory is concerned, the Russian psychologist regards language as a psychological tool that mediates social activity, both through external speech and through what he calls "private speech" or "inner?? speech". Thus, the Vygotskian theoretical framework determines that "cognitive development and higher order psychological functions (e.g., language) are socially and culturally determined" (Jackson, 2008:15). The key point in Vygotsky's work is that it meant an important shift that opened doors that aimed at leaving behind the exclusively cognitivist view towards learning and development. However, even though such a theory "recognizes the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artefacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking", the fact that it was a "theory of mind" (Lantolf, 2004:30-31) cannot be forgotten.

As Block (2003) argues, it is difficult to frame SLA research using both cognitivist and social approaches to language learning. In addition, Vygotsky considers language as a "psychological tool" that mediates both our external social relations and our internal mental activity. This view, according to Block, does not leave much space to analyse language from a social theory perspective, which is the main aim of the present dissertation (Block, 2003). A brief summary of some of the principal constructs that arise from his theory, thus, were considered necessary to introduce what I see as the most significant contribution to research into learning for the identity approach that this dissertation is framed in: the *Community of Practice approach* (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

Etienne Wenger, together with Jean Lave, wrote a book in which their aim was to come up with a general theory of learning that could give response to several ethnographic studies of apprenticeship. In that book (Lave and Wenger, 1991), they focused on the notion "legitimate peripheral participation", but, even though they used them in their arguments, they did not fully analyse the role of identity and the notion of "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

Jean Lave, a social anthropologist, and Etienne Wenger, a former teacher and doctorate in artificial intelligence, published their "Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation" in 1991, which became a turning point in the way to understand human learning practices. With the idea that "knowing" is essentially a social act and that "learning is ubiquitous in ongoing activity, though often unrecognized as such" (Lave, 1993:5), the approach they developed is key in the understanding of the identity approach to SLA. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) analysed the conditions under which individuals acquire knowledge and they developed a model of "situated learning", suggesting that learning always comes with engagement with communities of practice.

It is worth mentioning that the understanding of learning as participation or, in other words, the social theory of learning that Wenger addresses, is caught up in the middle of those theories of social structure that totally deny agency and those theories of situated experience which ignore structure: "through these local actions and interactions learning reproduces and transforms the social structure in which it takes place" (Wenger, 1998:13). Practice and identity theories, as Wenger highlights, offer a way to look at society which encompasses characteristics of both structure and agency.

The main point that this theory of learning takes into account is the fact that learning is understood as social participation. Such participation refers "not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relationship to these communities" (Wenger, 1998:4). Learning takes place through our practices and the meaning that we attribute to these practices, while all these experiences in the world shape our identity. Wenger's

theory of learning integrates several components, which are mutually dependent, that help us to understand social participation as a process of learning and of knowing: *meaning, practice, community* and *identity*. Let us know turn to look at these notions and the connections between them.

The assumption that learning "has a beginning and an end; that it is best separated from the rest of our activities; and that it is the result of teaching" (Wenger, 1998:3) does not take into account the complexity of what learning involves and how it is related to social participation. From Lave and Wenger's point of view, social participation in communities of practice and learning processes are inextrinsicably bound together.

Learning is always "situated", it occurs "in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world" (Wenger, 1998:3) and it always occurs within particular communities of practice, as it is "fundamentally a social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as human beings capable of knowing" (Wenger, 1998:3). The notion of practice "connotes doing [...] in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do" (Wenger, 1998:47). He provides a clear explanation of his concept of "communities of practice" by defining them as "the prime context in which we can work out common sense through mutual engagement", while he adds that "the concept of practice highlights the social and the negotiated character of both the explicit and the tacit in our lives" (Wenger, 1998:47). The term "community of practice" appears to make sense, in that "practices" and "community" are two terms that may be more easily understood considering the relationship with one another: according to Wenger (1998:45), the practices that result from learning process "reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations" and such practices end up being "the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise". Thus, social participation, refers to "not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relationship to these communities" (Wenger, 1998:4).

"Practice is, first and foremost, a process by which we can experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful" (Wenger, 1998:51). Wenger argues that practice involves the continuous attempts to find meaningfulness, in that, as a work of art, "it is the meanings we produce that matter" (Wenger, 1998:51). He refers to the term "negotiation of meaning" to address the reality that meaning is never pre-existing nor it is easy to find, but it is constantly negotiated: "this perspective does not imply a fundamental distinction between interpreting and acting, doing and thinking, or understanding and responding. All are part of the ongoing process of negotiating meaning" (Wenger, 1998:54). "Meaning exists neither in us, nor in the world, but in the dynamic relation of living in the world" (Wenger, 1998:54).

During negotiation of meaning two processes interact: participation and reification. While participation refers to "the social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprises" (Wenger, 1998:55), reification signals the "engagement with the world as productive of meaning" (Wenger, 1998:58). The meanings we attribute to our experiences and our reality end up becoming a reality of their own, an abstraction that helps us to understand the world as we look at it. Wenger, for instance, exemplifies such a term with his own explanation of this notion. Both processes constantly interweave and, in fact, they complement each other and they do not exist on isolation.

According to Wenger, communities of practice are everywhere and every person belongs to more several of them, which constantly change as time goes by. Even though membership to such communities is never explicit, we are all aware of which communities we belong to a certain extent. The process of learning is understood as the act of participating in communities of practice and it is an inevitable process that characterizes human beings. Living and participating in the world involves learning, even when learning is not our main purpose.

Wenger argues that communities of practice are surrounded by a periphery of their practice that connects that particular community with the rest of the world and opens doors to different levels of participation: "the ability to have multiple levels of

involvement is an important characteristic of communities of practice, one that presents opportunities for learning both for outsiders and for communities" (Wenger, 1998:117).

In what Block (2007a) calls a "welcoming context", the process of participating in a community of practice begins with a "legitimate peripheral participation" through exposure. However, individuals must be allowed sufficient legitimacy in order to move to the next phase and, thus, to be considered as full members of a particular community: "only with enough legitimacy can all their inevitable stumblings and violations become opportunities for learning rather than cause for dismissal, neglect, or exclusion". (Wenger, 1998:101). Following this first phase of participation, therefore, individuals might move forward to a fuller participation (if they are considered as legitimate), they might be denied entry in that community (if they are considered illegitimate) or they might choose not to participate.

An initial peripheral form of participation in a new community of practice can lead to a learning experience that becomes significant to the extent that it shapes one's identity. Engagement with communities of practice, thus, always involves a certain degree of reshaping one's identity.

According to Wenger (1998:145) his social theory of learning cannot be understood without taking into account identity issues: "building an identity consists of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social communities". The author does not want to fall into an individualistic or societal dichotomy, but he wants to emphasize "the lived experience of identity while recognizing its social character -it is the social, the cultural, the historical with a human face" (Wenger, 1998:145). Communities of practice offer possible trajectories in which individuals can engage with and, thus, whose identities can expand as they envision their own possible future. Wenger's theory argues that individuals' identities are formed by experiences of multimembership and the reconciliation processes that such experiences lead to: "proceeding with life -with actions and interactions- entails finding ways to make our various forms of membership coexist, whether the process of reconciliation leads to successful resolutions or is a constant struggle" (Wenger, 1998:160). The formation of one's identity requires constant work, in that the reconciliation that it all involves "is

not simply an additional concern for an independently defined identity viewed as a unitary object; rather, it is at the core of what it means to be a person" (Wenger, 1998:160-161).

Since identity formation involves both participation and non-participation, Wenger provides his theory with conceptual tools and notions that serve as a mode of understanding different modes of belonging: engagement, imagination and alignment. Engagement is described as "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning"; imagination is about "creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience"; and alignment refers to the process of "coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises" (Wenger, 1998:173-174).

When it comes to defining what constitutes a community for an individual, Wenger (1998) came to the conclusion that people decide to engage (or to not engage) with communities that often reach "beyond the walls of their office". The author' notion of "imagination" has been one the most well-known concepts that emerged from this theory of learning. Imagination can become, in this sense, a source of engagement with certain communities of practice, while it provides a wider view of a mode of belonging. (Wenger, 1998):

> *My use of the concept of imagination refers to a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves. Imagination in this sense is looking at an apple seed and seeing a tree. It is playing scales on a piano, and envisioning a concert hall* (Wenger, 1998:176).

From his perspective, imagination plays an equally important role in the formation of the self. It is a creative process (that goes beyond engagement) in which new images of the self and the world are constituted:

> *Through imagination, we can locate ourselves in the world and in history, and include in our identities other meanings, other possibilities, other perspectives. It is through imagination that we recognize our own experience as reflecting broader patterns, connections, and configurations. […] By taking us into the past and carrying us into the future, it can recast the present and show it as holding unsuspected possibilities* (Wenger, 1998:178).

On the other hand, alignment involves focusing efforts and directing individuals' energies in order to find common ground. Among the examples the author cites regarding alignment as a mode of belonging, there are governmental institutions, scientific methods, religious faiths, fashions, educational standards... According to the author, all of these ... in our societies "propose broad systems of styles and discourses through which we can belong by aligning, for certain purposes, our ability to direct our energy and affect the world" (Wenger, 1998:180). Alignment, in this sense, requires power, as it from the author's point of view it is a "condition for the possibility of socially organized action": "the power over one's own energy to exercise alignment and the power to inspire or demand alignment" (Wenger, 1998:180).

The three modes of belonging cited above provide a framework in which an endless list of different types of communities can be constituted. Likewise, such modes of belonging are not mutually exclusive and they are combined in many different ways to constitute certain communities. In short, such combinations are not fixed over time. Wenger presents the kind of work that each form of belonging (engagement, imagination and alignment) requires. In broader terms, engagement entails the work "of forming communities of practice"; imagination "requires the ability to disengage-to move back and look at our engagement through the eyes of an outsider" (Wenger, 1998:185); and finally, the work of alignment "requires the ability to coordinate perspectives and actions in order to direct energies to a common purpose" (Wenger, 1998:186). Wenger highlights the fact that these three modes of belonging work best cooperatively and that, when that takes place, communities of practice can grow into learning communities.

The different modes of belonging shape individuals' identities with a dual process, that is, with "the tension between our investment in various forms of belonging and our ability to negotiate the meanings that matter in those contexts" (Wenger, 1998:188). Therefore, identification processes with any kind of community we feel we belong to (due to engagement, imagination or alignment) become constitutive of our identities and shape these identities. Likewise, negotiability "determines the degree to which we have control over the meanings in which we are invested" (Wenger,1998:188).

Wenger argues that any learning experience is an experience of identity, "because learning transforms who we are and what we can do" (Wenger, 1998:215). Such a premise, within his framework of communities of practise, creates a very powerful theory of learning in which the individual and the social constantly interweave to create meanings and realities that evolve over time and as people and places in which these people interact change. Individuals' identities are shaped within these moving communities: "it is in that formation of an identity that learning can become a source of meaningfulness and of personal and social energy" (Wenger, 1998:215).

Since power issues are always central in social theory, Wenger addresses them by using them in line with Bourdieu (1977). In order to become a member of a certain community or practice, the idea of "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1977) helps to explain how individuals need to accumulate the sufficient "educational resources and assets, necessary to be a fully functioning participant in a particular community of practice" (Block, 2007a:25).

Wenger's understanding of identity is in line with the postructuralist theories of identity presented in section 2.3.1.2. His perspective "does justice to the lived experience of identity while recognizing its social character", in that "it is the social, the cultural, the historical with a human face" (Wenger, 1998: 145). Identity is understood as a continuous reconciliation process that requires individuals to be active and creative when facing the demands of more than one community of practice. Norton & McKinney (2011:80) highlight the fact that "imagination should not be confused with misleading fantasy or withdrawal from reality" but it is a mode of belonging that involves "a creative process of producing new images of possibility and new ways of understanding one's relation to the world that transcend more immediate acts of engagement".

The following table (Table 4) provides a brief summary of the main concepts and ideas that Lave and Wenger's theories brought to light and which strongly shape the present dissertation.

Table 4. Postructuralist theories of learning

Postructuralist theories of learning: key concepts and ideas
✓ **Key authors**: Lave & Wenger (1991), Wenger (1998) ✓ **Key concepts**: CoPs, participation, non-participation, engagement, negotiation of meaning, peripheral participation, full participation, legitimate peripheral participation, imagination, old-timers, newcomers
Lave & Wenger (1991) / Wenger (1998) ✓ **Identity** is shaped within and is shaped by CoPs ✓ **"Knowing"** is a **social act** and "**learning"** is an **ongoing activity**. ✓ Learning comes with engagement with CoPs = **Learning as participation** ✓ Wenger's theory of learning integrates: *meaning, practice, community* and *identity*. ✓ **Learning is always "situated**", it occurs as we participate in CoPs ✓ There are different levels of participation: CoPs are surrounded by a **periphery of their practice**. **Newcomers** first enter a phase of "legitimate peripheral participation", interacting with full members (=**oldtimers**) ✓ Engagement with CoPs always involves a certain degree of reshaping one's identity. ✓ Different **modes of belonging**: engagement, imagination, alignment. ✓ **Imagination** can become a source of engagement with CoPs and it plays an equally important role in the formation of one's identity.
Note: *CoPs: Communities of Practice*

Up to this point, the theories underlying the main theoretical approach that this thesis is based on have been discussed. In the next section such an approach, that is, the identity approach to SLA, will be presented in detail.

2.3.2. THE IDENTITY APPROACH TO LANGUAGE LEARNING

Following the work of the scholars presented so far, this thesis specifically draws on the Identity Approach to language learning, which will be the focus of the present section.

The postructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, positioning and learning that have been presented so far, have informed the work of those researchers who

investigate the connections between identity and language learning. In spite of the broadness and variety of terms and frameworks that have attempted to look at SLA from this new perspective and in spite of the fact that they have all tried to do so in very different ways, all such studies locate identity "at its center" (Block, 2007a:44).

This section presents research carried out by many scholars whose central concern is how language education and issues of identity are inextrinsicably interlinked. These theories of identity and language learning permitted "a conceptual shift in research about L2 learning and offer important insights about the language learning process" (Norton & Toohey, 2011: 414). Thus, this chapter aims at presenting some of the most important studies and theoretical principles that have attempted to look at the reasons why learners decide to learn a language. The factors that push such learners to spend time and effort on the learning process of this second or foreign language.

2.3.2.1. Norton's Theory of sociocultural Identity

Current studies following the identity approach to SLA are very indebted to the work of Bonny Norton, who introduced several theoretical constructs that have influenced many studies in this field. The present study, thus, heavily draws on these concepts developed by Norton, who came up with a theory of SLA based on postructuralist views of identity, language learning and power. In fact, as Block (2007a:864) argues, Norton's approach to identity "has become the approach of choice among those who seek to explore links between identity and L2 learning".

The reasons lying beneath the interest in the target language, therefore, greatly differ from the quantitative and psychological view on second language motivation presented up until then by most scholars in the SLA field. A totally different approach to research on language learning has been developed during the last decades, following the assumption that researchers in the field should look at what had been called "motivation", which is a key factor in the present study, from a more complex perspective, looking at issues of power and identity. This section, therefore, presents the identity approach to SLA that the present thesis is mainly based on, which has become

an extremely important field of research, as numerous scholars frame their work on second language learning within this identity-inflected approach (see section 2.3.3.4).

As presented in section 2.3.1., Norton (1995) called for the need to consider the essential importance of identity issues in the study of SLA while she emphasized the relevance of contextual factors in second language processes. Norton's (1995) criticism of L2 motivational research up until then is sharp and clear: SLA theorists have drawn artificial distinctions between individual and social variables in language learning.

The term identity, as understood by Bonny Norton, references "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" (Norton, 2000:5). This notion, then, encompasses complex factors that need to be examined and taken into account in SLA research. Drawing on postructuralist theories of identity, Norton and McKinney (2011:74), emphasize and distinguish three different features of identity that, according to them, are particularly important to SLA: "the multiple, non-unitary nature of identity; identity as a site of struggle; and identity as changing over time". The ways in which individual present themselves to the world are always something socially constructed and they always derive from changing relations of power. Therefore, this conception of identity connects the individual and the social and proposes to leave behind the idea that "learners can be defined unproblematically as motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited" (Norton, 2000:5), an assertion that will happen to be extremely relevant to the present study. There are a number of scholars who have specifically called their attention to the need to follow such postructuralist theory to recognize the value and relevance of social factors in L2 learning, supporting Norton's view. Pavlenko (2002:279), for example, argues that in the main perspectives on L2 motivation research there is presumption of certain "homogeneous and monolingual cultures, or in-groups and out-groups, and of individuals who move from one group to another".

Turning to her view on language, it is not considered a "neutral medium of communication", but "it is understood with reference to its social meaning" (Norton, 2000:5). Language is connected to a learner's identity, it is in our life and it cannot be

understood without taking into account who we are and how we define ourselves. As far as foreign and second language is concerned, according to Norton & McKinney (2011:73), "every time learners speak, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in relation to the larger social world, and reorganizing that relationship in multiple dimension of their lives".

The theoretical framework that enabled the identity approach to SLA to come into play brought up important issues for discussion, such as the fact that "language learning is not a gradual individual process of internalizing a neutral set of rules, structures, and vocabulary of a standard language" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:81) and the case that "language learners need to struggle to appropriate the voices of others, […] to learn to command the attention of their listeners, […] and to negotiate language as a system and as a social practice" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:81.). Language learners, therefore, need to be looked at taking into account their complex identity, which can only be understood within "larger, and frequently inequitable social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction" (Norton, 1995:13).

