T. C.

BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION

DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN INTERNATIONALIZATION AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IDENTITY IN TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION: POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PERCEPTIONS

PhD THESIS

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN INTERNATIONALIZATION AND GLOBAL
CITIZENSHIP IDENTITY IN TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION: POLICIES,
PRACTICES, AND PERCEPTIONS

Akyüz, Aslı

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This study explores the multifaceted role of English in the internationalization
and Global Citizenship Identity (GCI) in the Turkish higher education. Although
English has become a central tool in internationalization strategies worldwide, most
existing research remains geographically limited, conceptually fragmented, and
methodologically narrow. Responding to these gaps, this collective case study draws
on a layered analytical framework that integrates language policy, ideology, and
citizenship. The research was conducted in eleven higher education institutions
(HEIs) located in nine cities, all of which were designated as pilot universities by the
Council of Higher Education (CoHE) within the scope of internationalization. The
data were collected through document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and
semi-structured interviews with administrators, academic staff, and students. The
findings triangulate across three levels, each focusing on the perceived role of
English: in macro-level policy discourses from CoHE and other national documents,
in meso- and micro-level institutional practices, and at the individual level. The
findings illuminate how English is simultaneously perceived as a symbol of global
academic legitimacy, a strategic policy tool, and a complex identity marker. While
policy discourse promotes English as a vehicle for competitiveness and global
engagement, institutional practices vary significantly, and stakeholder perceptions
often involve multi-layered tensions oscillating between aspiration and exclusion,

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resistance and belonging. The research contributes a nuanced, context-sensitive understanding of how English mediates internationalization and GCI in Türkiye. Offering a multi-level, multi-site empirical analysis provides insights that may inform more inclusive and reflective internationalization strategies in non-Anglophone, Global South settings.

Keywords: Internationalization, English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Global Citizenship Identity (GCI), Critical Language Policy (CLP), Epistemic Justice (EJ)

ÖZET

TÜRK YÜKSEKÖĞRETİMİNDE ULUSLARARASILAŞMA VE KÜRESEL VATANDAŞLIK KİMLİĞİNDE İNGİLİZCENİN ROLÜ: POLİTİKALAR, UYGULAMALAR VE ALGILAR

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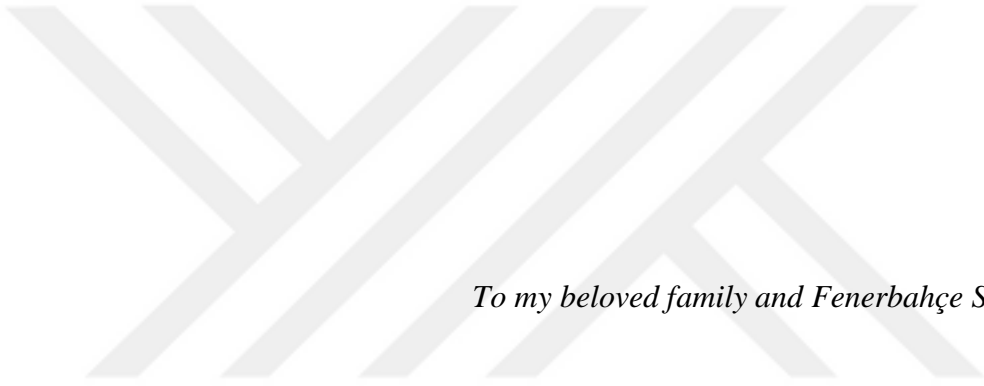
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Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki yükseköğretimin uluslararasılaşmasında ve Küresel Vatandaşlık Kimliğinde (KVK) İngilizcenin oynadığı çok katmanlı rolü incelemektedir. İngilizce, dünya genelinde uluslararasılaşma stratejilerinin merkezî bir aracı hâline gelmiş olsa da mevcut araştırmaların çoğu coğrafi olarak sınırlı, kavramsal açıdan parçalı ve yöntemsel olarak dar bir çerçeveye sahiptir. Bu boşluklara yanıt olarak dil politikası, ideoloji ve vatandaşlığı birleştiren katmanlı bir analitik çerçeveye dayanan bu kolektif durum çalışması, Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) tarafından uluslararasılaşma kapsamında belirlenen pilot üniversitelerde yürütülmüştür. Bu bağlamda, dokuz şehirde yer alan on bir yükseköğretim kurumundan veri toplanmıştır. Veriler; doküman analizi, açık uçlu anketler ve yöneticiler, akademik personel ve öğrencilerle yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışma, bulguları üç düzeyde çeşitlendirerek sunmaktadır: YÖK ve diğer ulusal politika belgelerinden elde edilen makro düzey politika söylemlerinde, kurum içi uygulamaları kapsayan mezo ve mikro düzey pratiklerde ve bireylerde İngilizcenin algılanan rolü. Bulgular, İngilizcenin Türk yükseköğretimi bağlamında yalnızca bir öğretim dili değil; aynı zamanda küresel akademik meşruiyetin bir simgesi, stratejik bir politika aracı ve karmaşık bir kimlik göstergesi olarak algılandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ulusal politikalar İngilizceyi rekabet gücü ve küresel etkileşim için bir araç olarak teşvik ederken kurumsal

düzeyde uygulamalar önemli ölçüde farklılık göstermektedir ve paydaş algıları genellikle arzuyla dışlanma, direnişle aidiyet arasında gidip gelen çok katmanlı gerilimler içermektedir. Bu çalışma, İngilizcenin Türkiye bağlamında uluslararasılaşma ve küresel vatandaşlık süreçlerini eleştirel ve bağlama duyarlı bir perspektifle incelemekte, Anglofon olmayan ve Küresel Güney'e ait bağlamlarda daha kapsayıcı ve eleştirel uluslararasılaşma stratejilerine yönelik içgörüler sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararasılaşma, Eğitim Dili Olarak İngilizce (EMI), Küresel Vatandaşlık Kimliği (KVK), Eleştirel Dil Politikası (EDP), Epistemik Adalet (EA)

To my beloved family and Fenerbahçe Sports Club,

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Finally, as a woman in global academia, I owe my freedom to think, write, and contribute to the enduring vision of Mustafa Kemal ATATÜRK. His unwavering belief in science, education, and gender equality has shaped not only this work but the very path that made it possible.

Aslı AKYÜZ

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
APQN	Asia-Pacific Quality Network
Bologna	Bologna Process
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CAE	Cambridge English: Advanced (C1 Advanced)
CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
ChatGPT	Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer
CHEA/CIQG	Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group
CLP	Critical Language Policy
CoHE	Council of Higher Education
CPE	Cambridge English: Proficiency (C2 Proficiency)
DELTA	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMI	English Medium Instruction
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQUALS	Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
G-20	Group of Twenty (International Forum of Governments and Central Bank Governors)
GC	Global Citizenship
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GCI	Global Citizenship Identity

HEI(s)	Higher Education Institution(s)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MAXQDA	MAX Qualitative Data Analysis
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
ÖSYM	Ölçme, Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi (Student Selection and Placement Center – Türkiye)
PTE	Pearson Test of English
PYP	Preparatory Year Program
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds (World University Rankings)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFL	School of Foreign Languages
TEPAV	Türkiye Ekonomi Politikaları Araştırma Vakfı (The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Türkiye)
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
THE	Times Higher Education (University Rankings)
THEQC	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TÜBİTAK	Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye)
TURQUAS	Turkish Quality Assurance
VQA	Vocational Qualifications Authority
WB	World Bank
WE	World Englishes
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction

As a reflection of globalization, internationalization has become a key strategic priority for higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide. With the intensification of cross-border mobility, research collaborations, and competition among institutions (Altbach & Knight, 2007), HEIs implement a series of initiatives to position themselves as "*global*" or "*international*," not only through structural reforms but also symbolic alignments (Held et al., 1999; Jenkins, 2014). This global transition has resulted in significant shifts at the demographic and linguistic levels, creating an increase in demographic and linguistic diversity across stakeholders. In this context, the growing adoption of English as the default medium of instruction and communication (Dearden, 2014) has emerged as a defining marker of internationalization. As Jenkins (2014) states, HEIs today function in environments where "people from various parts of the world, often with very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, converge on the same university to learn, teach and research either partly or entirely through the medium of English" (p. 5). However, while the use of English may have the potential to facilitate global academic communication, today its use in the global higher education domain raises questions about *equity*, *ownership*, and *legitimacy*, especially in contexts where English is neither the native nor the dominant language.