Norton's pioneering work, with her initial theory of Social Identity (1995) has grown hand in hand with notions and perspectives incorporated by other researchers who were also interested in taking such an identity approach to the study of second language learning. Her research, therefore, has evolved and she herself has reconceptualised some of the points she made in her first calls for an identity approach to language learning. In fact, in her paper titled "Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language research", Norton points out to the fact that in early research on this field, scholars used to theorize identity in slightly different ways, but that those conceptions of identity had more commonalities than differences (Norton, 2006). More recent research, though, studies language learning taking into account institutional and community practice and identity is therefore understood as a sociocultural construct. Thus, there are now more intersections between social and cultural identity, at the same time that the differences between social and cultural identity, according to Norton, have become "theoretically more fluid" (Norton, 2006:2). The broad range of research that evidences such fact leads Norton to enumerate five characteristics of a sociocultural conception of identity (2006:3): (i)" A sociocultural conception of identity conceives of

identity as dynamic and constantly changing across time and place"; (ii) "much research on identity conceives of identity as complex, contradictory, and multifaceted, and rejects any simplistic notions of identity"; (iii) "most researchers note that identity constructs and is constructed by language"; (iv) "most researchers note that identity construction must be understood with respect to larger social processes, marked by relations of power that can be either coercive or collaborative"; " much research seeks to link identity theory with classroom practice".

Furthermore, after presenting a situation that one of her graduate students encountered when presenting an article to a highly prestigious second language journal, Norton calls for the need to go beyond the Vygotskian framework. Norton (2006) emphasizes that such "collapsing of boundaries between the "social" and "cultural"" is what enables present research in language learning to refer to identity as a sociocultural construct.

Drawing on her understanding of power, language and identity, Norton (2000:5) points out that "it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to –or is denied access to- power social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak". In this sense, the role and the status that English language has acquired in the last decades plays a key role in this thesis and in the understanding of the identity approach to SLA. English serves as the necessary communication tool in many countries to access resources and communities that would otherwise not be available to individuals. The state of the world and the role of English in it will be further discussed in section 2.4.

Norton's work traces the trajectory of the present thesis, together with theories that fit into her research and together with the concepts that have recently arisen due to the globalisation process that is taking place worldwide. Let us now turn to the main theoretical constructs that Norton developed in her work , in order to present them and to clarify them. Her ground-breaking research opened up new questions and new terminology that led to a new approach to the study of language learning. The role of identity in language learning is understood through concepts such as imagined

identities, imagined communities or critical language pedagogies. Such terminology is extremely relevant to the present study. Let us know turn to the key constructs that give shape to most of the studies dealing with language learning and identity.

2.3.2.2. Motivation as "Investment"

Norton (1995) introduced a notion that has turned out to be essential in her work and in the work of those who follow the identity approach to SLA: the notion of "investment". It is precisely because the identity approach explores SLA "as a sociocultural practice" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:79) that motivation, is also investigated as something related to social relations and individuals' interactions and life practices. Inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1991), Norton develops the construct of "investment".

Norton uses the term "investment" instead of "motivation", believing that it better explains and describes the complexity of reasons for wanting to master the target language. She argues that this term can capture "the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it" (Norton, 2000:10). The notion of investment is strongly connected to Bourdieu's idea (1977) of "cultural capital", in that "learners invest in the target language at particular times and in particular settings, because they believe that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources which will increase the value of their cultural capital and social power" (Norton & Williams, 2012:317).

In respect to the symbolic resources learners might seek to acquire, Norton (2000:7) explains how the term "power" references "the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated". The distribution of such resources defines the distribution of power among all individuals in a society, at the same time such relations of power vary depending on how the value of such resources varies. By "symbolic resources", Norton refers to "resources such as language, education and friendship", while "material resources include capital goods, real estate and money"

(Norton, 2000:7). There is therefore an integral relationship between learners' investments in the target language and their identity:

> *As the value of their cultural capital increases, so learners' sense of themselves and their desires for the future are reassessed. Hence, the integral relationship between investment and identity* (Norton and Toohey, 2002:122).

The concept of investment Norton is advocating strongly differs from instrumental motivation, as it includes much more complex variables, such as their history or their possible multiple desires: “an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity, an identity that is constantly changing across time and space” (Norton & McKinney, 2011:575). While the notion “motivation” is considered a primarily psychological construct, the term “investment” takes a sociological approach to the study of language learning and a person’s possible interest towards a certain language. Such interest towards a language, from Norton’s perspective, will be inextrinsicably connected to a person’s complex identity. Every time learners use the target language, they are not only exchanging certain information or a certain message with the target language speakers, but they are showing the world who they are, continually changing their sense of themselves.

From those who study SLA from an identitary approach, the concept of motivation in most research in SLA mostly draws from social psychology, which led many scholars to "quantify a learner's commitment to learning the target language" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:74). Instead of understanding the learning of English, in this case, as an individual process in which rules, structures and vocabulary are incorporated in one's repertoire, the identity approach to SLA looks at the interest to learn the target language as an interest in appropriating the voices of those who speak it, an interest in making yourself understood and valued by all listeners, as well as their need to incorporate the target language as a new social practice of their persona. The importance of the notion of "investment" lies in its connection to a learner's identity, as an investment in certain practices through English might mean that English learners might need to incorporate this language as part of who they are in order to get closer to their "imagined identity" (see section 2.3.2.3.), as it has to be coherent with the "imagined community" they aim to belong to.

2.3.2.3. Imagined communities and imagined identities

A key construct in the identity approach to SLA is Norton's notion of "imagined communities". Drawing on Lave and Wenger's (1991) view of learning (see section 2.3.1.4.), Norton expands it "to connect the learner's *future* affiliations and his or her *current* learning" (Kanno, 2003:287). In her paper titled "Non-participation, imagined communities and the language classroom", Norton takes Wenger's (1998) idea of imagination in order to explain "the extent to which we create images of the world" (Norton, 2001:163). She followed Katarina and Felicia's learning trajectories (two of the participants in one of her studies), and she wondered what constituted the community for these learners, finding out that the communities of practice that portrayed their learning trajectories were "communities of the imagination" (Norton, 2001). What Wenger calls "engagement" is not the only way in which individuals can belong to a community, as affiliations can "extend beyond local sets of relationships" (Norton & McKinney, 2011:76). Imagination is another powerful source of community. Norton and Toohey (2011) discuss how the notion of "positioning" (Davis and Harré, 1990, 1999) is useful when explaining how learners position themselves and position others within an "imagined community" and thus, adopt certain identities (Kinginger, 2004; Murphey, Jin, & Li-Chi, 2005; Norton, 2001; Piller & Takahashi, 2006). As Block (2007a:19) argues, "language learners often adapt imagined subject positions in imagined communities of speakers of the language they are learning".

Individuals are thus capable of relating to others who are not interacting with us in the present time, whom we can connect through the power of imagination. Imagined communities are defined as "groups of people not immediately tangible and accessible with whom we connect through the power of imagination" (Kanno & Norton, 2003:1). Such concept had already been coined by Anderson (1991), who considered it the appropriate way to explain what nations are. Within a nation, a sense of community arises across time and space with fellow members of that community and, even though we might not have yet met our compatriots, this bond between people belonging to the same nation is "imagined" and it is what makes us feel part of a whole.

Thus, Norton takes Anderson's (1991) notion of "imagined communities" and incorporates it into her research. She uses the term to study non-participation in second language classrooms (Norton, 2000, 2001) as well as to study how these imagined communities affected learners' learning trajectories (Kanno & Norton, 2003). According to Norton & McKinney (2011:76), "these imagined communities are no less real than the ones in which learners have daily engagement and might even have a stronger impact on their identities and investments". The power of this concept in language learning processes lies in the fact that, if language learners have images of the communities in which they want to take part, these "imagined communities" strongly guide and affect their current learning. Besides, participation in any kind of community, as Wenger (1998) had pointed out, involves the construction of an individual's identity. Feeling a sense of affiliation to an imagined community, therefore, provides individuals with an imagined identity: "an imagined community assumes an imagined identity" (Norton & McKinney, 2011: 81). Language learners decide to invest in the target language in order to claim membership to a certain imagined community: “whether or not the learners see the learning of L2 as leading them closer to the imagined communities influences their current investment in that learning” (Norton, as cited in Kanno, 2003:287). Their hope, in this sense, is to gain access to the community of practice in which they want to take part.

2.3.2.4. State of the Art: studies following the postructuralist approach on language learning and identity

The identity approach to SLA has inspired the work of many scholars who were interested in the connections between identity and second language learning, each of which has put more emphasis on a concept or another. Norton’s pioneering publications related to the study of language learning and identity shape a new paradigm that has been followed by many researchers in the field. Several theoretical treatments have attempted to contemplate and reconceptualise SLA from a postructuralist perspective, theoretical treatments that have foregrounded empirical examinations of second language learning and use.

There have been numerous studies to second language learning that deal with the concepts introduced by the Canadian author, which place identity as a fundamental concept in the field. While following the assumption that the study of SLA is a complex process, numerous studies have also incorporated and continued incorporating concepts, ideas and fields of inquiry from general social sciences. On this regard, some researchers have argued that such sociological dimensions undoubtedly lead them to take this approach and to become strongly critical towards the social psychological approaches to L2 motivation (e.g. Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006; Pavlenko, 2002).

Thus, recent research on SLA has provided very important insights into the relationship between identity and language learning. The identity approach to SLA has spread throughout the world, being applied to a wide range of different contexts, where key issues related to language in such contexts have been analysed. Other than Norton's in-depth longitudinal studies of the construction of identity of immigrant women in Canada (Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton, 2001; Norton Pierce, 1995), other scholars have looked at language learning and gender (Pavlenko, Blackledge, Piller, & Teutsch-Dwyer, 2001), language practices and affiliations of Mexican American families in the US (Schechter & Bayley, 2002), language socialization processes of immigrant children in Australia (Bayley & Schechter, 2003), sociolinguistic variables and the ongoing construction of identities on the Nigerian/Benin border (Omoniyi, 2004), second language learners' accounts of their experiences (Benson & Nunan, 2005) or multilingual identities in London (Block, 2006). Similarly, the book published by Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004a) provides very interesting insights into the negotiation of identities in different language, culture and political contexts, while it also attempts to theorize and propose a postructuralist and critical theory approach to negotiation of identities.

Similarly, empirical studies following such an approach emphasize different notions or constructs. As far as studies dealing with the notions of “imagined identities” or “imagined communities”, there are several scholars who have used such terms in order to frame their theoretical explanations. Several scholars have taken up the notion “imagined communities” in their research (e.g. Carroll, Motha, & Price, 2008; Dagenais,

2003; Kanno, 2008; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Kendrick & Jones, 2008; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). A special emphasis is put in the concept "investment" in the work developed by other scholars interested in the relationship between identitary processes and learning trajectories (e.g. Angélil-Carter, 1997; Cummins, 2006; Haneda, 2005; McKay & Wong, 1996; Pittaway, 2004; Potowski, 2007).

Some studies following the postructuralist approach to language learning and identity have inspired the present thesis. In her study of long-term changes in bilingual students' identities, Kanno (2000) looks at how bilingualism affects students' identities. Her participants seem to attribute different roles to the two languages: the majority language represents the entrance to full participation in their society, while the minority language emphasizes the individual's uniqueness.

Seeing the relevance of the notion of "imagined communities" in their respective research (Norton, 2001; Kanno, 2000), Kanno & Norton (2003) (Ed.) present, in a very interesting issue of the *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, a series of studies that expand on this notion as a primarily concept in their analytical frameworks. They specifically focused on how the notion of imagined communities enabled researchers to understand learning realities on both temporal and spatial dimensions. For example, Norton & Kamal (2003) undertook a study in which they examined how the vision of a Pakistan as a contributing member of the international community helped middle-school students to design a project to address a certain social issue in their country. Similarly, Kanno (2003) also uses "imagined communities" in order to study the relationship between the school's visions for their pupils, their policies and practices, and the students' identities, arguing that schools already have in mind the communities in which their students will eventually participate in and that that reality affects their policies and also students' identities. Pavlenko (2003) aims at analysing language learning and teaching narratives among graduate students in TESOL Masters, who are exposed to critical readings and discussions about native and non-native English speakers, as well as to notions such as "multicompetent speaker" (Cook, 1992; Pavlenko, 2003). Such exposure leads to a better and more positive self-perception as English speakers/teachers.

Murphey, Jin, & Li-Chi (2005:83) also draw on "imagined communities" to explain how identities are socially constructed and how the envisioning of certain imagined communities can nourish learning. They encounter situations that vary from moments of dis-identification, lack of an imagined community or changes in the type of imagined communities they have in mind, whether because they evolve, fade or are forgotten.

Kinginger's (2004) presents a longitudinal case study about foreign language learning and identity. The author follows Alice's process in the learning of French, a language she idealizes and she considers the door to a broadening of social options, the door to an "imagined identity" and "imagined community" she seeks to be part of. The author follows Alice's French learning process during four years, in which expectations, changes, access to certain communities or identity negotiation and construction are only some of the complex processes that underlie Alice's learning trajectory. In this sense, her image of France resembles the image of Oz or Wonderland: coming from an American working-class family, Alice seeks to become the person she admires and invests in the learning of French as an investment in her own identity.

Similarly, in their ethnographic study with five Japanese women, Piller & Takahashi (2006:59) aim to "make a sociolinguistic contribution to the literature on motivation and language learning" by examining the subject positions these five women adopt during their English learning process, as well as by looking at how it affects their motivation towards the language.

Angelil-Carter (1997) analyses the interaction between himself and a South African student during an interview. Drawing on Norton's notion of "investment", as well as on Bourdieu's notion of legitimate language, the researcher delves into how discourses change depending on the topics addressed and how power issues related to social and political realities affect such discourses. McKay & Wong (1996) study traces the English language learning process of adolescent Chinese-immigrant students in the US. The authors discuss how the students negotiated their multiple identities and discourses according to their positioning in relations of power. Norton herself has carried out research with scholars from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and settings,

exploring the complexities that the uniqueness of such situations imply (Norton & Kamal, 2003; Norton & Gao, 2008; Norton & Williams, 2012).

Before concluding this section, Table 5 aims to provide an outline of the main constructs and ideas that shape the identity approach to SLA that has been presented in the present section.

Table 5. The Identity Approach to SLA

The Identity Approach to SLA
✓ **Key authors**: Norton (1995, 2000), see section 2.3.2.4. ✓ **Key concepts**: investment, imagined identities, imagined communities
✓ **Need to develop a theory** that embodies language learners and their language learning context (Norton, 2000). ✓ Conception of identity that **links the individual and the social**. ✓ **Language** is connected to learners' identities. ✓ **Investment** ≠ motivation: ▪ It better captures the **complex reasons** behind a person's interest towards a language. ▪ Motivation is also related to social relation , individuals' interactions and life practices. ▪ It differs from "instrumental motivation" (Gardner, 1985) . ✓ **Imagined Communities** ▪ Imagination is another source of community. ▪ They guide learners' learning processes. ✓ **Imagined Identities** ▪ Imagined Communities assume Imagined identities.

The identity approach to second language learning presented in this section trace the present study on identity and language learning and provides a thorough lens through which to delve into the complex relationship between languages, identities and the social world. However, in the case of English, it is necessary to remove all doubts about the specificity of the position that this language occupies in the world and the role that its status might have on individual's daily lives and on their evolving identities. Hence, the following section is devoted to clarifying such issues in detail, as it presents a

review on research studying the relationship between globalisation and identity. Such research may afford interesting insights into how unique language learners' interest towards English may be taking into account the current state of the world.

2.4. GLOBALISATION AND THE STATUS OF ENGLISH

After having presented the identity approach to SLA and the general theories which it draws on, the global reality and the role that English plays in it are factors that should not be left aside. Since English has a very unique role in the world, it is of prime importance to address its status worldwide and the realities it encompasses. This section provides a thorough summary of the work of those scholars that are delving into the role that English has acquired in the world (section 2.4.1.) and the impact that this reality is having on individuals' lives and societies (section 2.4.2.). Similarly, the impact of such situation on higher education institution is also addressed (section 2.4.3.).

The rise of identity in SLA has come hand in hand with the analysis of the impact that current changes in the world have on second learning processes and on learners' sense of self. Together with the identity frameworks presented in section 2.3.1.2., other scholars put special emphasis on how modern life affects individuals and how they understand their relationship with the world. Bearing in mind the focus of the present study, that is, the role that identity issues have on a group of learners' interest towards English, which is the language that has precisely become a global tool for communication all over the world, it is therefore paramount to outline in this section theories of identity that take into account the life in the modern world (Bauman, 1992, 2005; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991), where globalisation processes affect people's lives and practices at many different levels. Such scholars specifically focus on the study of modern life and identity. Likewise, the arguments and discussions of others also rely on this postructuralist perspective on identity and will also be briefly looked at. Therefore, section 2.3.1.2. and the present section complement each other, as they both present postructuralist theories of identity, even though in this chapter special emphasis will be placed on the impact of globalisation and modern life on identity.

Nowadays, the reality that forms the live narrative of individuals in the modern world, encompasses mobility, intercultural experiences and worldwide travel. According to Block (2007a), hybridity, which is the blending of different cultures and traditions, has positively contributed to the theorizing identity. Taking into account that nowadays people need to cross geographical borders and interact with people who come from very different sociocultural backgrounds, it is important to theorize such reality in terms of what it implies for identity reconstruction.

The following definition sums up very well the construct of identity for social scientists who frame their theories in a postructuralist view of the world.

> *Identity becomes an issue when the self ceases to be taken for granted.... Today, identity has become an issue because the reference points for the self have become unstuck [...] The contemporary understanding of the self is that of a social self formed in relations of difference rather than of unity and coherence. Identity becomes a problem when the self is constituted in the recognition of difference rather than sameness* (Delanty, 2003:135).

Block (2007a:20) discusses the conflicts that can appear when individuals "move across geographical and sociocultural borders", arguing that such experiences can easily and understandably challenge one's sense of self. Thus, he defined "critical experiences" as follows:

> *By critical experiences, I mean periods of time during which prolonged contact with an L2 and a new and different cultural setting causes irreversible destabilization of the individual's sense of self. There is, in a sense, an element of before and after in critical experiences as the individual's sociohistorical, cultural and linguistic environment, once well defined and delimited, becomes relatively ill defined and open-ended* (Block, 2002:4).