The spread of English as a global lingua franca is often framed as a pragmatic response to the need for a common medium, particularly in contexts seeking to increase their competitiveness and visibility in the international education market. As the OECD (2010) observes, "an increasing number of institutions in non-English speaking countries now offer courses in English to overcome their linguistic disadvantage" (p. 315). In response to the dominant position of English-speaking countries (e.g., the U.S., the U.K., Australia), mainland Europe, East Asia, and Latin America have adopted English as the medium of instruction (EMI) as part of their internationalization strategies (Jenkins, 2014; Woodfield, 2010). However, over time, scholars have scrutinized the positioning of English as a tool for prestige and inclusivity. For instance, Mauranen and Ranta (2008) call for "a better understanding

of the way English is used in the new circumstances where the native speaker may not be present, and where Standard [i.e., native] English may not be the most relevant norm" (p. 199). At this point, English as a lingua franca (ELF), referring to "the world's most extensive contemporary use of English, in essence, English when it is used as a contact language between people from different first languages (including native English speakers)," is gaining scholarly traction as a lens to analyze how English is appropriated, negotiated and contested across diverse academic settings (Jenkins, 2014, p. 2). Yet, despite its supposed neutrality, English as a global academic lingua franca remains ideologically and symbolically charged, calling for global engagement rather than being taken for granted.

Together with the efforts to internationalize curricula and academic mobility, the paradigm of global citizenship (GC) has gained traction as a key framework aligned with the broader goals of 21st-century global higher education. The role of universities now extends beyond preparing students for global employability in the labor market to the development of cosmopolitan values, intercultural sensitivity, and ethical awareness (Banks, 2008; Bottery, 2006; Myers & Zaman, 2009; Zhao, 2010). At this juncture, English is frequently positioned as the language of GC, which facilitates students' participation in transnational discourses and access to global knowledge networks (Crystal, 2003; Osler, 2005). However, such assumptions often escape deeper scrutiny, such as the equivalence of linguistic fluency with global competence, and English with a presumed neutrality. With a cautionary tone, Huddart (2014) states that "if there were to be a language of global citizenship, it could not be an English that imposes itself and is imposed as an alternative to local languages" (p. 56). Drawing upon the status of English around the world today, Huddart argues that World Englishes (WE) "can offer much of what global citizenship seems to desire" (2014, p. 73).

These debates reflect the deeper asymmetries that exist within the global higher education system, particularly the structural divide framed as the *Global North* and *Global South*. Although these two terms are situated within geopolitical discourse, they refer not only to geopolitical considerations but also to the presence of epistemic and institutional hierarchies, wherein HEIs in the Global North define academic norms, language standards, and legitimacy criteria that others are expected to adhere to. Within this framework, Guilherme (2014) critiques the uncritical

transfer of academic models from the Global North to other contexts, especially through English, as a form of epistemological domination, stating that this leads to the marginalization of local languages, identities, and knowledge systems. Such concerns have led to the emergence of the "*Glocademia Matrix*" (Guilherme, 2022a, 2022b), which is a framework that adopts multilingualism, epistemic diversity, and contextual sensitivity in the pursuit of a more inclusive model of global academic research and internationalization. In this context, Türkiye- a semi-peripheral site of knowledge production located between borrowing and contestation (Altbach, 2009; Shahjahan, 2012; Tikly, 2004)- constitutes a compelling site for examining how English functions both as a vehicle for internationalization aspirations and as a mechanism of symbolic and epistemic exclusion.

Building on these, this research examines the role of English across macro-level national policies, meso- and micro-level institutional practices, and perceptions among administrators, faculty members, and students within Türkiye's evolving internationalization agenda and its engagement with GCI. While informed by international and cross-contextual research, the research is anchored in Türkiye's specific sociolinguistic and political configuration, where English operates within layered and contested roles at once a symbol of aspiration and a force of stratification. Given these dynamics, the inquiry adopts an interrogative stance in order to analyze the underpinnings of English in global academia and evaluate whether the internationalization of Turkish HEIs promotes substantive inclusivity or reinforces symbolic hierarchies.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework underpinning the research is informed by critical language policy (CLP), examining the interplay between macro-level educational policy and meso and micro-level institutional practices and perceptions in the Turkish setting. It mainly explores how English as an International Language (EIL) functions both as a language of academic and institutional operation and a carrier of ideological power and political consequence within the internationalization agenda of Turkish higher education and how it intersects with emerging notions of GCI. Towards this aim, this study employs a synthesis of four theoretical traditions:

Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model of language policy, Shohamy's (2006) critical theory of language policy mechanisms, Woolard's (2005) ideologies of authenticity and anonymity, and Andreotti's (2006) soft vs. critical GCE. Accordingly, the following section presents these four theoretical lenses, followed by a multi-layered conceptualization that illustrates the dynamic relationships among these lenses (Figure 1).

1.1.1 Spolsky's (2004) model of language policy. Spolsky's model integrates the three key components: language practices, language beliefs (or ideologies), and language management. Spolsky defines *language practices* as "the sum of the sound, word and grammatical choices that an individual speaker makes, sometimes consciously and sometimes less consciously, that makes up the conventional unmarked pattern of a variety of a language" (p. 9) which reflect the observable behaviors and choices of a speech community, constituting the actual linguistic reality in which policies operate. As Spolsky indicates, "*language ideology or beliefs* designate a speech community's consensus on what value to apply to each of the language variables or named language varieties that make up its repertoire" (p. 14). Spolsky further clarifies, "Put simply, language ideology is language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done. Language practices, on the other hand, are what people actually do" (p. 14). The third and final component is *language management*, consisting of deliberate efforts to influence or regulate language behavior. Spolsky states, "When a person or group directs such intervention, I call this language management [...]" (p. 8). In more formal terms, he explains that language management is "the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy about language use, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use" (p. 12). These three components of Spolsky's (2004) model emphasize the dynamic and multi-layered nature of language policy, characterized by observable practices, embedded ideologies, and intentional interventions that maintain constant interaction. Therefore, the model is considered appropriate for the current research as it suitably provides the foundational structure for analyzing the formal policy texts of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE) and the actual practices within Turkish HEIs. It creates a descriptive baseline for exploring national policies and their reflections in the form of on-the-

ground realities at universities. Furthermore, it allows the research to distinguish between what is officially mandated (management), what is ideologically assumed or valued (beliefs), and what is actually done on the ground (practices), thereby enabling a comprehensive analysis of the (mis)alignment between national policies and institutional realities.

1.1.2 Shohamy's (2006) critical theory of language policy mechanisms. Drawing upon Spolsky's language policy framework (2004), Shohamy (2006) develops her conceptualization of language policy by linking it with language ideology. Accordingly, she describes this extended framework as "the foundation for introducing the concept of mechanisms, or policy devices, as means through which policies are introduced and incorporate the hidden agendas of language policy" (p. 52). With mechanisms, Shohamy refers to "overt and covert devices that are used as the means for affecting, creating, and perpetuating de facto language policies" (p. 54). Her complete "list of mechanisms between ideology and practice consists of rules and regulations, language education, language tests, language in public space, and ideology, myths, and propaganda coercion" (p. 58).

Challenging the notion of policy being neutral and ideology-free, Shohamy (2006) outlines a range of mechanisms through which ideologies are transformed into de facto language policies, emphasizing that "*rules and regulations* are the most commonly used devices that directly affect and create de facto language practices and thereby turn ideology into practice, in private as well as in public domains" (p. 59). Among these mechanisms, *language education policy* is defined as "a mechanism used to create de facto language practices in educational institutions, especially in centralized educational systems" (p. 76). Another tool is *language tests,* described as "a set of mechanisms which are used in subtle ways to manipulate language and create de facto language policies" (p. 93). Additionally, Shohamy identifies more discursive and symbolic mechanisms- *ideology, myths, propaganda, and coercion-* which she notes "play powerful roles in promoting certain ideologies" (p. 131). She clarifies that "myths fall somewhere between ideologies and propaganda" and can shape beliefs about language correctness, status, and learning (p. 131). Propaganda is framed as "a more aggressive means of spreading ideologies and myths," frequently linking language to political loyalty or suspicion (p. 131),

while "coercion is an aggressive strategy that actually involves persecution," compelling individuals to abandon their habitual linguistic practices in favor of those sanctioned by dominant ideologies (p. 132).

As part of this inquiry, Shohamy's (2006) framework enables a critical examination of how language policies are enacted, interpreted, and contested within institutional contexts. Her identification of covert mechanisms (e.g., high-stakes testing, curriculum content, institutional signage, and teacher certification) traces the "*hidden curriculum*" (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004) as a mechanism for operationalizing ideological agendas. Rather than limiting the analysis to formal policy texts, Shohamy's framework takes this further by emphasizing how rules and regulations are embedded in everyday academic practices, subtly reinforcing English as the default language of academic legitimacy. By exposing the disjuncture between policy intentions and on-the-ground realities, her framework enables a nuanced understanding of how English is reproduced, internalized, or resisted in the Turkish HEIs, revealing how top-down decisions are interpreted in situated contexts.

1.1.3 Woolard's (2005) ideologies of authenticity and anonymity. Woolard's "*authenticity*" and "*anonymity*" concepts are central to understanding how English is ideologically constructed in global and local contexts. The ideology of "*authenticity,*" she explains, "locates the value of a language in its relationship to a particular community" such that "a speech variety must be perceived as deeply rooted in the social and geographic territory to have value... must be very much "from somewhere in speakers' consciousness, and thus its meaning is profoundly local" (p.2). The result is that "[t]o profit, one must sound like that kind of person who is valued as natural and authentic, must capture the tones and nuances." This is considered to be "behind the notion- and practice- where it exists of non-native speakers of English in HE, being required to conform to the academic English norms of one or other of two local academic communities, British or North American English" (Jenkins, 2014, p. 78).

By contrast, the ideology of "*anonymity*" is about how "hegemonic languages in modern society often rest their authority on a conception of anonymity." In this view, speakers are "supposed to sound like an Everyman, using a common, unmarked standard public language," such public languages being "open and

available to all in a society if only we are good enough and smart enough to avail ourselves of them" (Woolard, 2005). This results in the frequent misconception that native English has "no accent." As Bourdieu (1991) indicates, "[t]he concept of *misrecognition* tells us that the standard is not really everybody's language and that it really does belong to specific 'someone's' more than to others." (as cited in Woolard, 2005, p. 8).

Despite their opposite orientations, "ideologies of authenticity and anonymity come together in a way that has a doubly pernicious effect on non-native English users" (Jenkins, 2014, p. 78). Although English is often said to be an international language, the global lingua franca is only internationally acceptable if it follows the marked, yet supposedly unmarked, preferences of selected members of two native English-speaking groups. This tension continues to marginalize the vast majority of English users regarding their use of the language. There is a mismatch between the types of English that are actually practiced, specifically native-like English, which is typically North American or British.

In the context of this study, Woolard's framework elucidates how ideological perceptions of language, precisely the view of English as anonymous and ideologically neutral, facilitate its unassailable supremacy in academic discourse. Her distinction between authenticity and anonymity facilitates a critical examination of how English is concurrently regarded as inclusive and global while also marginalizing other languages and epistemologies. In the context of this study, it enables the understanding of why certain policies are contested at the national level, where English often represents a global, anonymous code that may fall into conflict with discourses that regard and sanction Turkish as authentic. As such, this ideological positioning is crucial to understanding how English functions not only as a communicative tool but also as a symbolic marker of legitimacy, belonging, and authority within internationally oriented educational institutions.

1.1.4 Andreotti's (2006) soft vs. critical global citizenship. Andreotti (2006) draws a distinction between soft and critical paradigms of global citizenship education (GCE), contrasting their ideological assumptions, ethical foundations, and pedagogical implications. While *soft GCE* promotes empathy, charity, and moral obligation, it risks perpetuating hegemonic norms and assumptions, as learners are

often driven by "self-improvement, the development of leadership skills or simply having fun, enhanced... by the moral supremacy and vanguardist feeling of being responsible for changing or saving the world 'out there'" (p. 41). This approach leans toward emotionally driven participation and norm-driven instructional practices, which may reinscribe neocolonial dynamics between the Global North and South (p. 42). By contrast, the *critical* version of *GCE* emphasizes causal responsibility, epistemic reflexivity, and structural critique. It centers on "the development of skills, critical engagement, and reflexivity: the analysis and critique of the relationships among perspectives, language, power, social groups, and social practices" (p. 49) and acknowledges that "all knowledge is partial and incomplete, constructed in our contexts, cultures and experiences" (p. 52). Rather than imposing solutions, it "creates spaces where [learners] are safe to analyze and experiment with other forms of seeing/thinking and being/relating to one another" (p. 53).

The current study centers on GCI, rather than on GCE per se; however, Andreotti's (2006) framework remains conceptually relevant as it unpacks the ideological and pedagogical dynamics through which such identities are shaped, enacted, and contested in globalized higher education contexts. This binary framework allows for the examination of whether the institutionalization of English resonates more with a *soft* paradigm- highlighting global values, empathy, and moral responsibility- or a *critical* paradigm- foregrounding systemic disparities, epistemic responsibility, and ethical reflexivity. This contrast is critical to grasping whether English is positioned as a neutral and natural facilitator of cross-border dialogue or legitimizes hegemonic epistemologies and deepens uneven power relations. Guided by Andreotti's *critical GCE* approach, the study further examines how English serves as a mechanism of policy enforcement, a space for epistemic privilege, and ideological tension, rooted in legacies of colonialism and reproduced through institutional discourse and practice.

1.1.5 Theoretical intersections: mapping a comprehensive conceptual framework. The conceptual diagram below (Figure 1) visualizes the key theoretical frameworks and their relational dynamics: Spolsky's (2004) approach conceptualizes language policy as the interplay of language *practices*, *beliefs*, and *management*, establishing a structural framework for understanding how English is incorporated