Connected with Block's notion of "critical experiences", there is the notion of "thirdspace" (Bhabha, 1994; Kramsch, 1993; Claire Kramsch, 1999a, 2000), in order to refer to the creative process that takes place in individuals' identities when they cross borders and transform, rather than replace, their new culture and their own culture (or languages) into a new identity that is not attached to either one of them.

Block also cites Mercer (1990:43), who makes a good point: "identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty". According to Block (2007a), the result of such hybridity processes in individuals' lives is "what has come to be known variably as *hybrid* and *third place* identities". Ambivalence can be defined as the coexistence of opposing attitudes or feelings, such as love and hate, toward a person, object, or idea, and it is, according to Block (2007a: 21), "a key concept in any discussion of identity as hybrid in nature". When being immersed in ambivalent feelings, an undesired state, individuals attempt to resolve such contradictory feelings by looking for an "ontological security", defined by Giddens (1991:47) as the search for "answers to fundamental questions which all human life in some way addresses".

Anthony Giddens, a British sociologist concerned about social theory, modernity and how these impact on social and individual life (and therefore, with the self), greatly contributed to the understanding of identity in the modern world. In his book "Modernity and Self-identity" the author argues that modern social life is…:

> *characterized by profound processes of the reorganisation of time and space, coupled to the expansion of disembedding mechanisms – mechanisms which prise social relations free from the hold of specific locales, recombining them across wide time-space distances* (Giddens, 1991: 2)

The uncertain circumstances and the wide range of multiple choice situations in which individuals nowadays have to engage with lead Giddens to the notion of "trust" and "risk", as the two extremes in which human-being live. Daily life and the diversity of options that it offers are continually constituted through a dialectical exchange between the local and the global, which involves making lifestyle choices. On the one hand, trust is linked "to achieving an early sense of ontological security", what originates "that leap into faith which practical engagement demands" (Giddens, 1991:3). On the other hand, modernity being a "risk culture", "the future is continually drawn into the present by means of the reflexive organisation of knowledge environments" (Giddens, 1991:3). This dichotomy emerges as a need to make sense of who we are in such circumstances, due to the growing "influence of distant happenings on proximate events, and on intimacies of the self" (Giddens, 1991:4). Self-identity is not seen as a quality of a moment, but it becomes *reflexive:*

> *The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems* (Giddens, 1991:5)

Giddens' notion of "trust" embodies individuals' possibility of making decisions, as "intrinsic reflexivity" is an underlying element of modernity, but, at the same time, "the faith which trust implies also tends to resist such calculative decision-making" (Giddens, 1991:19). As Giddens (1991:19) highlights, "trusting is not by any means always the result of consciously taken decisions: more often, it is a generalised attitude of mind that underlies those decisions, something which has its roots in the connection between trust and personality development". Both the local and the global influence day-to-day life in high modernity and dialectics between them result in transformations in self-identity and globalisation.

This search for "ontological security" among individuals raises the issue of individual choices and self-conscious, which happen to be possible. Giddens, therefore, just like Bourdieu (1977) demonstrates that identity can be defined and theorized by the constant balance between ambivalence and hybridity. Overall, Giddens' notions and perspectives on identity and modernity offer a meaningful and useful general conceptual backdrop to the present study and its way of viewing identity.

Giddens, together with other scholars such as Beck (1992) or Bauman (2005), began to study identity and to frame their work taking into account the changes that the world has been experiencing over the last decades. Their work has special relevance for the present thesis as it focuses on the impact that globalisation has on individuals' identities. Life in the age of globalisation has changed and such is the reality that some scholars have been trying to delve into.

According to Block (2007a:22), "the idea that individuals strive for a coherent life narrative, seeking to resolve conflicts and assuage their ambivalent feelings, raises the issue of consciousness". Some scholars argue that there is always space for individuals to make choices and to be aware of what surrounds them (Giddens, 1990; Mathews, 2000; Ortner, 2005). However, other scholars, reflect upon the boundaries of agency

and account for a certain degree of structure in people's lives (May, 2001). Some of these scholars, such as Ortner (2005) and May (2001), consider that both notions (agency and structure) may complement each other and that it might be wrong to take any of them to the extreme. According to Block, most applied linguists who deal with identity studies in second language learning contexts implicitly acknowledge some degree of structure in their discussions.

Let us now focus on the role that English has acquired worldwide and the research that surrounds the issue (section 2.4.1.) and how it might be affecting individuals' identities and their English language learning development (section 2.4.2.).

2.4.1. THE STATUS OF ENGLISH

The global spread of English has turned this language into a communication tool that enables people from all over the world to interact in a wide variety of settings. According to Crystal (2003:3) "a language achieves global status when it develops a special role that is recognised in every country". English is now used by natives and non-natives for the purposes of interaction and exchange of information. It enables both native and non-native speakers of English to communicate and exchange information in a wide variety of settings and it is no longer necessarily linked to the countries that use it as their first language (Holliday, 2005; McKay, 2002).

English has been given several names in light of its spread around the world: "an international language, a lingua franca, a global language, and a world language" (Caine, 2008:4). All these proposals focus on the functional uses of English and on the fact that it is a language of communication rather than a language of identification (Caine, 2008). English is no longer linked to certain countries or cultures, as "it belongs to those who use it" (McKay, 2002:1). The spoken varieties of English do not have to fall into an idealized variety of Inner Circle English anymore. The Three Concentric Circles of English were created by Braj B. Kachru (Kachru, 1986) in which the Inner Circle represents "those countries where English is spoken as a first or native language"

(Caine, 2008:3); the Outer Circle comprises "countries wherein English is institutionalized as an additional language and learned as a second language" (Caine, 2008:3); and the Expanding Circle includes those countries in which English is a foreign language. Although it has no official functions in countries in the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1986), it is precisely the users in these countries who are turning English into an international language (Kuo, 2006). Many scholars have discussed the impact of the international role of English on the way that ELT should be approached, arguing that such methods should not be based on native speaker norms (Caine, 2008; Crystal, 2003; Higgins, 2003; Jenkins, 2009; Llurda, 2004; McKay, 2002; Phillipson, 1992; Widdowson, 1994, 1997). Language, from this perspective, is seen as a communicative tool that goes beyond the native/nonnative speaker dichotomy and that belongs to its international speakers.

According to Crystal (2003), as cited in Jenkins (2009), there are two factors that led to the internationalisation of English. On the one hand, the colonization process contributed to its value as a business and trade tool. On the other hand, the economic power of the US has become the main factor that has maintained the influential power of English nowadays. Even though this global status of English might have several negative outcomes, such as the jeopardising of "the learning of other languages and the very existence of smaller languages" (Jenkins, 2009:39), the international status of English is a reality that cannot be changed.

In the field of SLA, the perception of the term "native", in contrast to "non-native" has been generally perceived as a positive category in contrast to a negative one (Matsuda, 2003). Within the same field of study, Davies' (2003) analysis determined that it is not linguistic or psycho-linguistic properties what define whether individuals are native speakers or non-native speakers of a certain language, but group admission and self-adscription. An approach attempting to overcome the rigid native speaker/non-native speaker (NS/NNS) dichotomy has been explored by many scholars (e.g. Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001; Piller, 2002) From this perspective, being a "native speaker" is no longer a fixed identity category. While Piller (2002) argued that the idea of "passing for native speaker" provided this field of study with a richer perspective,

arguing that some L2 learners could temporarily take native speaker identities, but it still used the terms "native vs non-native". Cook (2002) chose the notion "user" (L2 user) and uses it to substitute the term "L2 learner", advocating for these users' right to feel legitimate speakers of their foreign language. The notion "L2 user" becomes very meaningful and comes in handy specially in the case of English and the current discussions in SLA literature which place this language at an international or global level.

The accepted idea that the NNS is an imperfect user of the language still remains, but, as Llurda (2006) points out, there have been numerous studies which now consider the positive effects of bilingualism on cognitive abilities. Furthermore, he argues that "the decline of the concept of the native speaker as the ideal speaker is parallel to the surge of the concept of the bilingual speaker or more recently of the multicompetent speaker". The last concept refers to Cook's (2007) notion of "multicompetent speaker".

The interest towards the learning of English, thus, should shift from the native/non-native speaker dichotomy to a broader view that considers L2 users as multicompetent speakers (Cook, 1992; Pavlenko, 2003). The non-native speakers should not be compared to native speakers and should be looked at on its own right (Phillipson, 1996). See Moussu & Llurda (2008) for a more extensive review of the literature on this fairly recent area of research (research on native and non-native teachers).

Following this idea, Jenkins (Jenkins, 2002:85) distinguishes between EFL and EIL: while the purpose of the former is "to speak the target language as a foreigner in order to facilitate communication with NSs of the language", the latter focuses on the facilitator role that English has "for international communication". Smith (1983:1) defines EIL as a language used "by people of different nations to communicate with one another". The role that English plays as an international language empowers learners of English to be part of an international community "in which all participants have an equal claim to membership" (Smith, 1983:1).

2.4.2. GLOBALISATION, IDENTITY AND ENGLISH LEARNING

Globalisation processes support the need to interact with other communities and, as Block (2007a:113) argues, "an engagement with English as an international language [...] can have a significant impact on an FL (foreign language) learner' sense of self". According to Giddens (2000:4), "in a globalising world, where information and images are routinely transmitted across the globe, we are all regularly in contact with others who think differently, and live differently, from ourselves". English has become a tool that links different realities and for this reason young generations are starting to be aware of the need to master this language, as they feel the need to travel, to move to foreign countries for professional purposes or to be connected to the world with new technologies and media resources. Robertson & White (2007:56) observe that "increasing global consciousness runs in complex ways, hand in hand [...] with increasing connectivity". Warschauer (2000:512) makes a convincing argument about the impact of technology in a globalised world, while he adds that people's lives are "increasingly affected by international networks". In their paper about the motivation to learn Spanish among American students, Fonseca & García (2010) observe how mass media has become a relevant tool for learning foreign languages, while they discuss social motivation and how it can be achieved through mass media, which in turn strongly affects social motivation to learn Spanish. They discuss social motivation as a means of transmitting the target language culture, but in the case of English, this so called "social motivation" might be related to a global affiliation that does not belong to any specific countries or cultures. Thus, their findings support the idea that mass media can be a powerful tool to engage with communities of practice with which students are not in direct contact.

In the field of education and teacher education, globalisation is playing a very important role and it raises major new challenges (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), such as access to global information and knowledge (Kenway & Bullen, 2008), more geographic mobility, interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds, the impact of events happening in the world on the ways in which people learn in a specific place, etc. (Bourn, 2011:560) and most importantly, the infinite cultural influences that lead to challenges to one's sense of identity (Ryan, 2007, as cited

in Bourn, 2011). Bourn (2011:563) expands on the impact of globalisation on individuals' identities, arguing that these global forces tend to lead to a sense of "global or cosmopolitan citizenship". He also cites Buonfino (2007:5): "As travel becomes within the reach of most people and communication technologies enable people to be immersed in cultures located elsewhere, and to cultivate multiple identities, the question of belonging becomes more complex and more central to the debate on how we live together".

The activities and experiences in which learners invest in order to take part in an international community are guided by the notion of "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and by the notion of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991; Norton, 2001). Taking Wenger's theoretical framework of communities of practice and globalisation theories, Ryan (2006)'s theoretical paper on how globalisation affects individuals' identities presented what he calls "an imagined global community". Drawing on the concept of "glocalization" (Block & Cameron, 2002; Robertson, 1995) which is described as the "blend of-or tension between- the global and the local" (Ryan, 2006:26), he argues that globalisation can be seen as an opportunity to be embraced or as a threat: "Global English requires learners to assess the values linked to this global cultural and how they as individuals relate to them. […] If learners perceive globalisation to be an opportunity rather than a threat, they are far more likely to have a positive disposition to learning its language" (Ryan, 2006:31).

Several research studies manifest the scope of the impact of globalisation in L2 motivation, both from a more cognitive perspective and from an identitary and postructuralist perspective. Bearing in mind the theoretical constructs that have been presented so far, even for those working within a cognitive-oriented approach to L2 motivation, the notion of integrativeness takes a whole different perspective and several scholars start to consider the role that English plays in the globalisation process:

> *Some sort of a virtual or metaphorical identification with the sociocultural loading of a language, and in the case of the undisputed world language, English, this identification would be associated with a non-parochial, globalized world citizen identity* (Dörnyei, 2005:97).

In relation to this idea, Ushioda (2006) emphasizes that the feeling of being part of a global/international community is not only linked to a sense of affiliation to that external global community, but it is rather one's idea of self. Drawing on contemporary discussions dealing with identity and the role of globalisation nowadays, (Lamb, 2003) examined how these factors contribute to L2 motivation research and the notion of integrative orientation. He explores high-school students' motivation and its link to the pursuit of a bicultural identity. When analysing the role of integrativeness in his participants, his findings support Dörnyei and Csizer's contention (2002:454) that might have to do with "some more basic identification process within the individual's self-concept":

> *Meeting with westerners, using computers, understanding pop songs, studying or travelling abroad, pursuing a desirable career – all these aspirations are associated with each other and with English as an integral part of the globalization processes that are transforming their society and will profoundly affect their own lives* (Lamb, 2004a:14-15)

The author argues that motivation to learn English comes from a sense of identification with the target language. Lamb's findings are relevant in that he brings together the notions of the integrative motive, the self-concept and the role that globalisation processes have nowadays. He also highlights the importance "to see this kind of motivation as a process rather than a stable trait" (Lamb, 2004a:15).

Yashima (2002) observes that the role of EIL makes it difficult for Japanese EFL learners to identify or to connect with a specific target language culture. This leads her to the notion of "international posture", which "tries to capture a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group" (Yashima, 2009:145). Yashima (2009:147) argues that having a high international posture "might generate possible selves speaking with international students, helping foreigners lost on the street, reading English language newspapers". Block (2007a) presents a study in which he shows how language learners' sense of self can be directly affected by the engagement with the notion of EIL. Inevitably, the globalisation process has led many young generations to feel the need to be part of global community of world citizens and, according to Jackson (2009), English might be the key that enables them to access this international imagined community.

Kramsch & Thorne (2002:85) discuss the links between language learning and technology in a global context, arguing that these communication tools present a paradox: on the one hand "they encourage alienation by reducing face-to-face contact", while on the other hand they provide "a nexus of connectivity, social interaction and community building, albeit in novel formations". They also state that network technologies have contributed to an important pedagogical shift, in that they have helped to move towards a "contextual, collaborative and social-interactive approaches to language development and activity" (Kramsch and Thorne, 2002:86). Looking at the connections between globalisation and English, Gray (2002:153-154) lists three ways in which he considers these two variables to be interconnected: the rise of transnational corporations, the increase in the number of world organizations and the predominance of English on the internet.

Globalisation might help learners of English to envision themselves as part of an international community of people who share certain knowledge and interests. The interest to become a member of such community can lead English learners to invest in the learning of the target language, looking for opportunities and contexts that strengthen their sense of belonging to such international fellowship in which they can communicate using English. Taking part in a study abroad program, in a university exchange or in any other kind of international/intercultural settings might "make it easier for a person to situate her possible self in an English speaking environment" (Yashima, 2009:148). Getting involved in such experiences or simply becoming an English language user can contribute to the expansion of learners' identities, which can increase their interest in maintaining this new identity. Arnett (2002:777) presents the construct of "bicultural identity" by arguing that globalisation has a severe impact on learners' identities, which end up being divided into the part which is "rooted in their local culture" and the part which "stems from an awareness of their relation to the global culture" and which, overall, afford them "a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture" (Arnett, 2002:32). The notion of "bicultural identity" has also been used by Kramsch (1999b) when discussing how globalisation might affect English language learners and their interest towards the target language. English language learners, from

her perspective, might end up integrating both the local and the global, something inevitable bearing in mind today's globalized world.

Arnett's view is in accordance with Ryan's (2006) perspective on identity and globalisation: "If we accept the construction of a social identity as a site of struggle and conflict, it would be possible to argue that globalisation does not necessarily present individuals with an "either/or" choice; it creates contextually dependent hybrids of local and global values.... The task for individuals is to construct their own identity with reference to this "local manifestation of global values" (Ryan, 2006:33).

Yashima (2009) explains that in order to help learners or L2 speakers of English to develop their L2 selves in relation to an international imagined community, it is important to make such communities visible for them. Speakers of English in typical EFL contexts might find it more useful to mediate their interest in learning the target language by aiming to achieve an international standard, rather than learning it on the basis of native speaker norms. Taking into consideration the reasons for mastering English in these settings, this idea makes much more sense. From this perspective, investments in English might be guided by the claim to be a member in this international community of English speakers who share information and interests. The experience of feeling part of an international community of practice and the fact that individuals' imagined identities might be based around this idea might have a lot to do with their interest to learn the target language. Such shifts in the perceptions of L2 speakers' identities can strongly affect their investments in the target language. The social values attributed to a "sense of belonging to a worldwide culture" (Arnett, 2002:32) imply issues related to power when it comes to the possibility to master this language. Following this idea, I shall conclude this chapter by attempting to link their views presented in this section with Norton's approach to language learning and investment, focusing on the uniqueness of the role that English plays worldwide. When discussing her theory of social identity, Norton (1995:12) concludes that it "assumes that power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers".

2.4.3. INTERNATINOALIZATION AT HOME

To avoid possible negative effects of stays abroad on students' identities, there is a growing tendency to view internationalisation taking place at home universities as a promising alternative. As Marginson & Van der Wende (2007:7) point out, "higher education is swept up in global marketisation". Nowadays, many European universities are undergoing processes of internationalisation, processes that are materialised, for example, through student and staff mobility. Such processes are taking place due to numerous sociocultural factors shaping Europe's construction. Among them, the creation of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is worth mentioning (Altbach & Knight, 2007). "Internationalisation", as defined by Knight (1994:7) is "the process of integrating an international dimension into the research, teaching and service functions of higher education".