into institutional discourse and managed through both overt and covert ways. This core framework is enriched by Shohamy's (2006) *mechanisms* (e.g., testing, curriculum, signage, institutional regulations) that function as covert means for reinforcing linguistic conformity. In a thematically connected but ideologically intensified shift, Woolard's (2005) framework deepens this line of inquiry by tracing the ways in which linguistic ideologies- particularly *authenticity* and *anonymity*-assign symbolic legitimacy to English as a culturally neutral and unmarked global language, marginalizing other linguistic traditions. Completing this theoretical foundation is Andreotti's (2006) distinction between *soft* and *critical* GCE as methods for deconstructing prevailing narratives from ethical and epistemological dimensions. Taken together, these four frameworks offer a multi-layered lens for delineating how language policies (Spolsky, 2004) are implemented (Shohamy, 2006), legitimized (Woolard, 2005), and reflexively examined (Andreotti, 2006), revealing how English shapes and mediates key dynamics within Turkish higher education, including *identity*, *legitimacy* and *global positioning*.
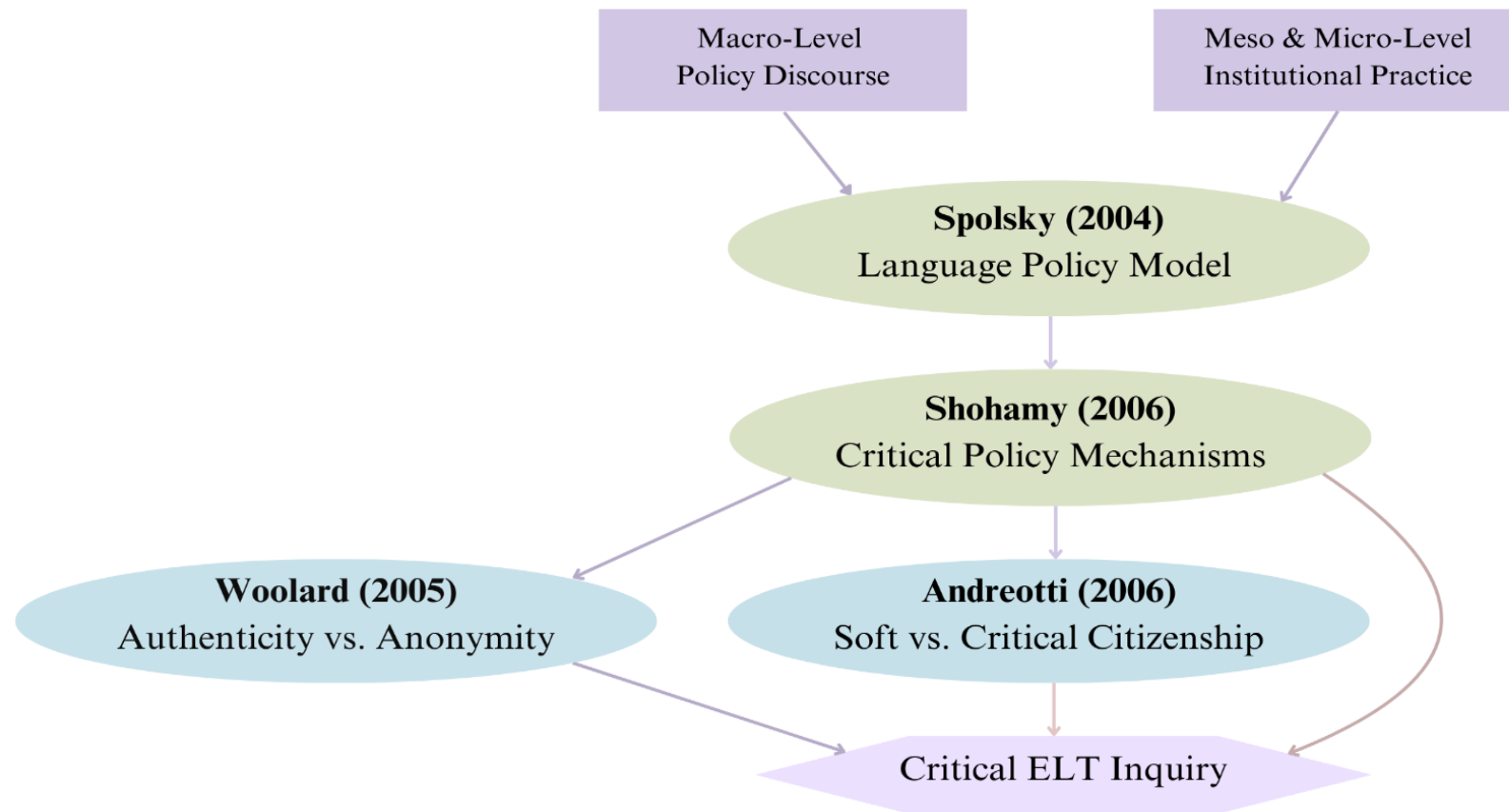
Figure 1. A multi-layered conceptual model connecting English language policy, institutional mechanisms, ideological legitimation, and critical global citizenship (Andreotti, 2006; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Woolard, 2005).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Today, the role of English as a global lingua franca (Crystal, 2003) has become a bona fide influence on how universities imagine and implement internationalization (Jenkins, 2014). English is often presented as a neutral mode of communication and knowledge exchange, but on the ground, it has come to be framed as a symbolic marker of legitimacy, prestige, and globality. Notably, its instructional role as a medium of instruction is closely tied to the internationalization ideals of higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007), serving as a tool for HEIs to enhance institutional visibility and attract international flows. Reflecting a growing trend in global scholarship, the role of English as a neutral, utilitarian instrument within internationalization processes is under scrutiny. In this context, critical voices in the field (Guilherme & Menezes de Souza, 2019a, 2019b; Jenkins, 2014; Mauranen & Ranta, 2008; Phillipson, 2009) have challenged the supposed neutrality of English and instead portrayed it as a symbol of linguistic legitimacy that functions as an epistemic gatekeeper privileging Global North norms and silence voices from the Global South. Such tensions also manifest in countries situated in the semi-peripheral intersections of global academia, such as Türkiye, wherein English plays a role that is at once desired and contested, instrumental and stratifying, accessible and exclusionary.

In the Turkish context, the internationalization of higher education has largely mirrored the aggressive expansion of English-medium programs following Türkiye's participation in the Bologna Process in 2001. Institutions such as Robert College, Middle East Technical University, and Bilkent University pioneered the use of English in the Turkish academic landscape. Today, Turkish HEIs increasingly rely on English across curricula, institutional branding, and accreditation processes (CoHE, 2017a; Ekoç, 2020), yet the widespread implementation of EMI has not been accompanied by adequate infrastructure to ensure pedagogical support, inclusive curriculum design, or context-sensitive language policies (Kırkgöz, 2007; 2009). Such acts of internationalization offer a case of *symbolic internationalization* where English is at risk of becoming an aesthetic marker of globality, lacking genuine engagement with epistemic plurality and pedagogical reform (Guilherme, 2019). Such a perspective positions English as a semiotic emblem of international

aspiration- a surface-level display of institutional modernity- one that renders the politics of language and social stratification invisible, leaving little or no room for its pedagogical potential.

Previous research on EMI in Türkiye points to the highly uneven distribution of EMI across regional, institutional, and socioeconomic lines. In this context, it is observed that students who have received quality education in private institutions and early English exposure navigate EMI environments in a more equipped manner; yet, students coming from public schools or rural areas report facing a range of challenges from linguistic insecurity to exclusion from classroom discourse and international mobility opportunities (British Council & TEPAV, 2013; Curle et al., 2020; Doğançay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005). Still, policy frameworks prioritize proficiency standards and global visibility metrics (e.g., standardized norms, institutional ranking, Anglophone publication output) (CoHE, 2017a, 2021) with limited concern for the multidimensional forms of labor, affective, cognitive, and cultural, required of EMI stakeholders. What emerges is a form of *epistemic stratification* (Santos, 2014), in which English is no longer a gateway but a gatekeeper, setting the boundaries for access (Guilherme, 2019; Mignolo, 2011).

Although Türkiye has, in recent years, become increasingly involved in the field of internationalized higher education through its stated commitment to internationalization and its growing emphasis on global engagement, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding how English is understood across different policy scales- in macro policy documents, institutional practices, and stakeholder perspectives at the ground level. Existing literature tends to focus on tracing the historical development of EMI, examining how it is operationalized, or evaluating the attitudes of EMI participants. However, in the context of Turkish higher education, the ideological, symbolic, and identity-shaping dimensions of English have received limited scholarly attention. Furthermore, the affective dimension of EMI, particularly in relation to participant experience, is rarely absent from scholarly discussion; yet these experiences shape not only academic engagement but also feelings of belonging, legitimacy, and self-worth (Haliç et al., 2009). Adding to this gap, what remains underexplored is how English intersects with symbolic hierarchies, reproduces Global North norms, and shapes understandings of GC in academic settings. In this regard, the role of English in shaping internationalization

and GCI, as far as current research indicates, has yet to be systematically examined in the global literature, particularly from a critical and multi-scalar lens.