During the Protestant Reformation universities started to teach in national languages and their teaching practices became more closely connected to nation-states (Altbach & Teichler, 2001:6). Universities never stopped having important international links. However, during the last decade, the world has been facing "the inevitability of a globalized economy and of a globalized academic system" (Altbach & Teichler, 2001:6). When discussing the fact that some continental European countries (e.g., France, Austria, Denmark, Spain...) are not frequently chosen as host countries and that strong efforts are being made to harmonize their different academic systems, Altbach & Teichler (2001:13) reflect on the situation:

> *The situation, […] has convinced policy makers in a number of European countries that a change of structure of study programs and degrees (notably the introduction of bachelor's and masters' degrees), together with the expansion of study programs provided in the English language, is necessary to attract students and to remain competitive in international education.*

As students and staff engage in academic life, international mobility has also become a key issue in internationalisation processes in higher education. Altbach & Teichler (2001:8) argue that "although mobility is more likely for the most able students and staff, it has become a normal option for staff and students as well as a

regular policy and administrative review within higher education institutions, especially in the industrialized countries".

Focusing specific attention on how these processes are shaping higher education institutions' practices, the concept "Internationalisation at Home" (IaH) (Nilsson, 2003) becomes particularly relevant. Defined as ''a way to embrace all ideas about and measures to be taken to give all students an international dimension during their time at the university" (Nilsson, 2003:31), the concept was introduced in 1999 as a response to the failure of Erasmus, one of the most used mobility programs implemented by the European Union. The Erasmus goal of 10% of European students spending some time studying in another European university turned out to be unrealistic and unattainable (Brewer, 2004; Wächter, 2003). The questions around Erasmus were the following: were the remaining 90% of students in higher education "not to be educated for citizenship in a Europe constantly facing new challenges?" and were these students not "to gain the intercultural communication skills that would enable them to effectively interact with people from other countries?" (Brewer, 2004:2). Such failure called for a new approach: the objective was then to "internationalise" the education "of that vast majority of higher education students who would never leave their home country" (Wachter, 2003:5). Nilsson's concept therefore "acknowledges that the majority of students (and staff) are not mobile and thus the opportunities for developing cultural capability will not be gained by travelling to other countries for study or work" (Trahar & Hyland, 2011:626-627). In this sense, the international dimension of IaH emphasizes local activities within the institution in question which are aimed at developing international and intercultural cooperation (Campins Eritja, 2007).

Nilsson's concept helps to understand how internationalisation processes are reaching more domestically oriented practices at local universities. IaH focuses on "academic learning that blends the concepts of *self, strange*, and *otherness*" (Teekens, 2006:17, original emphasis). According to Brewer (2004:2), Internationalisation at home is "an intensely individual matter", as "each institution will have its own approach, based on its history, mission, location, resources and the composition of its faculty staff and students". In this regard, some position educators such as those

responsible for implementing intercultural communication in international classrooms (Ippolito, 2007; Teekens, 2000).

Following this idea, Wächter (2000) discusses the differences between internationalisation and globalisation, arguing that they are not synonymous. On the one hand, globalisation refers to "forceful changes in the economic, social, political and cultural environment, brought about by global competition, the integration of markets, increasingly dense communication networks, information flows and mobility" (Reichert & Wächter, 2000) and it is an uncontrolled process. Internationalisation, on the other hand, "is based on conscious action" (Wachter, 2000:10). For Wachter, the capacity of a university to internationalise itself depends on various factors: the government (European, national and regional) and also an anonymous "actor" setting certain rules, which is commonly known as 'globalisation'. The author also argues that ...:

> *Most of the forces emanating from the globalisation process - and one of its main features, world-wide competition - tend to increase the pressure on institutions to develop an international profile* (Wachter, 2000:12).

Thus, while in its early stages IaH mainly prioritised student mobility, "priorities have partially shifted towards the encouragement of internationalised curricula, and programmes taught in foreign languages, to name only two examples" (Wachter, 2000:12) in the local setting. According to Moore (2011:4), "apart from the multilingual environments created by students and staff mobility, European universities are also actively engaged in creating opportunities for members to learn foreign languages". In fact, when universities attempt to introduce some of the features of internationalisation at home, it often results in the fact that "successful programmes will be taught in an internationally frequently spoken foreign language, in most cases in English" (Wachter, 2000:10), due to the status that this language has acquired worldwide (see section 2.4.1.).

Bringing IaH at a university in Catalonia comes with the realities and objectives stated so far and, in addition, asks for the need to take into account sensitive cultural, linguistic and political issues that are specific to the local setting where the new English-medium degree in Primary Education is being implemented. In this sense,

“glocalization” (Robertson, 1995:12) “compels universities to keep a delicate balance between the two conflicting but also complementing forces that interact and struggle for ground”. In fact, the global/local dichotomy is present even in exemplary education models, such as the Finnish and there is no doubt that training future teachers both to educate through the local values and culture, and through cosmopolitism is an achievable target (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming b).

In this sense, a brief snapshot of the sociolinguistic and political context in which the participants of this research live and are immersed in was considered relevant and necessary in order to understand what the "local" setting is. Catalonia is an autonomous region in the Spanish state where two different languages, Catalan and Spanish, share co-official status (see section 1.5.). Even though Catalan used to be the only spoken language in Catalonia (Artigal, 1997), it was banned from the education system and from society during Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975). Over that time, this language remained restricted to domestic use (de Mejía, 2002:227). Franco's regime strongly set out policies of "cultural and linguistic homogenization" (Artigal, 1997:134), and all manifestations of Catalan language, culture and identity were strictly banned (de Mejía, 2002:227). After this period, the Spanish Constitution (1978) "granted regional languages a co-official status alongside Spanish in the territories where such languages were spoken" (Escobar Urmeneta & Unamuno, 2008:1) and, in addition, the Estatut d'Autonomia (passed in 1979 and reformed in 2006) defines Catalan as Catalonia's "own language" (Moore, 2011) ("*la llengua pròpia de Catalunya*", Article 3) (Council of Europe, 2005) in what Woolard (2008) considers an attempt to emphasize the national identity values attributed to the language.

In Catalonia, the Act on Linguistic Normalization (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1983) turned Catalan into the language of instruction in the Catalan education system, "as a means both to integrate the large non-Catalan speaking immigrant population into Catalan life and to upgrade the status of Catalan" (de Mejía, 2002:228). The model has ever since remained as an exemplary model of immersion in Europe (Artigal, 1991). Its success is also reflected in the report made by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) (Council of Europe, 2005), which in fact accounts for the success in "achieving an impressive reversal of the previous trend" (Escobar Urmeneta

& Unamuno, 2008:6), as Catalan became the main language of instruction in the education system after its oppression. The main objective of the Catalan immersion program was that all students whose mother tongue was the majority language could attain bilingualism (Artigal, 1997), even though its implementation aimed at going beyond that:

> *The Catalan immersion program is not simply an opportunity for individuals to learn two languages. Rather, it is part of the project of reinstating Catalonia's heritage language as a language of normal use in its territory* (Artigal,1997:133).

According to (de Mejía, 2002:227), nowadays "the official bilingual status of the region and an active political, linguistic and cultural campaign on the part of the Catalan authorities and support groups has led to a significant revival and revaluation of the prestige and status of Catalan". In spite of that, Catalan is still a minority language in Catalonia, due to its coexistence with Spanish and English in terms of geography and of daily life (Nussbaum, 2005). According to Pons & Vila (2005:73), in the 2001 census, the oral and written knowledge of Spanish among the population of Catalonia was universal, while 94% of such population understood Catalan, 75% could speak it, 74% could read it and 50% could write it. The issue of identity and language use in Catalonia is a complex one, mainly due to historical and political reasons, and in this context language choice defines individual's identities (Boix-Fuster & Sanz, 2008:87).

Even though delving into the L1 linguistic identities of the participants in this PhD thesis is beyond the scope of this thesis, it was necessary to present the sociolinguistic reality that shapes the daily lives of Catalan citizens. Having said that, the increase in the importance of foreign language learning in the education system has now become a remarkable challenge in Catalonia, as the teaching and learning of foreign languages have become a political and educational priority both in Catalonia and in Spain (see section 1.2.).

Taking into account the IaH context in which this thesis was carried out, in the case of the English learners who participated in the study, visualizing a global community through internationalisation that goes beyond Western and American cultures is of extreme relevance. According to Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004:15), “in Bourdieu’s terms,

those who are not speakers of the official language or standard variety are subject to symbolic domination, if they believe in the legitimacy of that language or variety". Bringing "internationalisation at home" also implies creating a community that goes beyond Westernization and Americanization. Knight (2004:7) argues that "the world of higher education is changing, and the world in which higher education plays a significant role is changing", which highlights the importance of acknowledging the complexities that go hand in hand with such processes. According to Wachter (2000:10), while globalisation is an uncontrolled process, internationalisation "is based on conscious action" and it might be looked at as a "response to the challenges brought about by globalisation". Thus, an uncontrolled view towards the world based on the values that globalisation processes occasionally transmit , namely, the promotion of Western values over Eastern ones or the promotion of Americanization vs the rest of the world, might be affecting the types of imagined communities that English language learners envision. In fact, some scholars have shown concern about the loss of one's cultural identity due to what they have named McDonaldization (Phillipson, 2004; Ritzer, 2004) or, in other words, the transfer of North American or British norms and values that might lead to homogenization or imperialism. In spite of such a political stance, other scholars have argued about the fact that English can in fact be used independently from its original culture and ideology, "without compromising cultural, historical, or ideological diversity" (Llurda, 2004:321) and that "fears of homogeneity and cultural uniformity are thus largely unfounded, and human cultural diversity (although clearly met with significant challenges) remains in good health" (Dewey, 2007:336).

Jenkins (2009:16-17) refers to this new global reality: "English is fast becoming the medium of instruction in tertiary education, while in secondary and even primary education, school subjects are increasingly being taught through English as means of learning both". In Catalonia, numerous efforts are being made "to resolve the tension caused by the friction between local, regional and global policies" (Escobar Urmeneta & Unamuno, 2008:3). The notion of CLIL "embraces those educational practices in which content subjects – excluding those labelled as 'language subjects' – are taught and learned through a language of instruction, second or foreign, in which a learner has a basic or advanced developing communicative competence" (Escobar Urmeneta,

2011:203-204). The first language and culture of learners, a dual focus of pedagogical attention and the assistance needed in the target language are three factors that are highly contemplated in CLIL settings (Escobar Urmeneta, 2011:203-204). Research on CLIL, a model that is prevailing in primary and secondary schools all over Europe, has been prominent for many years, but it was importantly inspired by different realities in the world that were calling for the need to study such phenomena: bilingual and immersion programmes in the US and Canada and bilingual programmes in Spanish autonomies (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2007; Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010). According to Smit & Dafouz (2012), when looking at how this notion applies to university contexts, they argue that the term has been substituted by "Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education" (ICL or ICLHE) or "English as a Medium of Instruction" (EMI). However, Unterberger & Wilhelmer (2011) argue that it is precisely due to the lack of emphasis on language in EMI contexts what differentiates it from CLIL and ICLHE settings, as in the latter there are "explicit and integrated content and language learning aims". While in lower educational stages the focus is on both the content and the language (see e.g. Escobar Urmeneta & Evnitskaya 2013, 2014; Evnitskaya & Morton, 2011), in EMI settings the primary concern lies on the content, although this type of immersion will probably lead to language improvement (Muñoz, 2012) (see section 1.6.; Escobar Urmeneta Ed., forthcoming 2017a; and Escobar Urmeneta Ed., forthcoming 2016b, for a more detailed discussion on terminology).

There is a growing body of research done on ICLHE and its role in the universities' internationalisation process. Thus, Pérez-Vidal (2014) discusses the instrumental role of CLIL and ICLHE in the promotion of internationalisation, arguing that the realities they encompass set multilingual academic settings in home universities which go beyond merely preparing students for participating in mobility programs but contribute to eventually preparing students for multilingual work settings. Furthermore, when comparing formal language instruction and Study Abroad (SA) programs as two learning contexts and their effects on foreign language learning and development, Pérez-Vidal (2015) acknowledges the superior effect on learners' linguistic processes of periods spent abroad. Pérez-Vidal & Juan Garau (2009) show how SA experiences turn out to be more efficient for certain students than Formal Instruction contexts (i.e.

foreign language classes) when analysing language learners' development in writing skills. Pérez-Vidal & Barquin (2014) compare progress in academic writing in two different settings: after SA and after formal instructions. Their results highly support the positive impact of SA programs in the advance of writing skills in a foreign language.

Smit & Dafouz (2012) provide an exhaustive review on CLIL education research while specifically focusing on higher education. They argue that "university-level education constitutes a distinct research and educational field owing to its specific characteristics as regards language and education policy, institutional interests as well as learners and instructors involved". They state that common research looking at classrooms discourse, teacher cognition and English-medium policy documents and implementation allow for in-depth analyses that contribute to the exploration of EMI beyond individual cases.

Dafouz & Smit (2014) argue that even though ICLHE seems to have been widely researched at a local level there is the need to create a conceptual framework for analysing the phenomenon they call EMEMUS (English-Medium Education in Multilingual University Settings). Therefore, the authors propose a theoretically grounded and holistic approach (which has been given the acronym "ROAD-MAPPING") which allows comparing EMEMUS within and across contexts. They conceive this kind of immersion programmes as a social phenomenon, while they view discourse as the door to access six highly relevant dimensions: Roles of English (RO), Academic Disciplines (AD), (language) Management (M), Agents (A), Practices and Processes (PP), Internationalisation and Glocalization (ING). The latter concept is especially relevant for the present thesis. Dafouz & Smit argue that "internationalization" and "globalisation" are two different concepts, as higher education institutions need to address their diversified roles in society:

> *While the global or horizontal mobility process provides access to international students, the local or vertical mobility process aims to widen participation of minoritized communities* (Dafouz & Smith, 2014:12)

In a study which examined the students' development of Global, International, and Intercultural Competencies (GII), it was shown that 'participating in some on-

campus global/international activities may benefit students' development of GII competencies more than participating in study abroad' (Soria & Troisi, 2014:273). In their study, the authors broadly define GII competencies as that "knowledge about several dimensions of global and international cultures" (Soria & Troisi:262), while they add that such competencies help individuals to work effectively with other people coming from different cultural traditions and backgrounds. Their study discussing the internationalisation of universities' curricular and curricular efforts, thus, suggests that internationalisation at a home university, through their on-campus activities, might hold the same benefits as study abroad, as they 'positively influence students' development of GII competencies as much as - if not more than - traditional study/travel abroad' (Soria & Troisi:273). Similarly, some research dealing with the impact of internationalisation on student identity has been carried out (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006; Phan, 2009). Phan (2009:201)'s study with Asian students aimed at uncovering their own "sense of self and their positioning with respect to English language".

Research into plurilingual interaction in CLIL settings carried out at different educational levels indicates that plurilinguism may be a source for creating better opportunities for the formation of subject content knowledge (e.g., Evnitskaya, 2012 Gajo & Berthoud, 2008; Gajo & Grobet, 2008; see also individual contributions in Escobar Urmeneta, Evnitskaya, Moore & Patiño, 2011 and in Evnitskaya, 2011). In the Catalan context, as opposed to those who might argue that teaching and learning through English may result in the weakening or an impairment of local cultures and linguistic practices, some studies have looked at the plurilingual practices that frequently take place in internationalised universities. In fact, Nussbaum (2009) argues that the introduction of second language for teaching/learning academic subject content tends to boost the preservation and development of plurilingual competences. Similarly, plurilingual practices have been found to reinforce the process of content and language learning (Moore, Nussbaum, & Borràs, 2013). Focusing on the university level, Moore et al. (2013:472) have found that the process of internationalisation of universities in Catalonia can coexist with plurilinguism and the complexity of learning and teaching subject-matter content. Their findings point to the fact that both professors and students in internationalised university lectures rely on the plurilingual and multimodal

resources they have in order to achieve successful teaching and learning activities. Similarly, acquiring plurilingual competence at a university setting might help to increase motivation towards new cultures and languages, while it might provide a more global and positive attitude towards multiculturalism matters. This idea is strongly supported by Lasagabaster & Sierra (2009). Also, in the context of one Catalan university, Moore (2011) delves into the relationship between plurilingual practices in classroom and non-classroom settings and knowledge construction. According to Moore's findings, linguistic diversity in classrooms favour knowledge construction, as students draw on their various first languages, through the use of resources such as code-switching, when using English as a lingua franca (ELF). Plurilingual practices are, thus, seen as resources to promote knowledge. Table 6 below outlines the main ideas and concepts presented in this section:

Table 6. Globalisation and the status of English

Globalisation and the Status of English
✓ **Key authors**: Bauman (1992); Beck (1992); Giddens (1991); Bhabha (1994); Kramsch (1993); Claire Kramsch (1999a, 2000); Nilsson (2003) ✓ **Key concepts**: critical experiences, thirdspace, trust & risk, international posture, glocalization, bicultural identity, multicompetent speaker, L2 user, L2 learner, IaH, ICLHE
✓ **Status of English** worldwide: ▪ It has been described as "an international language, a lingua franca, a global language, and a world language" (Caine, 2008:4). ▪ No longer linked to certain countries or cultures. ▪ English users in the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1986) are turning it into an international language. ▪ It is argued that ELT should not be based on native speaker norms (Caine, 2008; Crystal, 2003; Higgins, 2003; Jenkins, 2009; Llurda, 2004; S. L. McKay, 2002; Robert Phillipson, 1992; Widdowson, 1994, 1997) ▪ L2 user vs. L2 learner (Cook, 2002; Pavlenko, 2003) → Multicompetent speaker. ✓ Impact of **globalisation on identity**: Arnett (2002), Bourn (2011), Giddens (1991) ✓ **Learning** the "global language": Ryan (2006), Block & Cameron (2002); Ushioda (2006); Dörnyei & Csizer (2002); Lamb (2004a); Yashima (2002,2009); Kramsch