In response to these underexplored areas, the current study employs a critical perspective to reveal the meanings attached to English in internationalization and GCI, as reflected in policies, institutional discourse, and participant experience. Guided by an intersecting conceptual framework linking theories of language policy, institutional mechanism, ideological legitimation, and critical GCE (Andreotti, 2006; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Woolard, 2005), the study goes beyond viewing English as merely a medium of instruction, framing it as a symbolically charged discursive terrain, in an effort to explore how English structures participation, regulates legitimacy, and shapes GC imaginaries within the context of Turkish higher education.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this inquiry is to examine the role of English in the processes of internationalization and the shaping of GCI. Grounded in Türkiye's politically ambivalent positioning within the global academic order, this research adopts a multi-layered approach to exploring how English as a global academic lingua franca is perceived within the context of Turkish higher education. This analysis spans macro-level policy discourse, meso-level and micro-level institutional practices, and stakeholder perceptions.

Taking a critical stance, this research conceptualizes English not as a neutral communicative resource but as a symbolic and ideological force that embodies assumptions about modernity, legitimacy, and global participation. Drawing on a multi-layered theoretical framework comprising critical language policy, linguistic ideology, and critical GCE, this study interrogates whether English language policies in Türkiye reflect inclusive, pluralistic, and epistemically just visions of global engagement, or they instead reproduce standardized, Western-centric models of internationalization. In this context, while examining the perceived roles of English across various layers of Turkish higher education, the study seeks to uncover how English is both implemented and experienced, lived, negotiated, and felt, particularly within a non-core, semi-peripheral national context.

Another central aim of the study is to foreground the role of English in shaping institutional structures and individual subjectivities, especially as they relate to GC imaginaries. Focusing on English in connection with GCI, the research examines how English, through its institutionalization, operates within Turkish higher education settings. In this regard, the study offers insights into how language mediates the ethical, epistemic, and emotional dimensions of internationalization through an analysis that spans policy scales.

At this point, the study is shaped by a multi-scalar and context-sensitive framework that examines the intersection of English, internationalization, and GCI within Turkish higher education, unpacking dimensions including, but not limited to, the ideological, structural, pedagogical, and experiential. In this regard, the research questions are deliberately kept analytically open to allow for inductive depth; thereby, they are designed to flexibly explore the role of English in internationalization and GCI in Turkish higher education. Through a critically analytical lens, the study aims to inform discussions on linguistic justice, symbolic capital, and epistemic inclusion within non-Anglophone higher education systems.

1.4 Research Questions

The study aims to address the following research questions:

1) What is the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities:

    a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE)?

    b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?

2) How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization?

3) What is the perceived role of English in Global Citizenship Identity (GCI):

    a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE?

b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?

4) How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents in shaping the GCI within the context of internationalization?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This inquiry offers a multilayered contribution across four core dimensions- theoretical, empirical, contextual, and ethical- by unpacking the underexplored intersections among English, internationalization, and GCI. Today, English has come to symbolize the core of contemporary internationalization agendas; yet the existing scholarship largely remains confined to policy-centric orientations or accounts of implementation. Despite its centrality in shaping access to knowledge and imaginaries of global belonging, several dimensions of English, such as symbolic, ideological, and affective, remain critically under-theorized, particularly in structurally uneven contexts like Türkiye, wherein internationalization is aspirational. At this point, this study reconceptualizes English as a multifaceted mechanism operating across policy discourse, institutional structures, and lived experience.

Theoretically, a central contribution of this research lies in its integration of four critical conceptual frameworks: Spolsky's (2004) model of "*language policy*," Shohamy's (2006) theory of covert "*language policy mechanisms*," Woolard's (2005) understanding of "*language ideology*," and Andreotti's (2006) typology of "*soft vs. critical global citizenship*." Through this synthesis, the study develops a novel conceptual lens treating English as a discursive regime, beyond its instrumental use, which regulates legitimacy, restricts participation, and constructs symbolic capital. Applied to Türkiye's semi-peripheral higher education context, this framework allows for a multi-layered analysis of how language ideologies manifest across pedagogical, institutional, and identity-based domains. Such a framework reveals the layered processes by which English is managed, naturalized, contested, and internalized across the various strata of the internationalized university.

Empirically, this study contributes to the existing literature by foregrounding semi-peripheral perspectives in EMI and internationalization literature. While existing literature is primarily dominated by case studies from Anglophone core systems or highly globalized East Asian contexts, this research positions Türkiye as a site of internationalization that is geopolitically hybrid, ideologically ambivalent, and structurally stratified. Through a triangulated data design that combines policy documents, institutional texts, and stakeholder narratives, the research offers a detailed account of how English is framed by national authorities (e.g., Turkish CoHE), operationalized by HEIs, and navigated by individuals. By foregrounding both the institutional contradictions and affective frictions that define English use in Turkish higher education, the study challenges functionalist and managerial understandings of EMI and brings into focus the emotional labor, identity negotiation, and symbolic violence that are often masked by official policy statements.

Practically, the inquiry generates critical insights into higher education language policy, curriculum development, and internationalization planning- both in Türkiye and in broader international contexts. As Türkiye continues to invest in global positioning strategies through various initiatives (e.g., Bologna, Erasmus+, internationalization strategy reports) (CoHE, 2017a, 2021), the question of not just how English is operationalized, but how it is lived and perceived within the system becomes critically important. The study offers implications for policymakers, administrators, and educators seeking to go beyond superficial compliance toward more inclusive, reflexive, and context-sensitive models of internationalization, recognizing the multilingual realities of learners, supporting emotional well-being, and challenging the uncritical adoption of Anglophone norms as taken-for-granted benchmarks of global legitimacy.

Ultimately, the study contributes to the reimagining of internationalization as a project of epistemic pluralism, linguistic justice, and ethical engagement. By situating English not merely as a vehicle for global exchange but rather as a contested ideological terrain for identity formation, the study challenges normative assumptions about what it means to be "*international*." In this regard, the study calls for rethinking global higher education beyond linguistic standardization, through alternative visions such as dialogue-based participation, mutual recognition, and the

postcolonial transformation of academic practice. In doing so, the study offers both a critique of dominant models and outlines a framework for advancing more equitable futures for language, citizenship, and knowledge in the global university.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

English Medium Instruction (EMI). It is "the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English" (Dearden, 2014, p. 2).

Internationalization of Higher Education (HE). It refers to "the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and serve functions of the institution" (Knight, 1997, p. 8).

Global Citizenship Identity (GCI). It is "a matter of identification and sense of personal belonging (Myers, 2016, p. 10), which is defined as "awareness, caring, and embracing cultural diversity while promoting social justice and sustainability, coupled with a sense of responsibility to act" (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2012).

English as Lingua Franca (ELF). "It is a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is chosen the foreign language of communication" (Firth, 1996, p. 240).

Critical Language Policy (CLP). It refers to the study of how language policies are ideologically constructed, institutionally enacted, and socially experienced, often interrogating issues of power, inequality, and marginalization in educational and societal contexts (see Shohamy, 2006; Tollefson, 2006).

Macro-Meso-Micro Levels (Policy Scales). In language policy and education, the macro level refers to national-level policies and ideologies, the meso level to institutional structures and practices, and the micro level to individual beliefs, decisions, and classroom interactions (see Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

Agents of English. It refers to individuals, institutions, and discursive mechanisms that produce, circulate, and regulate the use and perception of English in internationalized higher education contexts (see Canagarajah, 2005; Phillipson, 1992; Shohamy, 2006).

Symbolic Capital. It is "the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 118).

Global North and Global South. They refer not only to geopolitical considerations but also deeply rooted hierarchies in which economically advanced and institutionally dominant regions establish the academic norms, language standards, and legitimacy criteria that others are expected to adhere to (see Phillipson, 1992; Santos, 2014).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Today, the increasing alignment of higher education systems with global economic, political, and cultural agendas has led English to assume a central role- not only as a medium of instruction but also as a powerful symbol of modernity, institutional prestige, and global academic legitimacy. English, often framed, articulated, and promoted as a neutral lingua franca, is frequently praised for its purported role in facilitating international mobility, academic collaboration, and the dissemination of knowledge. However, the current state of global academia has prompted a growing body of critical scholarship to question the purportedly instrumental view of English, emphasizing that English also functions as a stratifying force, reproducing social, linguistic, and epistemic inequalities depending on the context in which it is used. These studies underline that English can simultaneously serve both as a tool and a mechanism of exclusion (Jenkins, 2011; Phillipson, 2009; Shohamy, 2006; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). As Jenkins (2014) points out, universities may claim to be international, particularly by offering education in English. However, this approach, anchored in monolithic Anglophone norms, can result in a form of deep linguistic nationalism (Namdeorao, 2006), thereby revealing a contradiction between the rhetoric and the reality of internationalization. Similarly, Guilherme (2019) argues that English functions not as a neutral vehicle of global exchange but rather as a tool of epistemological dominance, shaped by colonial histories and global hierarchies when viewed in retrospect.

This literature review critically examines the role of English in the internationalization of higher education from a multi-scalar perspective, with a particular focus on how English contributes to the formation of GCI. Drawing on four theoretical lenses- critical language policy (Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004), language ideology (Woolard, 2005), and critical GC (Andreotti, 2006)- the review approaches English not merely as a tool of communication but as a site of identity construction, symbolic power, and epistemic control (Guilherme, 2019; Jenkins,

2013). The review also focuses on recent scholarship (Canagarajah, 2013; Ferraz, 2019; Guilherme & Menezes de Souza, 2019a, 2019b; Jenkins, 2014) that, in contrast to early internationalization models emphasizing mobility and competitiveness (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Knight, 2004), underscores the need to critically examine the language ideologies and power dynamics inherent in English-dominant academic systems.

This critical review situates Türkiye as an underexamined semi-peripheral higher education landscape where EMI has gained substantial institutional traction over the past two decades. Situated at the Global North and South intersection, the Turkish higher education context provides a rich terrain for questioning how English mediates global aspirations, emotional frictions, and evolving academic identities. Although English is promoted by the Turkish CoHE as a strategic tool for internationalization (CoHE, 2017a), empirical studies indicate ongoing tensions between policy goals and classroom realities (Arık & Arık, 2014; Ekoç, 2020; Kırkgöz, 2009b). These tensions include linguistic inequalities, the symbolic overuse of English in institutional branding (Keleş et al., 2019), a lack of pedagogical readiness and infrastructure (Taquini et al., 2017), and identity-based conflicts experienced by both students and faculty (Karakaş, 2016; Haliç et al., 2009). In light of these contradictions, unless EMI is reimagined through a critical, plurilingual, and decolonial lens (Guilherme, 2022a; Rose et al., 2022; Xu & Knijnik, 2024), such an approach risks transforming English into an aestheticized symbol rather than a means of educational transformation, reducing it to a superficial internationalization strategy (Choi, 2021; Han, 2023; Sarıçoban, 2012).

The review is structured into eight thematically interconnected sections. The first section addresses the symbolic and ideological weight of English in both global and local policy discourses (2.2). This is followed by an analysis of the performative use of English in institutional branding and visual identity (2.3). Subsequent sections are dedicated to exploring the pedagogical tensions within English-medium classrooms (2.4), the emotional and identity-related experiences of stakeholders (2.5), and the structural inequalities produced by English-dominant systems (2.6). Next, the review considers alternative models such as plurilingual pedagogy, linguistic fluidity, and critical GCE (2.7) that challenge the symbolic monopoly of English and call for more inclusive and critical approaches. Ultimately, the closing

section maps critical intersections identified across prior research and highlights unsolved tensions and missing inquiries (2.8). Focused emphasis is placed on the dearth of empirical work engaging multilevel policy scales- macro, meso, and micro- in non-core, semi-peripheral, and Global South contexts, stressing the necessity for deeper inquiry.

Before concluding the introduction of the literature review, it is worth noting that although significant progress has been made in the literature, much of the existing research remains fragmented in terms of scale, scope, or geography. In particular, studies that connect macro-level policies with micro-level experiences- and even those that link meso- and micro-level dynamics- are notably scarce in semi-peripheral contexts such as Türkiye; indeed, such studies may be almost entirely absent. Furthermore, the emotional, ideological, and epistemic dimensions of English use in the internationalization of higher education, though crucial, have received limited attention in existing scholarship. At this point, these gaps underscore the need for context-sensitive and multi-layered research that approaches English not merely as a medium of instruction but as a critical lens through which internationalization is enacted, experienced, and contested.

2.2 The Symbolic and Ideological Weight of English

As Knight (2004) observes, internationalization practices are frequently implemented "*through the lens of English,*" which functions as a gateway to global academic participation. Building on this, de Wit and Altbach (2021) highlight the dual function of English as a practical resource for global engagement and a form of symbolic capital associated with institutional legitimacy and international visibility. From such a perspective, English is positioned as a neutral lingua franca and is often presented as a tool for mobility, knowledge exchange, and competitiveness. However, following these early trends, in light of the evolving discourse surrounding the internationalization of higher education today, English is increasingly described not as a practical tool for interaction but as a symbolically charged medium embedded within ideological structures. The critical perspectives (Guilherme, 2019) foreground that "there is no such thing as a *lingua franca* at all, since every language is loaded with heavy luggage, the more powerful and dominant the less free the zone

is"- exposing what is often perceived as apolitical is, in fact, laden with baggage (p. 45), which serves as an arbiter of epistemological legitimacy and inclusion (Guilherme, 2019; Phillipson, 2009; Shohamy, 2006). Such patterns acquire heightened visibility in non-Anglophone settings, where an "exonormative view of the global language" is adopted rather than "a tolerant endonormative attitude" (Namdeorao, 2006, p. 85).

The duality of English, functioning simultaneously as a utilitarian tool and an ideological construct, is manifest in a range of national policy examples across the globe. In countries such as Türkiye, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, and Japan, the adoption of EMI is either covertly or overtly promoted as a technical solution to improve global rankings and prestige (Hashimoto, 2013; Kim, 2016; Sarıçoban, 2012; Van, 2013). Such promotion of English is in line with what Castro-Gómez (2005) calls the zero-point hubris- *la hybris del punto cero*- a metaphor used for the abstraction of English from its colonial and geopolitical contexts. It also reflects Woolard's (2005) *ideology of anonymity,* wherein English is constructed as a culturally neutral, universally accessible code. Beneath this ideological veneer (Kirkpatrick, 2014), certain accents, discursive styles, and registers continue to be implicitly privileged (Cavanagh, 2017, 2020; Guilherme & Teodoro, 2022). Here, the symbolic authority of English, as the unspoken default, shapes what kinds of knowledge are recognized, legitimized, or suppressed (Guilherme, 2022a). Jenkins (2011) draws attention to this contradiction in institutional discourses, noting that universities "claim to be deeply international [but] are in essence deeply national at the linguistic level" (p. 928) but often maintain native-speaker norms, even while serving multilingual populations. As a result, English serves as a sociopolitical boundary, regulating participation in global academic discourses and aligning institutions with Western epistemic models (Arık & Arık, 2014; Cavanagh, 2017; Park, 2012), which further deepens its ideological weight in non-Anglophone systems, transforming it into a mechanism that ensures symbolic alignment with dominant academic paradigms (Rose et al, 2022).