& Thorne (2002); Kramsch (1999b). ✓ The global reality has had an impact on **higher education policies** = Internationalisation at Home (Nilsson, 2003)
Note: ELT: English Language Teaching; L2: Second Language ; IaH: Internationalisation at Home; ICLHE: Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education

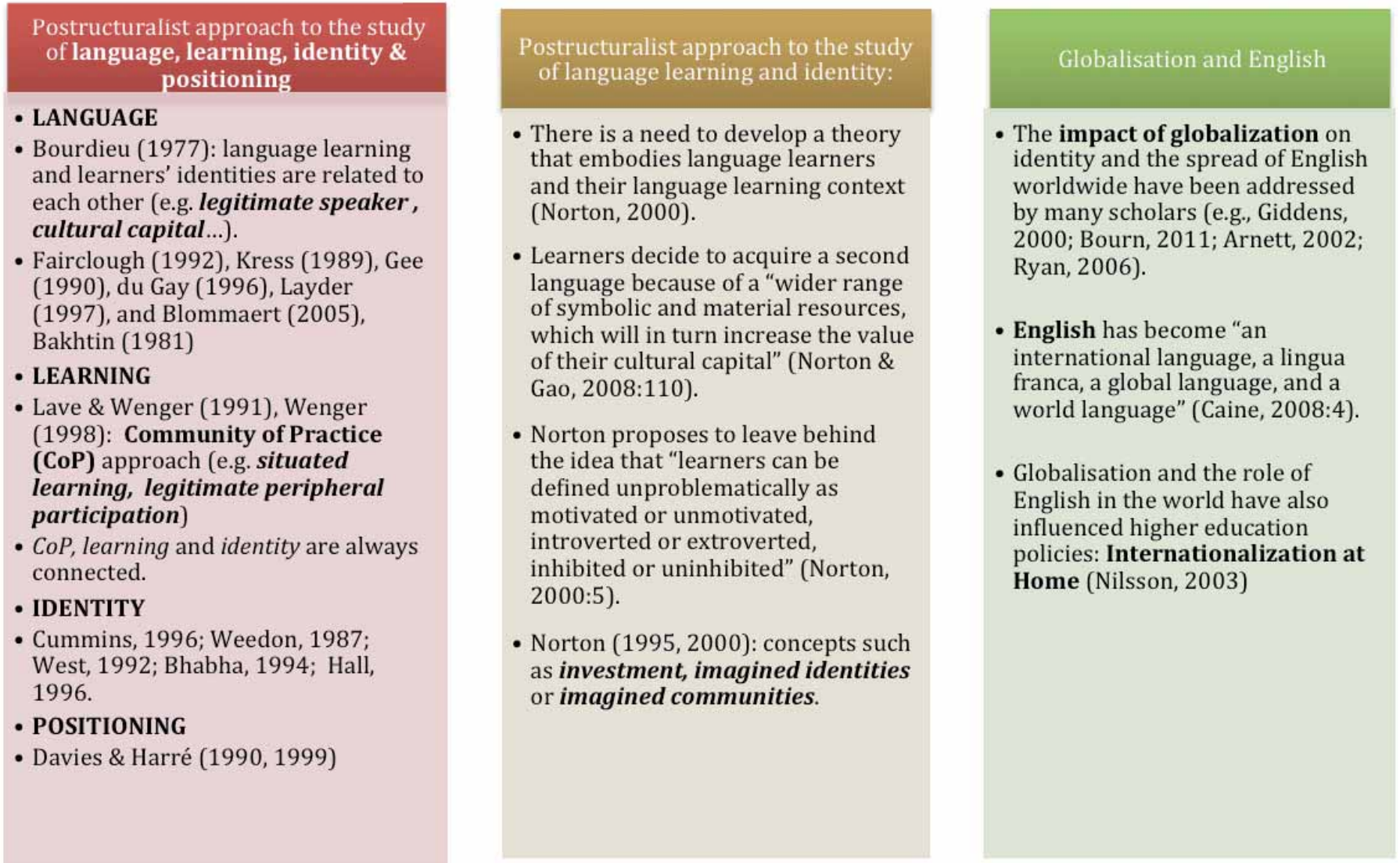
Therefore, we can say that the process taking place in many European universities wishing to internationalise their campuses is "internationalisation at home", and this is the case of the UAB, where this PhD thesis takes place.

2.5. A FINAL SNAPSHOT OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before concluding the present chapter, it was considered necessary to summarize the information provided so far and to provide the reader with a visual summary of the main theoretical approaches that construct the present thesis (see Figure 1).

The present study mainly draws on the postructuralist approach to the study of language learning and identity, mainly initiated by Bonny Norton in the 90s. Such an approach springs from more general postructuralist theories to the study of language, learning, identity and positioning. Finally, due to the very unique role that English, the language that concerns the present dissertation, has acquired worldwide, it was of prime importance to address issues related to globalisation and the impact that this reality has on individuals' identities and on higher education institutions.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework



2.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The present chapter presented the main tenets of current research on language learning and identity. First, section 2.2. provided an outline of the history of SL motivation and the arguments that led to some scholars to reconsider important social factors that had been left behind. The chapter also presented the theoretical principles underlying the identity approach to SLA, as well as its key concepts and ideas (section 2.3.). Similarly, section 2.4. outlined the main features of globalisation, the role of English in the world and its impact on individuals' identities, as well as it concluded with a section devoted to internationalisation in higher institutions. Finally, section 2.5. summarizes the theoretical framework with its key approaches and some of the most important concepts. As stated in section 2.1., not all the concepts presented in this chapter are employed during the data analysis. However, all frameworks put forth are considered necessary in order to set up the notions that served to analyse the data. Thus, it is assumed that such notions exist and take on meaning because of the wider frameworks and notions that have been presented here. In Chapter 4 the methodological framework employed in this thesis will be examined.

CHAPTER 3: OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the objectives and the research questions which guide this PhD thesis and briefly outlines the most important characteristics of the three studies which constitute the analytic part of the thesis.

3.2. THREE STUDIES: THEIR OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As it was already stated in section 1.7, the overall aim of the present thesis is to delve into the connections between English language learning, EMI- PEBD student-teachers' evolving identities and the effects of such learning processes on students' investments in English. The two overarching objectives were the following:

Objective 1 (O1): To explore and describe how and why subjective views towards English of a group of EMI-PEBD student-teachers drive them to invest in the learning of English.

Objective 2 (O2): To investigate the extent to which *the student-teachers'* engagements in communities of practice through English affect their imagined identities and their investments.

Three more specific objectives with the corresponding research questions were further stated which resulted in three analytic studies focused on a specific phenomenon, which are highly interweaved and complementary to each other.

Study 1 (S1): Studying Primary Education in English: Sociolinguistic factors that influenced the student-teachers' choice of degree (Chapter 5)

- Specific objective 1 (SO1): *To identify and explore salient sociolinguistic factors that played a key role in the student-teachers' decision to study the English-medium degree (EMI-PEBD) over the Catalan-medium degree (PEBD).*
- Research Question 1 (RQ1): What sociolinguistic factors influenced the student-teachers' decision to study the EMI- PEBD?

This study explores the main sociolinguistic factors that influenced a group of student-teachers to opt for studying an English-medium degree in Primary Education at the UAB. The study aims to analyse the reasons that led this group of students to choose the English-medium option, delving into the extent to which the language of instruction was relevant to them. In a globalizing world in which mobility, economy and information exchanges are mainly taking place through English, this study offers a thorough analysis of what studying through English implies at a social and personal level.

Study 2 (S2): English Communities of Practice and the student-teachers' imagined identities (Chapter 6)

- Specific objective 2 (SO2): *To explore and characterize the types of Communities of Practice through English that student-teachers have participated in over the course of their lives and to describe the extent to which their real and imagined identities evolved over the course of such engagements.*
- Research Question 2 (RQ2): How does engagement with communities of practice – where English has a key role – affect their imagined identities?

This study provides a general perspective on how participation in English-mediated communities of practices affects and shapes the EMI- PEBD student-teachers' identities. While the focus and the analytic approach are rather general, the study serves as a transition between S1 (reasons behind the student-teachers' choice of degree and S3 (the impact of the EMI- PEBD on their evolving identities). Thus, S2 offers a deep and thorough interpretation on how individuals experience life and the way how a

global/international language such as English can influence how they position themselves and are positioned by others. Since S2 analyses the data collected during the student-teachers' first and second year at the university, the study also brings some preliminary insights on the issues which are further explored in S3.

Study 3 (S3): The impact of the EMI-PEBD CoP on student-teachers' identities as English learners (Chapter 7)

Specific objective 3 (SO3): *To explore and track the ways in which the EMI-PEBD has contributed to the student-teachers' evolving identities as English learners/users.*

- Research Question 3 (RQ3): How do the student-teachers' identities as English learners evolve over the course of the EMI-PEBD?

This study offers a zoom-in exploration of the particularities of the EMI-PEBD community of practice. It examines the ways in which the student-teachers' participation in this CoPs affects, shapes and contributes to their identitary expansion. It also furthers understanding of the type of CoP that the English-medium degree becomes for the students, of its relevance for their ongoing process of learning English as a global language as well as of the way they position themselves (and are positioned by others) within society and the world.

3.3. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a general overview of the three studies that give shape to the present dissertation. The objectives and research questions addressed in each of the three studies were presented and a brief outline of each study was provided.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explains the methodological decisions taken in this dissertation. Section 4.2. presents de context of the study. Then, section 4.3. provides relevant information on the participants: while section 4.3.1. presents the sampling procedures, section 4.3.2. describes the main characteristics of the participants. Following, section 4.4. explains the specific methodological approaches adopted, that is, the qualitative, interpretive and case study that were adopted. Section 4.5. presents the data collection. First, section 4.5.1. presents the research instruments employed for data collection and the justification for their selection. Second, section 4.5.2. provides details on the data collection procedures. Next, section 4.6. describes the corpus obtained and used in the thesis (4.6.1.) and in the three studies (4.6.2.). After that, section 4.7. discusses the data analysis procedures undertaken. This section starts with section 4.7.1., in which the data transcription and translation are explained in detail. Section 4.7.2. describes the general analytic approach to data that was followed. After that, section 4.7.3. provides detailed information on the analytic steps followed during the data analysis. Before concluding the chapter, section 4.8. briefly exposes ethical issues taken into account during the research process.

4.2. CONTEXT

As already briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, this PhD thesis takes place within the context of the English-Medium Pre-Service Primary Teacher Education Bachelor's Degree (EMI-PEBD), a degree offered at the Faculty of Education, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Furthermore, the present doctoral dissertation is framed within two wider research projects (Guideway, ref. 2014 ARMIF 00009; Pathway, ref. 2015 ARMIF 00001).

The official Bachelor's degree in Pre-Service Primary Teacher Education (PEBD) is a four-year degree offered at most public universities in Catalonia and Spain which gives student-teachers access to the teaching profession at the primary education level. Similarly, future primary teachers have the option to specialize or to intensify specific training in a number of Minors. In the case of the UAB, the Minors available at the Faculty of Education are the following: Foreign Languages (English), Physical Education, Specific Educational Needs, and Musical Education. These Minors allow the graduated teachers to access specialized positions in schools. Due to the globalisation processes that are currently taking place, an IaH dimension (Nilsson, 2003) was incorporated into this Bachelor' degree in 2012 and the Faculty of Education at the UAB started offering the opportunity to study the same degree through English (see Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2016c). As a result, the English-Medium Primary Education Bachelor's Degree (EMI-PEBD) turned into the first teaching degree in Catalonia offered in English, as the teaching of between 65% and 80% of subjects, depending on the number of elective courses, is done through this language.

Both the EMI-PEBD and the PEBD (in case of the UAB, the Catalan-medium degree) consist of the same subjects, objectives and professional and academic content. However, the EMI-PEBD aims at providing students with the basic competences they need to teach through Catalan, Spanish and English by following the IaH approach, on the one hand, and aiming at preserving the local linguistic and cultural traits, on the other hand. The subjects take an ICLHE approach, facilitating the learning of both content and language in the classroom. Students are required to acquire a B2 level at the end of the first academic year, and a C1 level at the end of the third academic year. During the fourth year, the student-teachers are able to access the Minor in Foreign Languages (English), as well as to take a subject that specifically focuses on the CLIL approach (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2016c). However, similarly, they can access all other Minors. In addition to the ICLHE approach that the EMI-PEBD takes, this degree also adopts specific measures on linguistic resources offered to students, as discursive descriptors and discursive guidelines are provided. Language and academic discourse are part of the objectives and the assessment criteria (for more details on the

differences between the EMI-PEBD and the PEBD, see Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017b).

Regarding the international aspect within the EMI-PEBD, the level of English command among the students allows for a series of internationalising experiences that would otherwise be more challenging in the PEBD groups. Likewise, the EMI-PEBD seeks to provide students with the capacity to cope with both the near and the global context. Following this idea, the degree focuses on the development of social, cultural and economic matters in the country, as well as on international affairs, with the aim to provide students with different cultural perspectives (Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2017b and Escobar Urmeneta, forthcoming 2016d).

4.3. PARTICIPANTS

4.3.1. SELECTION PROCESS OF PARTICIPANTS

This PhD thesis aimed to provide no general representation of the wider population, but "it simply represents itself" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Therefore, the sample design employed to conduct this research was based on "purposive sampling" (Mason, 2002; McQueen & Knussen, 2002), with which "the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection" (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003:78). As a non-probability sample, the researcher is given the possibility to select certain cases according to the kind of features or processes that they illustrate as it is in these cases where "the processes being studied are most likely to occur" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, as cited in Silverman, 2010).

As Punch (2005:146) suggests, the intention in a case study is "not to generalize, but rather to understand the case in its complexity and its entirety, as well as in its context" and to investigate the "potential common elements in a case" (Punch, 2005:147). The research questions and the way they aim to approach the issues

presented in the literature review permitted to look for common patterns between participants. The purposefully selected sample may contribute on the one hand to base the selection criteria on issues relevant for the theoretical framework presented (e.g. students who have travelled, who have been abroad, who have not been in contact with English as often as others...), and, on the other hand, to find information-rich cases that allow the researcher to obtain in-depth responses to the issues this thesis addresses (Cohen et al., 2007; Patton, 1990; Silverman, 2010). As Stake (1995:6) observes, "even for collective case studies, selection by sampling of attributes should not be the highest priority" while he adds that "opportunity to learn is of primary importance".

Similarly, the selection process of participants also considered the valuable comments, observations and ideas that could be provided by this specific group of students, labelling them as what has been named "good respondents" (Merriam 1988:75, as cited in Trenchs, 1998).

With this aim, Questionnaire 1 (Q1) (Escobar Urmeneta, 2013) was used. The questionnaire, which purposely included a series of open-ended questions related to the issues under investigation in this thesis, was filled-in in March 2013 by the two cohorts of student-teachers enrolled in the Primary Education degree, i.e.by students from the Catalan-medium PEBD and the EMI-PEBD. However for the purposes of this PhD thesis only students in the English-medium degree were considered. This questionnaire was designed and filled in by the students in English for reasons that are beyond the scope of this thesis and since the amount of information they were asked to provide in open-ended questions was limited the degree of command of English of all student-teachers allowed them to express themselves in the foreign language.

In selecting the participants for the given PhD thesis, the following issues were considered highly relevant. In the first place, the meaningfulness and the relevance of their responses for the themes addressed in this thesis was considered essential. In other words, complexity in their answers and a capacity to widely express themselves were searched in order to obtain as much rich data as possible. In the second place,,

issues such as participants' previous experiences abroad or their absence as well as the participants' intentions to pursue different Minors were also taken into account.

To sum up, the participants of this thesis were all student-teachers at the UAB studying the EMI-PEBD, and data taken from Q1 served as a starting point to select participants who had provided relevant data related to the issues under investigation and who had showed to be able to express themselves freely about such issues.

4.3.2. DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Initially 14 participants were selected for this PhD thesis on the criterion that were already explained in the previous section. All participants were student-teachers enrolled in the EMI-PEBD at the UAB. The participants were thirteen female students and one male student and their age at the enrolment moment was between 18 and 30. All of them were bilingual Catalan-Spanish speakers. Table 7 summarizes basic personal information regarding each participant collected at the beginning of the study.

Table 7. Basic personal information on each participant

Name	Gender	Onset Age	Planning to do a Minor? (onset)	How much time living abroad before starting the EMI-PEBD?
Alicia	Female	22	Music Education	**Studying English:** 1 summer (Derry, North Ireland, UK)
Arnau	Male	18	Physical Education	**Studying English:** 2 weeks (Cork, Ireland)
Ester	Female	19	No	-
Gisela	Female	30	Doesn't know	-
Júlia	Female	21	Physical Education	**Studying English:** 2 weeks (New York, USA)
Mercè	Female	19	English	-
Montse	Female	18	Physical Education	-
Natalia	Female	19	No	-

Name	Gender	Onset Age	Planning to do a Minor? (onset)	How much time living abroad before starting the EMI-PEBD?
Neus	Female	18	Special Needs	**Studying English:** 1,5 month (Oxford, England, UK)
Patricia	Female	18	Special Needs	-
Roser	Female	20	No	2 months (Rehovot, Israel) participating in an International Science Camp at Weizmann Institute
Sara	Female	18	Music Education	**Living:** 2 summers (London, England, UK; Sheffield, England, UK) **Studying English:** 2 summers (Boston, USA; and San Francisco, USA)
Silvia	Female	18	Special Needs	-
Sònia	Female	20	No	**Living:** 2weeks (Birmingham, England, UK) 1 month (London, England, UK) **Studying English:** 2 months (Greystones, Ireland)

The previous table provides relevant information that needs to be taken into account. As it shows, 13 out of the 14 participants selected are female students. Also, the majority are between 18 and 22, while one participant is much older (Gisela). Alicia, Arnau, Júlia, Neus, Roser and Sònia (7 students) have participated in stays abroad. While most of them have been abroad taking EFL courses, some have lived with host-families and Roser has participated in an International Science Camp in Israel. Regarding the place of origin, all participants are from Catalonia, although they all come from different regions. The participants in the following study are from different regions within Catalonia, namely: Barberà del Vallès, Barcelona, Calella de la Costa, Font Rubí, Martorell, Olot, Sabadell, Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Sant Gregori, Terrassa, Vallirana and Vilafranca del Penedès. Thus, all of them live within a 111 km radius of the city of Barcelona and those who are not from the capital city commute every day or every weekend from these places to attend university.

4.4. QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDY APPROACH

Considering that the primary purpose of this thesis is to explore individuals' perceptions towards English and to delve into the role that their identities play in it, rather than generalizing the findings (Cohen et al., 2007; Nunan, 1992; Patton, 1990; Punch, 2005), it is based on qualitative research methods. Qualitative approaches have an interpretive and humanistic orientation, while they take into account multiple realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The significance of qualitative studies lies in their ability "to understand cultural values and social behaviour" and their capacity "to capture the nuances of human living" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:28). The need to seek for rich and meaningful responses fits into the ability that qualitative methods have "to study phenomena which are simply unavailable elsewhere" (Silverman, 2006:43).

As an example, the complexity of the notion "investment" called for the need to look at the phenomena under investigation through the eyes of the participants. Thus, qualitative methods were employed, as they "are useful for making sense of highly complex situations because they offer interpretations that are validated by the main research participants themselves" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011:2014). As Duff (2010:50) points out, "a growing enthusiasm for qualitative postructural, postcolonial, and critical L2 research [...] is indeed evident in many areas of AL [Applied Linguistics]", while she highlights the growing "emphasis on more subjective, discursive aspects of learning that are often approached through interpretive, inductive, and sometimes critical methods" (Duff, 2010:51).

Wanting to make sense of phenomena that takes place in a particular natural setting, the aim of the present study was to interpret the nature of such phenomena (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), adopting therefore an interpretive approach to the issues that play a role in individuals' interest towards English. The interpretive paradigm allows theory to emerge from particular situations, based on "a concern for the individual" (Cohen et al. , 2007:22). Likewise, an interpretive approach provides spontaneity and response complexity, since it sees "people, and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings, as the primary data sources" (Mason,

2002:56). Taking into account the complexity of the factors involved in the present research, taking an interpretive approach allowed the researcher to create a meaningful picture of the ways in which a group of student-teachers experience life and the factors that influence their perceptions and their realities.

The method employed here is also a collective case study. As Stake (2005:443) argues, a case study "is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied", the aim of which is "to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible" (Punch, 2005:144). Case studies allow for the investigation of the richness, complexity and uniqueness of the context, as well as they derive in important depth and detail (Berg, 2009; Cohen et al., 2007; Denscombe, 2007; Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Case studies are very useful to catch "the close-up reality and thick description of participants' lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for, a situation" (Cohen et al., 2007:182). The term "thick description", from an anthropological perspective, was introduced by Geertz (1973) and then expanded by Denzin (1989:83) who stated that it "evokes emotionality and self-feelings", while "the voices, feelings, actions, and meaning of interacting individuals are heard". Thick descriptions look at many facets of the same phenomena and consider its full social complexity.

As a collective case study, it allows the researcher to delve into a group of individuals' ideas and opinions towards English, as well as into the role that this language plays in their lives. While highlighting the importance of contextual factors in qualitative research, Cohen et al. (2007:181) state that case studies provide "a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles". Yin (1984:23) observes that "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" and it is clear that in the case of this PhD thesis the phenomenon under investigation encompasses "important contextual conditions" (Yin, 2009:18). It focuses on the "uniqueness of individual cases" and on the "subtlety of real life situations" (Denscombe, 2007:38). Moreover, the context in which these phenomena are investigated, the point in time, and the age of the participants are key factors which fit into the nature of a case study.

Therefore, the sampling (see section 4.3.1.) was designed to seek for tendencies among the participants, since, as Berg (2009:330) puts it, "few human behaviours are unique, idiosyncratic, and spontaneous". There is a lot to be learned from particular cases, as the general lies in the particular (Erickson, 1986). Therefore, if "human behaviour is predictable, then it is a simple jump to accept that case studies have scientific value" (Berg, 2009:330). Through the researcher's narrative describing a certain case, readers can invoke an image: "a vivid portrait of excellent teaching, for example, can become a prototype that can be used in the education of teachers or for the appraisal of teaching" (Eisner, 1991:199).

4.5. DATA COLLECTION

4.5.1. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Considering the importance of triangulation, the use of multiple sources to ensure validity of observations was considered (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Patton, 1990). According to Bogdan and Biklen (2006:115-116), "multiple sources lead to a fuller understanding of the phenomena". In addition, Patton (1990:467) states that within qualitative methods triangulation can be achieved by "cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means". Therefore, in order to capture the participants' subjective positions and ideas about their identities and the role that English plays in their lives, four different types of research instruments were employed for data collection: questionnaires, individual interviews, focus groups and linguistic autobiographies. In what follows, each research instrument will be presented in detail.

4.5.1.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a primary source of data collection (Cohen et al., 2007; Gray, 2004; McQueen & Knussen, 2002; Nunan, 1992; Oppenheim, 1992) and should be used "when they fit the objectives of the research" (Gray, 2004:187). Since this thesis intends to seek

"in-depth opinions and perspectives of a small number of respondents" (Gray, 2004:187), a self-completion semi-structured questionnaire was chosen as an appropriate research instrument to be used at the beginning of the data collection process to get general background information on the participants and their perceptions of their use of English and their relationship with the language. A semi-structured questionnaire usually combines closed and open-ended questions, as the latter are useful "in obtaining judgements or opinions" (Engelhart, 1972:99) and respondents can let "their thoughts roam freely, unencumbered by a prepared set of replies" (Oppenheim, 1992:113). Some of the open-ended questions were sentence-completion items (Oppenheim, 1992:56-7), which also aimed to allow the respondents to add remarks and full explanations regarding the issues addressed. Overall, open-ended questions "permit one to understand the world as seen by the respondents" (Patton, 1990:24). Also, open-ended questions are appropriate for exploratory and complex issues and they "catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour in the participants' own words" (Cohen et al., 2007:255).

The issues raised in the questionnaire were considered the starting point to proceed with the follow-up semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups in order to gain more in-depth data, while they also served as inspiration for the design of the interview questions (Cohen et al., 2007). As Gray (2004:187) observes, "case studies can use a combination of data gathering tools, with the use of questionnaires, sometimes in the form of an interview schedule".

4.5.1.2. Interviews

An interview is "a powerful tool for eliciting rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meanings that underpin their lives and behaviours" (Gray, 2004:213). In qualitative data interviews are a powerful source which enable the researcher to "gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:103). Following the completion of the questionnaire, the participants were invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews are "guided by

some general questions", while they also "offer the interviewer considerable latitude to pursue a range of topics and offer the subject a chance to shape the content of the interview" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:104). According to Nunan (1992:150), semi-structured interviews are advantageous in that, on the one hand, they give the interviewer "a great deal of flexibility" and, on the other hand, they give the interviewee a "degree of power and control", while also affording "one privileged access to other people's lives".

Having a list of the issues to be addressed in this thesis, this type of interview adds richer interactions and flexibility to conversations, while it also allows participants to further develop their ideas. Moreover, they can also contribute to add "emphasis on depth, nuance, complexity and roundedness in data" (Mason, 2002:65). It was paramount that the participants could see the interview as a conversation in which they could interact with the researcher in a free and comfortable way (see section 4.10).

While individual interviews could provide the study with great depth, focus groups were also incorporated. The advantages that this type of interview could imply were considered a positive contribution to the thesis. Namely, the use of focus groups allows participants to expose "a variety of viewpoints on the topic" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:150) which certainly contributes to enrich the data collected through individual interviews. The use of multiple sources was considered a strong point to ensure validity of observations (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Moreover, focus groups are believed to create a more relaxed atmosphere thus helping the participants feel more comfortable and share their ideas and stories more easily. Focus groups also provide the researcher with "deeper sources of information"; while, by allowing him/her to ask, challenge or oppose, the obtained data is "richer in content" (Rezaei, 2012:47). Similarly, according to Merton, Fiske and Kendall (1990:31)…:

> *…many participants are not aware of their implicit perspectives, and hearing others' perspectives gives the participants a chance to voice their points of view as well as learn from each other, while giving the researcher data that is not possible to get in another way. This also provides insight into how the participants understand their similarities and differences.*

A lot of effort was put in getting a meaningful and deep idea of what it means to interview someone in qualitative research, as "the interviewer's ability to sense the immediate meaning of an answer, and the horizon of possible meanings that it opens up, is decisive" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:134). Thus, the questions that were previously designed intended to be a starting point to allow participants to expand on their ideas, as "the goal of understanding how the person […] thinks is at the centre of the interview" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:106). Every word was treated by the researcher as if it could have "the potential to unlock the mystery of the subject's way of viewing the world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:105).

The openness of the questions as well as additional questions and a flexible atmosphere were considered at all times, as this allows participants to feel more comfortable and relaxed to express themselves and to expand on their responses as much as possible, while it results in the emergence of the so-called "autobiographic narratives" (Miyahara, 2010) during the conversations about past experiences and situations they had encountered over the course of their lives. According to Miyahara (Miyahara, 2010:6), "autobiographic narratives collected through talks and conversations with the participants have opened pathways for researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding on new theoretical constructs for studying language learning" (e.g. Mckay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 2000; Toohey, 2001).

4.5.1.3. Linguistic Autobiographies

Linguistic autobiographies are "life histories that focus on the languages of the speaker and discuss how and why these languages were acquired, used, or abandoned" (Pavlenko, 2007:165). Following, Ochs & Capps (1996:20) argue that "personal narrative simultaneously is born out of experience and gives shape to experience" and "narrative and self are inseparable". According to Pavlenko (2007:164-165), linguistic autobiographies "offer insights into people's private worlds", "highlight new connections between various learning processes and phenomena" and "constitute a valuable information source for historic and diachronic sociolinguistic research in contexts where others sources are scarce".

Edge and Richards (1998) argue that such data collection method provides researchers with different notions of authenticity and legitimacy, as they contextualize and argue the extent to which individuality and complexity validate the findings. Moreover, as a data collection tool, linguistic autobiographies have shown to be effective in research on teacher education (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Okawa, 2000; Pavlenko, 2003) because they provided interesting insights into issues such as these future teachers' perceptions towards themselves as professionals (or future professionals), their linguistic identities or the communities they had in mind. According to Pavlenko (2003:254), the data collected through linguistic autobiographies has both advantages and disadvantages: "although it lacks the richness of the data collected through triangulation of observations, interviews, and discussions, it allows the researcher to examine discourses of language and identity, or imagined communities, the students draw on when not explicitly asked to reflect on nativeness or linguistic membership".

Even though initially linguistic autobiographies were not considered to be used for data collection since oral short "autobiographic narratives" were collected through the interviews in data collection Time 1 and Time 2 (for more details see section 4.5.2), this research instrument was incorporated at a later stage in the development of the thesis. Written linguistic autobiographies were considered the most appropriate research tool to collect the data for S3 in order to answer the need for a more reflexive and condensed insight into the participants' learning experience. In this way, the incorporation of a longitudinal approach to RQ3, led to the choice of using narratives, as they provided the study with two basic dimensions that, according to Ochs and Capps (1996), define such type of data collection method: "temporality" and "point of view". Narratives, in this sense, "link the past to present and future life worlds" (Ochs and Capps, 1996:24).

Through narratives "we come to know ourselves as we use narrative to apprehend experiences and navigate relationships with others", since they are "partial representations and evocations of the world as we know it" (Ochs & Capps, 1996:21). The choice of using narrative inquiry, thus, lies in the belief that the primary focus for such study was on "experience". Some scholars have considered "experience" as the

feature that distinguishes narratives from other types of qualitative data collection methods (Goodson et al., 2010; Reissman, 2008). Since "experience" and "identity" were the major phenomena of interest in this thesis, it was considered very relevant to include a data collection method that contributed to triangulate the data obtained in T1 and T2 (see sections 4.5.2.1. and 4.5.2.2. for more detail).

According to Miyahara (2010:2), "identity research has relied heavily on narratives as its main methodology and methods of inquiry". Many studies have used autobiographies to elicit stories from the participants themselves, allowing them to become legitimate sources of data (Kanno, 2003; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Individuals construct themselves through narratives (Bruner, 1990), and so linguistic autobiographies can provide meaningful information for studies dealing with language learning and identity. Narratives deal with experience and with meaning-making phenomena, while they have been considered a tool that provides the researchers with an alternative way to look at issues that might otherwise be inaccessible (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Following Pavlenko's (2003) study on pre-service and in-service English teachers studying a TESOL programme, S3 of the present thesis attempts to uncover the student-teachers' human sense-making of all the situations and personal changes they have experienced over the course of the PEBD: "human beings create meaning from their experiences both individually and socially" (Miyahara, 2010:6). In this sense, S3 looks at "subject reality", that is, it attempts to examine the student-teachers' thoughts and feelings about their English learning process and the ways in which they might be connected to identity processes.

4.5.2. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

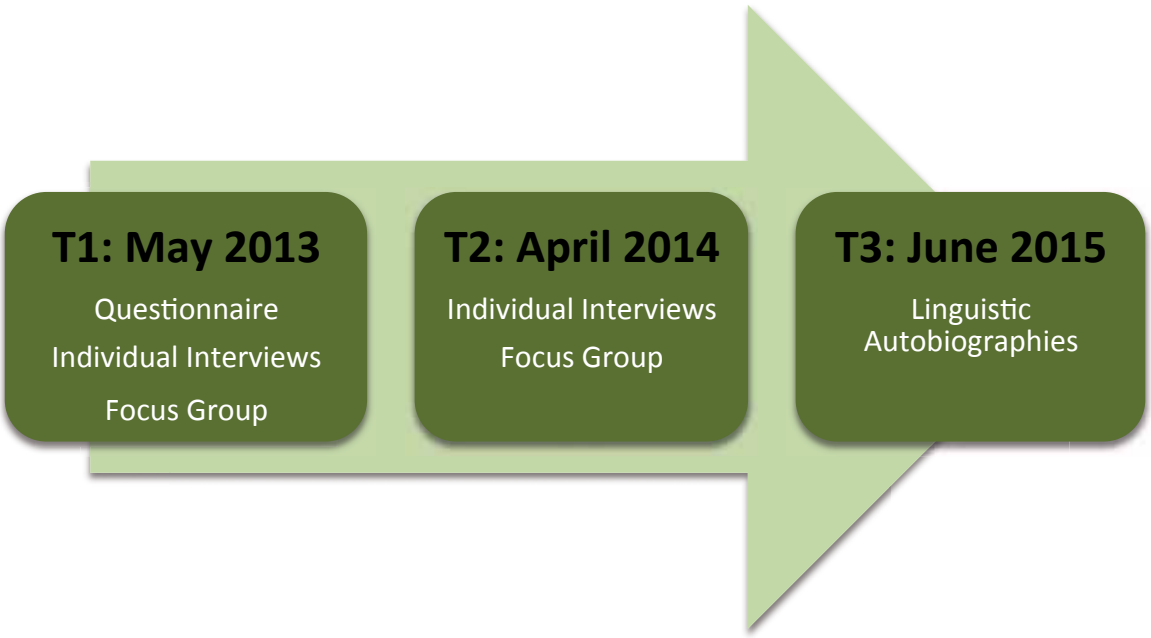
As it was already explained in section 4.3.1., prior to data collection process, 14 participants were selected in March 2013 through the use of Questionnaire 1 (Escobar Urmeneta, 2013) that was designed for the purposes of GUIDEWAY project and which fall beyond the scope of this thesis. Apart for the purposes of selecting the participants, the data obtained in this questionnaire were not analysed in this thesis and are hence not included here or elsewhere in the analytic chapters.

After that, the data collection that would gather all data included in this thesis began. The first data collection process took place between May and June 2013, at the end of the participants' first academic year, and the last data collection process took place in June 2015, at the end of their third academic year. The process included three phases. Thus, the data analysed in this thesis were gathered at three different times:

- **Time 1 (T1):** May 2013. In T1 three data sets were collected: a semi-structured questionnaire (Q2), individual interviews (I1) and a focus group (FG1).
- **Time 2 (T2):** April 2014. In T2 two data sets were collected: individual interviews (I2) and a focus group (FG2).
- **Time 3 (T3):** June 2015. In T3 only one data set was collected: a linguistic autobiography.

Figure 2 summarizes the procedures undertaken at each data collection time:

Figure 2. Data collection procedures



The data collection procedures included the following stages:

- Stage 1: participants were selected on the base of their answers to Q1;

- Stage 2: a request e-mail with an invitation to participate in research was sent to the participants;
- Stage 3: consent forms were filled in by the participants;
- Stage 4: data were collected at T1 (Q2, Individual Interview 1 and Focus Group 1);
- Stage 5: data were collected at T2 (Individual Interview 2 and Focus Group 2);
- Stage 6: data were collected at T3 (linguistic autobiographies).

Before providing more details on each data collection time, general issues that are applicable to all data collection procedures will be presented.

In the first place, on the basis of Pavlenko's (2007) suggestions, all sets of data were collected in and through Catalan. Pavlenko argues for the importance of discussing the rationale for one's choice of language: "in studies of subject and life reality where the speakers' L2 proficiency is low and the L1 is shared with the researcher, the choice of L1 as the language of data collection is justified" (Pavlenko, 2007:172). Individual stories may vary a great deal depending on the language in which they are written (Chafe, 1998; Norrick, 1998). Similarly, research shows that even the same story can become very different depending on the language in which it has been written (Koven, 2002, 2004), while differences in proficiency in one language can also have a great impact on the content of narratives (Rintell, 1990). Thus, all data (Q2, individual interviews, focus groups and linguistic autobiographies) were completed, carried out orally or written by the participants in Catalan.