The symbolic weight of English manifests most clearly through institutional branding and strategic communication practices. In this regard, in the Turkish higher education context, English is prominently featured in HEIs' websites, program titles, and promotional materials to project a globalized institutional image; yet it remains

unsupported by faculty preparedness or substantive EMI design (İnal et al., 2021; Keleş et al., 2019; Yılmaz-Virlan & Demirbulak, 2020). Such a semiotic use of English is not exclusive to Türkiye; similar dynamics are available across various contexts. For instance, national branding projects such as Japan's Top Global University Project for "*kokusai-ka*" (internationalization) and EMI expansion in Vietnam reflect the symbolic role of English as a code for global aspiration; yet research (Duong & Chua, 2016; Qiu et al., 2023) documents that such efforts often lack comprehensive curricular reform or inclusive pedagogy. Under these institutional configurations, English transcends its instructional utility and becomes a hidden regulatory apparatus (Shohamy, 2006), demonstrating that the deployment of English serves ideological logics over pedagogical needs. Relatively, "*franchising*," as critically conceptualized by Altbach (2012), explains how EMI programs are licensed globally as uncritical export, circulated as a one-size-fits-all commodity, stripped of contextual nuance.

The strategic aestheticization of English often contradicts the goals of transformative internationalization, which deeply aims for ethical and inclusive engagement (Kirkpatrick, 2011; Jenkins, 2013). Rather than critically embracing diversity and ethics in linguistic and cultural pedagogy, the symbolic deployment of English is leveraged to satisfy performative benchmarks of internationalization (e.g., QS, THE) (Dearden & Macaro, 2016; Kuteeva & Kaufhold, 2024), attract international students (Pan, 2024; Zhang, 2018), and align with neoliberal notions of competition and excellence (Ferraz, 2019 & Mirhosseini et al., 2024). At this point, English functions as an imagined promise and a staged performance, acting as a filter that excludes non-conforming ones presented through the rhetoric of inclusivity (Altbach, 2012). Such a hegemony creates an academia where success and failure hinge on linguistic and epistemic alignment with Anglophone paradigms, which gives birth to *epistemic coloniality* (Mignolo, 1995) embedded in global academic language policies (Guilherme, 2022a, 2022b). This hegemony is strongly exemplified in the Saudi Arabian context (Barnawi & Alzahrani, 2024), where "Anglicization" stands for internationalization, which privileges Global North-led norms at the expense of local educational knowledge and perspectives. This "universalizes policies and obscures country and regional differences, and denies the capacity of local traditions, institutions, and cultural values to mediate, negotiate,

reinterpret, and transmute the dominant models of internationalization (Olssen & Peters, 2005, p. 330).

Türkiye mirrors this dynamic, where EMI has rapidly expanded under state-led initiatives, reflecting broader global trends in language policy (CoHE, 2017a, 2021). Much like counterpart settings, in the Turkish context, the emphasis remains on institutional branding rather than pedagogical substance (Keleş et al., 2019; Özer, 2022; Yılmaz-Virlan & Demirbulak, 2020). There is a notable absence of efforts to embed sustainability in EMI design, particularly in the allocation of resources to build inclusive and reflective curricular practices (British Council & TEPAV, 2015; Karaferye, 2017; Kırkgöz, 2017). At this point, English is risky, with the potential to hinder rather than enable access to higher education when embedded in exclusionary normative frameworks (Karakaş, 2016). These roles of English, far from being neutral, point to the need to understand English within a broader political economy structure, shaping access to academic capital, social mobility, and symbolic legitimacy (Piller & Cho, 2013). To avoid or address these highly possible inequalities, institutions need a critical examination of the ideological role of English across their policy, planning, and practice, with the adoption of inclusive, multilingual policies. Otherwise, the internationalization efforts would remain grounded in exclusionary native-speaker norms and fall short of embodying any genuine principles of inclusion (Jenkins, 2014).

2.3 Institutional Practices and the Visual Performance of English

Policy discourses commonly frame English as a practical tool for academic internationalization, yet institutional practices often manifest in more symbolic and aestheticized forms (Choi, 2021; Sarıçoban, 2012; Sung, 2022; Zhang, 2018). Transcending mere curricular and administrative integration, English appears as the default emblem of globality that is visibly paraded across university websites, promotional brochures, program titles, and recruitment processes (Keleş et al., 2019; Köksal & Şahin, 2013; Pan, 2024). Even without meaningful engagement with comprehensive education or multilingual realities, the performative use of English enables institutions to present an image of possessing global competitiveness (Dimova et al., 2015). Here, English exists as a semiotic device and serves both as

discourse and display, which is a signifier of modernity, prestige, and international legitimacy (Hashimoto, 2013; Le Ha, 2018). This situation aligns with Agha's (2003) concept of "*enregisterment*," which refers to how linguistic forms repeatedly gain social value through their association with authority and legitimacy. Similarly, it reveals that English functions both as a strategic branding tool and as a norm-setting communicative code within the everyday institutional culture of globally oriented universities (Komori-Glatz, 2015; Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018).

Across transnational higher education settings, scholars have documented that English often takes on a decorative role to create an impression of global relevance. A notable case appears in Japan, where Brown (2019) critiques "*Japanese English education-style tokenism*" (p. 412) and documents how the visual function of native-English speaking staff in branding sidelines scholarly merit in favor of visual appeal. This commodified foreignness in promotional materials served as a proxy for "progressiveness, fairness, meritocracy, and inclusiveness" (p. 412), rather than reflecting institutional reality. By the same token, in their analysis of promotional videos from Sweden, Kuteeva and Kaufhold (2024) demonstrate that beyond its instructional function, English is framed as "an access code to the ways of life with a promise of global future" (p. 12). Here, English is aligned with upward aspiration (e.g., prestige, status, desirable identity), which reflects what the authors term "*banal cosmopolitanism,*" a dynamic in which English is aestheticized as shorthand for cosmopolitan lifestyle, ultimately reinforcing narrow and homogeneous ideals of "*belonging*" in international higher education. A parallel symbolic pattern is evident in Türkiye (Taquini et al., 2017), where over 80% of Turkish HEIs offer English-language interfaces for international visitors, yet fewer than 25% provide substantial EMI programs, revealing the gap between the symbolic representation of English and its actual linguistic practices.

These dynamics are also evident in the Turkish context, where HEIs are excessively and superficially using English across websites, program titles, and branding content. This commodified use of English, however, is often far from offering genuinely bilingual content, generally poorly translated, outdated, or fragmented, exposing a misalignment between pronounced policies and actual language practices that threaten institutional credibility (Keleş et al., 2019). Sampling Turkish and British universities as comparative cases, Özer (2022) also

reports the risks of the over-commercialization of English as a revenue stream, which lacks inclusive infrastructure but functions through admission quotas, promotional discourse, and curriculum packaging (Özer, 2022). Similarly, further research from the Turkish context (Arık & Arık, 2014) reports the overemphasis on English in HEIs, especially in fields like engineering and business, as a way to align with global academic norms in neoliberal higher education. Such practices point to Shohamy's (2006) framework of *covert language policy*, as HEIs reproduce the symbolic versions of internationalization rather than existential or transformative ones. At present, language ideologies are enacted not through overt policy implementation but through symbolic mechanisms such as digital interfaces, signage, or other tacit narratives where superficial global alignment is privileged over linguistic inclusivity or equity (Shohamy, 2006), calling for curricular depth or critical global engagement (Guilherme, 2022b, 2022c).

Within this performative logic, English has evolved beyond being a medium of instruction, becoming part of what Burton-Jones (1999) calls "*knowledge capitalism*" where knowledge itself becomes the most important form of global capital" (p. vi). As Olssen and Peters (2005) observe, "the most significant material change that underpins neoliberalism in the twenty-first century is the rise in the importance of knowledge as capital" (p. 330), prompting HEIs to operate increasingly like competitive enterprises that adopt English as a marker of modernity, international legitimacy, and alignment with global academic standards. English, as a form of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 1991), functions as a strategic pillar, made visible through overt and covert mechanisms (Shohamy, 2006). From this perspective, English is no longer merely a pedagogical tool; rather, it has become a commodified resource- circulated, displayed, and marketed- as a means of attracting "*students-as-consumers*" (Molesworth et al., 2009), partners, and global rankings. For this reason, EMI practices- often driven not by pedagogical needs but by market logic- tend to manifest through superficial and performative practices (Brown, 2019; Keleş et al., 2019). This market-oriented logic also draws in academic staff and students, who are increasingly forced to invest growing amounts of linguistic labor to secure a place within the system (Park & Wee, 2012). For academics, the labor is closely tied to structural pressures to publish in English, whereas for students, it manifests itself as

an investment in their future prospects. At this point, English plays a paradoxical role as a currency and a barrier, creating opportunities for some and marginalizing others.