In the second place, a especial effort was put in building trust and rapport between the researcher and the participants during all stages of the data collection process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Cohen et al., 2007; Gray, 2004; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Oppenheim, 1992; Patton, 1990). Due to the nature of the issues addressed in the present thesis, it was considered that the subjects might feel a bit lost and self-conscious, "contending in a self-effacing manner that they have (had) nothing important to say" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:103). Thus, in the case of individual interviews and focus groups, the fact of conducting them in Catalan notably contributed to rapport

building and allowed the participants to feel more at ease, to express themselves widely and in a very transparent way, while the researcher attempted to always be "reassuring and supportive" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:103). Moreover, at the beginning of each interview and focus group, participants were reminded of issues concerning anonymity and confidentiality (see section 4.8) and the fact that they had the right to withdraw at any time was emphasized.

4.5.2.1. T1 Data Collection

As it was already mentioned, T1 took place in May 2013 and consisted of Q2, Individual Interview 1 and Focus Group 1. Q2 was designed on the basis of the themes which, after a thorough literature review, have been selected as key issues for this PhD thesis and which were presented in Chapter 2. The questionnaire provided information on the general background and subjective positions towards English of the selected participants. In the process of designing Q2, a questionnaire used in Torras-Vila (2012) was used as the basis and served as a pilot study to enhance reliability in Q2. Furthermore, before conducting the study that led to Torras-Vila (2012), the collaboration of two acquaintances of the researcher who had the same profile as the participants of that study contributed to the identification of possible weaknesses in the questionnaire. Careful piloting was considered a key factor to achieve a successful qualitative research study (Cohen et al., 2007; Mason, 2002; McQueen & Knussen, 2002; Silverman, 2010; Wengraf, 2001) and the process helped "to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire" (Cohen et al., 2007:260).

However, since Torras-Vila (2012) and the present doctoral thesis take different methodological and theoretical approaches, some open-ended questions from Torras-Vila (2012) questionnaire were adapted to the research questions in the present thesis (see questions 6, 7, 8 and 9 in Appendix 2). Although they had been originally designed in English, in Torras-Vila (2012) they had already been translated into Catalan with the help of a professional Catalan-English translator. A mutual discussion about what was the intention behind each question was extremely helpful in order to ensure a valid translation that could provide the same kind of interpretations and answers regardless

the language of the questions. However, two new questions were incorporated into Q2 to address the objectives of this thesis (see questions 6 and 7 in Appendix 2), discussed with the supervisors and afterwards also translated into Catalan.

Once the preliminary approval to collaborate was received from all participants, consent forms were sent to them via e-mail (see Appendix 1) presenting them the main purposes of the study, together with ethical issues related to the research (see section 4.8). After having received the participants' consent to take part in the study, Q2 (see Appendix 2) was administered electronically in T1, during the student-teachers' first year in the EMI-PEBD. As already explained and justified in section 4.5.2, it was done in Catalan to avoid misinterpretations and to let the participants express themselves widely and freely in one of their first languages (see section 1.5. for a full understanding of the sociolinguistic reality in Catalonia).

Q2 consisted of three sections. Section 1 included 3 closed-ended questions which were aimed at establishing a general profile of the participants. Section 2 consisted of 2 closed-ended questions (Likert scale) to get information about the student-teachers' use of English in their daily life (adapted from Lamb, 2007) and one open-ended question intended at finding out about their possible motives for having chosen the EMI-PEBD. Section 3 contained 3 open-ended questions which aimed to elicit information about the issues related to their personal aspirations, their life and the role that English plays in it. More specifically. Thus sections 1 and 2 helped the researcher to obtain a broad picture of the participants' profiles in terms of basic information and the use of English in their daily lives, while section 3 helped to uncover how the fact of being English learners or English users was related to the participants' present identities and possibilities for identity expansion.

The data collected through Q2 was very concise, yet it provided a general background information about each participant and helped to get a broad idea of the topics, concepts and issues that would have to be dealt with further in Individual Interview 1 and Focus Group 1 (see Appendix 3), thereby delving further into the issues raised in Q2. In Pan & Block's (2011:394) words, "the questionnaire was seen as a

ground-clearing, temperature-taking exercise while the interviews were designed to explore in depth salient trends emerging in the questionnaire data".

At the beginning of the research process it was decided to have four participants for the individual interviews and 10 participants for the focus groups. A random distribution selected the participants who took part in the individual interviews and in the focus groups. Thus, the first part of each individual interview and focus group intended to investigate the role that English played in the interviewee's life. Similarly, the interviewer tried to uncover opinions underpinning the student-teachers' interest to learn English. In the second part, questions aimed at looking at the extent to which such interest was related to the participants' possibilities of identity expansion. It was necessary to constantly go back and forth, since themes and ideas seemed to interrelate on many occasions. Therefore, the initial questions served only as a guide and, together with the interviewees' responses, led the researcher to deepen into other relevant issues related to topics presented in Chapter 2.

In T1, the following four participants were interviewed individually: Sara, Roser, Alicia and Sònia. However, out of 10 participants originally selected to take part in FG1, only 9 participated: Arnau, Natalia, Patricia, Júlia, Montse, Silvia, Neus, Ester and Mercè. One participant (Gisela) was absent due to personal reasons. With the participants' permission, face-to-face individual interviews and focus group were video-recorded; Individual Interview 1 lasted between 45 and 60 minutes each while Focus Group 1 lasted between 60 and 90 minutes.

All interviews (Individual Interview 1 and Focus Group 1) were video-recorded and once the data collection was finished, they were transcribed verbatim using a simplified transcription style, that is, orthographically, usually adopted in different qualitative approaches such as narrative analysis (Block, 2007a; Block, 2015) and perfectly suitable for the purposes of the given PhD thesis (see section 4.7.1.). Over the course of the research, selected sections of the transcriptions that were to be included in the analytic studies were translated from Catalan into English. The translated versions were cross-checked by a colleague who was proficient in both languages, with the aim to ensure

accuracy and to avoid any possible errors arising due to translation (see Appendix 5 for translations of all excerpts used in the analytic chapters 5, 6 and 7).

To conclude, the data set obtained from T1, thus, includes responses to Q2 by 14 participants, 4 individual interviews (Sara, Roser, Alicia and Sònia) and a Focus Group with 9 participants (Arnau, Natalia, Patricia, Júlia, Montse, Silvia, Neus, Ester and Mercè).

4.5.2.2. T2 Data Collection

T2 took place in April 2014 and consisted of Individual Interview 2 and Focus Group 2 which aimed at eliciting information related to the phenomena under examination in S2 (see RQ2 in Chapter 3). Procedures and considerations similar to those taken in T1 were followed during this second data collection process, although some unexpected changes and amendments had to be undertaken due to the need to adapt to the participants' schedules and changes in lives which affected the data collection process. Thus, due to the absence of two participants (Natalia and Mercè) on the day of the focus group and taking into account their highly relevant and interesting contributions to FG1 the year before, it was considered important to interview these two participants individually. Another participant, Ester, neither participated in FG2 because she had temporally withdrawn from the EMI-PEBD. At the moment of T2, Alicia was also physically unavailable since she was doing a 10-month stay in Buffalo (USA), participating in an exchange programme organized by the UAB. Thus, her individual interview had to be done through Skype, due to geographical considerations (Bryman, 2008; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

To sum up, T2 consisted of a data set with 6 individual interviews (Sara, Roser, Alicia, Sònia, Natalia and Mercè) and a Focus Group with 7 participants (Arnau, Patricia, Júlia, Montse, Silvia, Neus, and Gisela).

4.5.2.3. T3 Data Collection

T3 took place in June 2015 and consisted of the participants' written linguistic autobiographies. Since the consent forms that had been sent to the student-teachers at the beginning of the research process did not include information about the linguistic autobiographies, at the end of May 2015 another request email was sent to inform them about it and all participants agreed to continue participating. Despite this fact, only 7 could attend the meeting in which they had to write their autobiographies. The rest of the participants wrote the linguistic autobiographies at home and sent them electronically to the researcher. However, one participant stopped being in touch with the researcher and never completed her linguistic autobiography (Neus). Furthermore, as it was already mentioned in section 4.5.2.2., Ester's case was different, since she had withdrawn from the degree for a year and thus at the moment of data collection in T3 she was still in her 2nd year of the EMI-PEBD. For this reason, it was considered appropriate not to include her in T3, which resulted in a total of 12 linguistic autobiographies collected.

During data collection in T3, which took place in a computer lab, the first 15 minutes were dedicated to an informal talk about their impressions and feelings towards the degree. This initial discussion was video-taped, but such data was not used for the thesis. After that, the participants were asked to write individually their linguistic autobiographies in Catalan in a word document on the computers. They had to report on their experiences as English learners/users throughout the degree (both inside and outside of their university) and on how they had lived the process of becoming someone who had progressively incorporated English into their personal and social repertoire (see Appendix 4). At no point were the student-teachers explicitly told about any concepts that frame the conceptual framework of the present thesis. Summing up, the data set obtained in T3 consists of 12 written linguistic autobiographies.

4.6. CORPUS

4.6.1. CORPUS DESCRIPTION

The following Data Sets were collected:

- ✓ **Data Set A:** closed-ended questions Q2
- ✓ **Data Set B:** open-ended questions Q2
- ✓ **Data Set C:** Individual Interviews 1
- ✓ **Data Set D:** Focus Group 1
- ✓ **Data Set E:** Individual Interviews 2
- ✓ **Data Set F:** Focus Group 2
- ✓ **Data Set G:** linguistic autobiographies

Table 8 presents the data corpus collected through the three data collection processes obtained for the purposes of this thesis. It has to be specified that the warming up phases during the interviews and focus groups, the ending of the conversations, which were more informal and did not (intentionally) provide relevant information, were excluded from the word-count in the data corpus.

Table 8. Data corpus

Type of data	Collected Data	Data Set description	Total number of participants	Total number of words
Quantitative Data	Questionnaire 2: closed-ended questions	Data Set A	14	-
Textual Data	Questionnaire 2: open –ended questions	Data Set B	14	5.153
	Linguistic Autobiographies	Data Set G	12	8.000
Conversational Data	Individual Interviews 1	Data Set C	4	23.173

	Individual Interviews 2	Data Set E	6	43.203
	Focus Group 1	Data Set D	9	13.723
	Focus Group 2	Data Set F	7	11.556
SUMMARY	TEXTUAL DATA: 13.153 words CONVERSATIONAL DATA: 91.665 words / 8 h, 58 min. and 54 sec.			

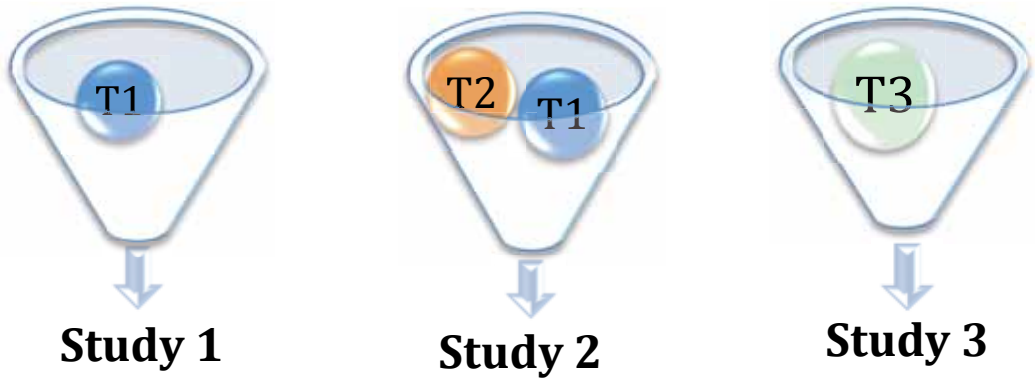
As Table 8 shows, three different types of data were collected: quantitative data, textual (written) data and conversational (oral) data. The quantitative data consisted of the 5 closed-ended questions in Q2 (see section 4.5.2.1.). The textual data consisted of 4 open-ended questions in Q2 and of 12 linguistic autobiographies. The column "total number of participants" reminds the reader of the final amount of student-teachers who provided the data described in column "collected data". As explained in sections 4.5.2.1., 4.5.2.2. and 4.5.2.3., each data collection had its own specificities regarding the number of students who participated. While in FG1 one student did not attend the meeting, in Focus Group 2 two students who had participated in the focus group the previous year were interviewed individually, together with the four students who had already been interviewed individually in T1. Furthermore, only 7 student-teachers attended FG2, since one of them had withdrawn from university. Regarding the data collection in T3, only 12 linguistic autobiographies were collected, as one participant stopped being in touch with the researcher and the other one had provisionally withdrawn from university and she was in her second year.

The data collection instruments are compiled in the following appendices, which are included in the thesis: Appendix 1 (informed consent); Appendix 2 (Q2); Appendix 3 (Interview and Focus Group Guidelines) and Appendix 4 (linguistic autobiographies). The rest of the appendices are compiled in the attached CD and DVD: Appendix 5 (translated data included in the thesis and organized in numbered excerpts); Appendix 6 (coded data in Study 1); Appendix 7 (coded data in Study 2); Appendix 8 (coded data in Study 3); Appendix 9 (all textual and transcribed data); and Appendix 10 (video data).

4.6.2. DATA SETS USED IN 3 STUDIES

Having presented the data corpus, it is necessary to explain the data sets which were used in each of the three studies as it depended on the its specific analytic focus and the RQ it addressed. As Figure 3 shows, data used in each study comes from different data collection periods.

Figure 3. Data collection Time & Studies



Considering that S1 focused on a very specific point in time – the students' first year at university – and aimed to delve into the sociolinguistic factors that initially led them to choose the EMI-PEBD (see RQ1 in Chapter 3), the data set used for this study only contained data from Q2, Individual Interview 1 and Focus Group 1, all of which were collected in T1 (see Table 9).

Table 9. Data Set 1

Type of data	Collected Data	Data Set description	Total number of participants	Total number of words
Quantitative Data	Questionnaire 2: closed-ended questions	Data Set A	14	-
Textual Data	Questionnaire 2: open –ended questions	Data Set B	14	5.153
Conversational Data	Individual Interviews 1	Data Set C	4	23.173
	Focus Group 1	Data Set D	9	13.723

S2 analysed all data which were collected in T1 and T2 and, therefore, it took a longitudinal approach (see Table 10). In addition to delving into the ways the EMI-PEBD student-teachers positioned themselves throughout their lives, the processes they experienced during their first two years at the UAB (see RQ2 in Chapter 3) were tracked and analysed in detail. Hence S2 includes data from Q2, Individual Interview 1, Individual Interview 2, Focus Group 1 and Focus Group 2. Since longitudinal studies are a "useful record of social changes over time" (McQueen & Knussen, 2002:55), in the case of S2 this methodological approach helped to see how engagement with CoPs through English affected the student-teachers' identity expansion and the ways in which they position themselves (Davies & Harré, 1990) within imagined communities (Kanno, 2003; Norton, 2001).

Table 10. Data Set 2

Type of data	Collected Data	Data Set description	Total number of participants	Total number of words
Quantitative Data	Questionnaire 2: closed-ended questions	Data Set A	14	-
Textual Data	Questionnaire 2: open –ended questions	Data Set B	14	5.153
Conversational Data	Individual Interviews 1	Data Set C	4	23.173
	Individual Interviews 2	Data Set E	6	43.203
	Focus Group 1	Data Set D	9	13.723
	Focus Group 2	Data Set F	7	11.556

Finally, S3 had its own specificities too, as it used linguistic autobiographies collected in T3 (see Table 11). Therefore, it cannot be said that S3 was a longitudinal study. However, it did incorporate a longitudinal perspective since it aimed to track the student-teachers' participation in the EMI-PEBD over the period of three years. That means that the researcher not only had the information gathered in the LAs, but she

also relied on the knowledge obtained over the course of three years and on what had happened to each of the participants' lives before T3. Thus it can be argued that S3 does have a longitudinal component. The fact that this PhD was carried out over the course of the participants' engagement in the English-medium degree served as a starting point to see how their relationship with this language evolved. In order to tackle changes during the three years of the study, T2 and T3 data collection took place. However, it can be argued that only S2 takes a longitudinal approach, as S3 only focuses on linguistic autobiographies carried out by the participants at the end of their third academic year at the UAB.

Table 11. Data Set 3

Type of data	Collected Data	Data Set description	Total number of participants	Total number of words
Textual Data	Linguistic Autobiographies	Data Set G	12	8.000

4.7. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

4.7.1. DATA TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION

Following each data collection, oral individual interviews and FGs were transcribed verbatim using a simplified transcription style generally adopted in different qualitative approaches (Block, 2007a; Block, 2015) and perfectly suitable for the purposes of the given PhD thesis. All interview and focus group data were transcribed on the basis of standardized spelling and punctuation (Block, 2007a). Suspension points aim to represent a pause or a part of speech that has been removed (in the case of the excerpts included in the thesis). Likewise, any remarks about paralanguage or information that was considered necessary for a full comprehension of interviews or focus group shows in brackets, e.g. (they laugh). After that, all collected data, including textual written data, were anonymised. Over the course of the research, a collection of excerpts from the data corpus were selected to be included in the analytic studies (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) and

were translated from Catalan into English. The translated versions were cross-checked by a colleague who was proficient in both languages, with the aim to ensure accuracy and to avoid any possible errors arising due to translation (see Appendix 5 for the translations of all excerpts used in the analytic chapters 5, 6 and 7). On the later stages of the analysis process, the translated excerpts, together with the original data in Catalan, were discussed with a colleague in order to ensure validity. This validation process allowed to further discuss the interpretations of the transcribed data to ensure the validity of the reached conclusions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

4.7.2. ANALYTIC APPROACH TO DATA: CONTENT ANALYSIS & NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

In this section, the general approach to data analysis will be presented. As it will be further discussed, the analysis that was carried out combined both content analysis and a thematic analysis (within the narrative approach). Section 4.8.3. will specifically focus on the steps followed.

According to Stake (1995:71), analysis is "a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations". While the scholar recognizes the use of analysis protocols, he highly emphasises the importance of intuition and impression (Stake, 1995). Similarly, Norton & Toohey (2011:426) encourage "language education researchers to reject 'grand theories' and methods, and to come to understand the particularity of the persons, environments, and processes they wish to examine".

> *You can either conduct an analysis in which your goal is to identify themes or conduct an analysis in which your goal is to provide an interpretation of the data by telling or retelling a story. Neither way is "right." The process you follow to get to the end depends on your goal* (Lichtman, 2012:249).

In this regard, the emphasis and the goal of the analysis carried out in this dissertation was both on content and on processes. That is the reason why both content analysis and narrative analysis were employed as analytic methods. The amount of interview data collected through individual interviews and focus groups was

considerable and required a preliminary analytic approach that would allow for building general schemes and would contribute to the thematic grouping that was needed to get familiarized with the data.

Following Pavlenko (2007), the analysis is was backed up by strong theoretical assumptions presented in the literature review, which contributed to explaining the conceptual lens through which the data corpus was analysed. Therefore, in order to analyse both the oral and written data confidently and thoroughly during the process of identifying codes by combining content analysis and thematic analysis, those codes which were connected to the participants' changing identities and the evolution of their perceptions towards themselves over time and space, were identified and analysed through a narrative lens. While the present PhD thesis may be viewed as data-driven, as categories and codes emerge from the data analysis, such categories and codes heavily draw on the framework that guide the entire study. In this regard, the data was analysed in a recursive process from theory to data and backwards, that is, from previous ideas emerged and framed within the literature review towards the data, and from the data to possible new themes that had not been previously considered (Block, 2015a). The analysis also followed Pavlenko (2007), who…:

> *encourage[s] analysts to reflect on their conceptual lens and to formulate their theoretical assumptions prior to analysis, even though subsequent analysis might modify the nature of these assumptions. In doing so, researchers no longer have to pretend that their categories are 'emerging' and their analysis is extemporaneous and objective, instead they make their assumptions clear, conceptual constructs explicit, and analyses replicable. Considering what framework they adopt allows researchers to decide: What do we read the narratives for?* (Pavlenko, 2007:175)

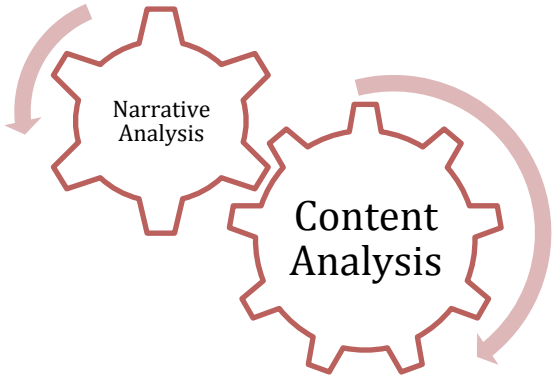
In relation to narrative analysis, according to Druckman (2005), it can go much deeper into the causes, explanations, and effects of the spoken word than content and thematic analyses. Likewise, according to Pavlenko…:

> *L2 learning stories... are unique and rich sources of information about the relationship between language and identity in L2 learning and socialization. It is possible that only personal narratives provide a glimpse into areas so private, personal and intimate that they are rarely – if ever – breached in the study of SLA, and at the same time are at the heart and soul of the L2 socialization process.* (Pavlenko, 2001b:167),

Furthermore, Pavlenko's (2007) discussion on how to analyse content while also looking at narratives when doing content analysis, that is, how to analyse data taking into account both the "content" and the "form", and on the importance of interpretation when carrying out qualitative studies (see also Cohen et al., 2007) was highly relevant and useful: "Unlike traditional content analysis, the approach proposed here encourages the analyst to consider not only what was said or written but also what was omitted and why" (Pavlenko, 2007:174).With this aim, Davies and Harré's (1990) and Harré & Langenhove's (1999) notion of "discourse positioning" as already presented in Chapter 2 was also taken into account when coding the data. This means that certain words or verbal tenses were considered highly relevant when exploring the participants' positioning in the past, present and future. While Pavlenko (2003) looked at very specific linguistic features in her analysis, here the ways in which the EMI-PEBD student-teachers positioned themselves along time and space contributed overall to a more focused and in-depth data analysis. Their identification was carried out through the thematic analysis that was not about "whether or not what they said about any number of topics was really what they thought", but rather it was about looking at their talk or written output as "enactments of discourses" (Block, 2015a:14), understood as "competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes" (Weedon, 1997:34). Subjectivities are thus created through "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (Weedon, 1997:32).

Hence, some codes and categories allowed for the emergence of short narratives that provided further meaningful insights into the student-teachers' evolving identities. In an attempt to iterate through different levels of focus of analysis, both content analysis and narrative inquiry contributed to an overall mapping of the emerging themes/codes, as these were examined through a dual lens. Managing the analysis, thus, was undertaken following a combination of methodological approaches as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Data analysis



4.7.3. ANALYITIC PROCEDURES UNDERTAKEN

4.7.3.1. Preliminary approach to data

The first stage of the data analysis process contributed to the familiarization with the data gathered. Once the individual interviews and focus group conversations were transcribed, a preliminary analysis of each data set was carried out in search for information which could be relevant to each research question and phenomenon under study. The data analysis also involved a constant comparison and data triangulation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Dye, Scatz, Rosenberg & Coleman, 2000). The first two components suggested by Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to analysis were adopted: data reduction and data display. Data reduction allowed to "reduce the data without significant loss of information" (Punch, 2005:198), while an appropriate and clear data display helped to organize the collected information.

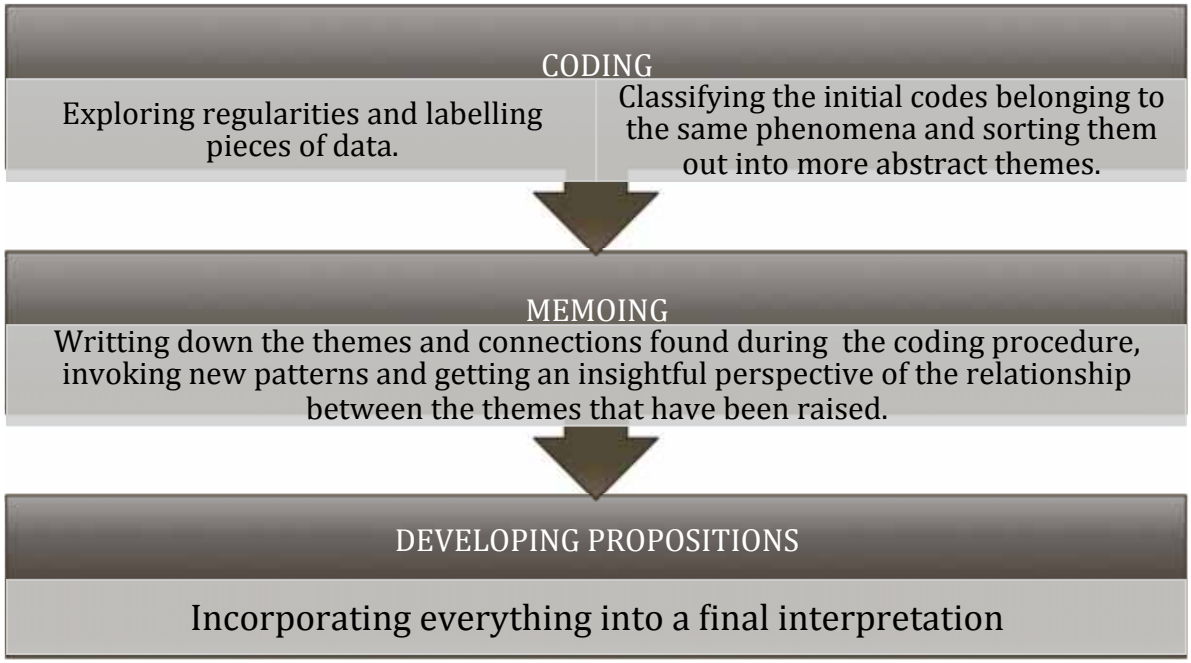
4.7.3.2.Thorough analysis

The deep thorough analysis that was carried out consisted of content analysis combined with narrative analysis at all times. The themes/topics to analyse were already were in the researcher's mind before starting the analysis, as they were guided by the

theoretical framework in which this PhD thesis is framed, but the researcher tried to be flexible enough in order to incorporate themes and new issues that could arise from the data and which were different or new in relation to the pre-established topics. That is why this thesis can be considered data-driven (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The search for patterns and conclusions in the data consisted of three operations (Punch, 2005): "coding", "memoing" and "developing propositions" (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Analytic procedures (Punch, 2005:202)



Thus, the analysis started with data coding, i.e. a search for regularities which allowed to assign labels to meaningful pieces of data. After that, the initial codes that seemed to pertain to the same phenomena were grouped into more abstract themes. By studying in depth the data and linking such codes to certain ideas a way to represent such phenomena was found (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Color-coding some terms and sentences also helped to reveal topics that belonged to similar ideas, allowing topics to emerge from the data and identifying higher-abstract categories related to the participants' attitudes towards English. During these processes, it was attempted to ensure that subjective interpretations were not included, trying to develop a conceptual

framework for each category that related to the theoretical issues presented in Chapter 2.

In order to follow Punch's (2005) first step (*coding)*, the coding procedures proposed by Strauss & Corbin's (1998) were followed: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Such coding protocols offered meaningful information related to the three stated research questions and the themes that could be related to them. Open coding is "the part of analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data"; axial coding "puts those data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories"; and selective coding refers to "the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationship, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:62,97,116).

Along with coding, another analytic process called memoing, i.e. "the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analysis while coding" (Glaster, 1978, as cited in Robson, 1993:386) was carried out. This consisted of writing down any ideas and any kind of relationships which were identified while carrying out the coding procedure, helping thus to create new patterns and to get a deeper understanding of the links between the themes that were being raised during the analysis.

Furthermore, the third process involved developing propositions in order to integrate everything "into a meaningful and coherent picture of the data" (Punch, 2005:202). Examining the categories that the data had generated, all the information was organized according to the extent to which it could fit into each research question. Generalisations, possible causes and consequences were analysed in order to find interpretations that could provide with meaningful answers to the research questions as stated in Chapter 3. The phases described above overlapped in many occasions, which allowed to re-examine the codes and categories throughout the data analysis process. Special effort was put to ensure that the information was well classified by including the data belonging to each participant in a different Word document.

During the coding and categorizing process, new codes and categories emerged from the data as the results of trying to uncover the connections between concepts and notions already identified in the data corpus. These codes and categories were extremely rich and complex and turned out to be clearly related to the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2, which, at the same time, helped to provide such data with clear concepts and notions to name and label all realities.

During this first approach to the data, that is, during its coding and categorization, all data was analysed manually following Kelle's (1995:3) discussion of computer-aided methods in qualitative research, who argues that "the central analytical task in qualitative research – understanding the meaning of text – cannot be computarized". The size of the project undertaken in the present thesis allowed the researcher to do so and, since qualitative data "are textual, non-numerical and unstructured", analysing the data manually contributed to further communicating and connecting with the data, facilitating the comprehension of the "emerging phenomena" and "generating theory grounded in the data" (Basit, 2003:152). The decision to analyse the data manually was also based on other issues, such as the following: the need to avoid feeling distant from the data (Fielding & Lee, 1998); the need for interpretation of the various shades of meaning found in the data and the desire to include the analysis that only human beings can do, unlike computers (Roberts & Wilson, 2002); and, finally, the importance of interpretation of meaning and the infrequent but significant instances of insight (Moss & Shank, 2002).

The same approach to data analysis was followed for the three studies despite two important differences among the studies. First, that the data sets in T1 and T2 analysed in S1 and S2 included fragments of oral autobiographies and the data set in T3 used in S3 consisted of only written linguistic autobiographies. And second, that the codes and categories assigned to the data were different in each study as the research questions that guided each study were highly focused and, thus, the type of information that needed to be searched varied from one study to the other (for a detailed analysis of the coding procedures undertaken in each study, see Chapters 5 to 7). Yet, in all cases, Pavlenko's (2007) recommendations for analysis of linguistic autobiographies were

followed and taken into account in all sets of data collected in the questionnaire, individual interviews, focus groups and linguistic autobiographies (see Table 12).

Therefore and as already explained in section 4.7.2., content analysis (Denscombe, 2007) that is, finding themes among the data through its coding and categorization, was combined at all times with the interpretation of such data. In an attempt to combine the data-emerged themes with the deeper insights that this field of research required, thematic analysis (Guest, 2012), a type of analysis that falls into narrative inquiry, was also incorporated as a data analysis tool. Salient themes, subthemes and narrative strands in the questionnaire, interview and autobiographic data were identified. This process involved a thorough immersion in the data by reading all data sets repetitively. Yet, each study required different degrees of narrative analysis, and the narrative "effort" varied depending on the research questions that needed to be addressed and explored. As the reader will notice in the analytic studies (Chapters 5 to 7), while having used the same procedures to analyse the data, the weight of narrative analysis in each study varied according to the relevance of the identitary analysis. In S1 narrative analysis contributed to the identification of those codes that were connected to the participants' imagined identities, but the weight of narrative analysis of this study turned out to be much lesser than in Studies 2 and 3. While S3, for example, required higher levels of narrative analysis and discourse positioning, as RQ3 aimed at tracking changes over time.

Table 12 aims to provide a summary of the connections between each study (and RQ) and the analytical procedures undertaken:

Table 12. Analytic procedures: summary of the analytic procedures

Study and RQ	***Theme***	***Type and amount of data collected***	***Method of analysis***
S1, RQ1	Factors behind the participants' choice of degree	Quantitative data: closed-ended questions from Q2 (14 participants)	Interpretive analysis of quantitative data
		Textual data: open-ended questions from Q2 (14 participants) I1 (4 participants) FG1 (9 participants)	Content analysis + Narrative analysis

S2, RQ2	Evolving identities and English CoPs	Quantitative data: closed-ended questions from Q2 (14 participants)	Interpretive analysis of quantitative data
		Textual data: open-ended questions from Q2 (14 participants) I1 (4 participants) I2 (6 participants) FG 1 (9 participants) FG 2 (7 participants)	Content analysis + Narrative analysis
S3, RQ3	Evolving identities and the EMI-PEBD	Linguistic Autobiographies (12 participants)	Content analysis + Narrative analysis
Note: *I1: Individual Interview 1; I2: Individual Interview 2; FG1: Focus Group 1; FG2: Focus Group 2; Q2: Questionnaire 2; CoP(s): Community(ies) of Practice*			

4.8. ETHICAL ISSUES

"Ethics are the principles and guidelines that help us uphold the things we value" (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:99). In conducting this study, all potential participants were informed about its purposes. Once the researcher had their acceptance to participate in the study, they were sent the consent form (Appendix 1), which included the following information: the researcher's contact information, the purpose of the study, the instruments that would be used, the time required from each participant, the permission to audio-record the online telephone call, issues regarding confidentiality and anonymity, as well as the option to withdraw from the study at any stage (Cohen et al., 2007).

The participants' were reminded of these issues at each step of the data collection procedure. Namely, when contacting them throughout the research process these issues were repeatedly emphasized, as well as they were given the opportunity to have all their questions and concerns answered. When collecting the questionnaires, they were asked to provide a pseudonym that ensured a maximum level of anonymity. Likewise,

when conducting the interviews, the principle of beneficence that states that "the risk of harm to a participant should be the least possible" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:73) was considered. Sounding too insistent was avoided, especially since all data collections took place at the end of their academic years, and some of them had started their holidays. The research schedule had to be adjusted to their preferences in many occasions. The time to conduct the interviews was negotiated with each participant. Throughout the research process, the researcher's gratefulness for their collaboration was shown.

A big effort was made to build a research relationship with the participants as symmetrical as possible (McDonough & McDonough, 1997), while the interviewees were always treated as "expert" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006), as it "it establishes the subject as the one who knows" and "it tells the interviewee that you respect his or her ideas and opinions" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:107). The researcher used her identity as a teacher to establish rapport with the participants, trying to engage them "in everyday, sociable conversations" (Foster, 2006:71) at the beginning and to "search for common ground" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006:103). According to Foster (2006:71), presenting oneself as "an honest, approachable, friendly, sensitive and understanding" person can strongly contribute to such aim. Since power tends to reside with the interviewer (Gray, 2004), the researcher tried to avoid to make the participants feel that they were "under scrutiny", emphasizing the fact that there were no right or wrong answers.

4.9. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the methodological approach that frames this dissertation, as well as the decisions that have been made, the justification of such decisions and the data analysis procedures undertaken. More specifically, the chapter started with a brief introduction outlining the context of this PhD thesis (section 4.2.). Then, section 4.3. presented the main characteristics of the sampling procedures and the participants. Section 4.4. provided information on the methodological approaches adopted. After that, section 4.5. outlined the main information regarding the data collection. While section 4.5.1. presented the research instruments employed to collect the data, section

4.5.2. described the procedures undertaken during such data collection. Section 4.6. summarizes the entire corpus of data obtained from this thesis (section 4.6.1.) and the specific data sets used in each of the three studies (section 4.6.2.). Next, section 4.7. described in detail the data analysis procedures. Finally, and before this brief chapter summary, section 4.8. concluded with the ethical considerations that have guided the entire research process. A brief reminder of the procedures undertaken and of the data analysis will be summarized in each study.