To conclude, the symbolic use of English in HEIs reflects a structural contradiction within internationalization goals. Although relevant efforts are often promoted as pathways to global inclusion and intercultural engagement, the mechanisms used to project these visions frequently reproduce linguistic hegemony, social exclusion, and symbolic elitism. At this point, such performative practices transform English into a visual currency in the global academic marketplace- valued not for what it enables pedagogically but for what it symbolically represents (Piller & Cho, 2013). Without critical examination, internationalization risks devolving into a superficial visual illusion. English, within such framing, becomes not a medium for epistemic justice or intercultural dialogue, but a façade that sustains symbolic inertia (Doiz et al., 2013), embodying a *"killer language"* paradox (Crystal, 2000). As several scholars (Guilherme & Menezes de Souza, 2019a, 2019b) have warned, unless language policies are grounded on critical-pedagogical foundations, English ceases to function less as a tool for transformative internationalization and more as a reflection of neoliberal realities, reproducing the very inequalities it claims to resolve.

2.4 Pedagogical Realities and Language Policy Mechanisms

Although EMI is often promoted as a symbol of international competitiveness (British Council & TEPAV, 2015; Dimova et al., 2015; Komori-Glatz, 2015), its implementation is typically characterized by structural limitations (Köksal & Şahin, 2013; Tilstra & Smakman, 2018), pedagogical inconsistencies (Macaro, 2020), and linguistic burdens for both faculty and students (Durmuşoğlu Köse et al., 2019; Park & Wee, 2012). The challenges associated with EMI do not stem solely from infrastructural deficiencies; they also arise from the ideological positioning of English as the assumed medium of academic excellence, regardless of students' or faculty's actual ability to function effectively in the target language (Duong & Chua, 2016; Zhang, 2018). EMI policies often prioritize institutional prestige over pedagogical content, creating tensions between symbolic alignment and actual learning conditions (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). More recent research also shows that

while students in these programs develop positive attitudes toward global integration, they also struggle- particularly in the early years of undergraduate education- with academic comprehension, deep learning, and self-confidence (Han, 2023), highlighting the need for EMI environments that are not superficial, but sustainable and inclusive.

In HEIs where EMI is institutionalized as default practice, faculty members are expected to teach complex disciplinary content through English, often without access to training in language pedagogy or content and language integration (Dearden & Macaro, 2016; İnal et al., 2021). In turn, they frequently resort to strategies such as code-switching, (over)simplification, or translanguaging (originally coined as *trawsieithu* in Welsh) (García, 2009; Williams, 1994) to facilitate comprehension (Ege et al., 2022; Sung, 2022). Such practices may be functionally effective, yet they also carry the risk of diluting *epistemic depth* (Pan, 2024), especially in fields that require discursive nuance (Kuteeva, 2014). In time, the discursive repertoire of faculty teaching in such programs becomes restricted (Airey, 2012), as there appears to be subtle losses in expressiveness, spontaneity, and linguistic nuance (Tilstra & Smakman, 2018). On the other hand, for students, Han (2024) describes the situation as a form of "*double work*," as the process requires the simultaneous acquisition of content knowledge and language, often leading to "*cognitive overload*" (Macaro, 2020) and resulting in "*surface-level learning*" (Kırkgöz, 2014). Relevant pedagogical tensions become more pronounced in settings where linguistic proficiency is prioritized over conceptual depth, especially when students with high English proficiency are privileged while those with strong content knowledge but limited proficiency are marginalized (Curle et al., 2020; Macaro et al., 2018). At this point, at the expense of conceptual depth, English is layered onto existing structures, resulting in what Phillipson (2009) refers to as the "*subtractive model*" of education. These problematic monolingual models are highly criticized by recent studies (Baker et al., 2025; Rose et al., 2022), calling for the pedagogical imperative to incorporate multilingual realities, such as translanguaging, into instructional practices. Such approaches challenge the ideology of English as a self-sufficient academic code and argue for the pedagogical value of multilingual classroom ecologies.

The distinction between "*de jure*" (stated) and "*de facto*" (practiced) language policies (Johnson, 2013) is rarely acknowledged through overt policy; instead, it is

often reinforced through covert mechanisms (Shohamy, 2006). At this point, EMI-though not systematically mandated- becomes an unspoken default embedded in assessment criteria, curricula, and other tacit expectations. Evidence of this can be found in inquiries conducted in Türkiye (Ege et al., 2022; Ekoç, 2020), which revealed that instructors felt insufficiently supported both linguistically and pedagogically, and often resorted to Turkish to explain abstract concepts and manage classroom dynamics. Another study from the Turkish context (Köylü, 2018) also showed that most EMI instructors follow Macaro's (2009) "*maximal model*", supporting judicious use of L1 when needed; yet some reported a frequent switch to L1. However, such code-switching practices are often discouraged in formal evaluations, potentially creating internal tensions among instructors regarding their professional legitimacy. As a result, English ceases to be a cognitive or conscious pedagogical choice, and instead, it functions as a form of linguistic conformity (Canagarajah, 2005)- one that does not promote local adaptation or pedagogical relevance but rather reproduces global norms. In another sense, these code-switching practices themselves continue to exist as a contested area, which reflects tensions between institutional language ideologies and pedagogical realities (Doiz et al., 2019; Fernandes, 2019; Guilherme, 2019).

Although studies often focus on the mechanics of EMI instruction, EMI classrooms are also emotionally charged spaces where language intersects with identity, legitimacy, and belonging (Mauranen et al., 2010; Norton, 2006). Especially for students from non-elite or rural backgrounds, the feeling of inadequacy often stems not from actual academic deficiency but from the divergence of their English from the norms of native speakers. For instance, while there is a study showing how Turkish students internalize a sense of inferiority based on their accent (Karakaş, 2016), other research in the literature reveals that even academically successful Turkish graduate students studying abroad describe their English as "*contaminated*" (Haliç et al., 2009), which indicates that language anxiety emerges not from the actual communicative value of English but as a construct shaped by ideological pressures. At this point, Jenkins (2014) points out that language policies based on native-speaker norms further deepen identity tensions related to English, indicating that students are expected not only to learn and convey content but also to conform linguistically. Here, accent and fluency become indicators of distinction and

legitimacy, which points to the concept of Bourdieu's (1991) *linguistic capital* by positioning English beyond merely being a tool for academic access and mediation to a mechanism that regulates academic identity and self-worth. Macaro (2020) adds that EMI often increases *cognitive load*, especially when instructors fail to take students' linguistic processing capacity into account, emphasizing the need for intentional lexical scaffolding and genre-specific support.

Despite the oscillating systemic challenges between policy and practice, certain EMI contexts set examples of alternative pedagogical possibilities. In one case, an English course in Canada (Carroll, 2024) employed English as a platform for activism, representation, and inclusive support through dialogic pedagogy, thereby fostering both critical thinking and social engagement within an EMI setting. Similarly, a bilingual EMI project in Oman (Salih & Omar, 2021) demonstrated how bilingual EMI classrooms enabled critical dialogic exchange across linguistic and cultural boundaries, moving students from cultural dissonance toward mutual appreciation. A further study in China (Xu & Knijnik, 2024) reported that critical literacy can frame English not only as an endpoint of proficiency, but also as a medium of ethical responsibility and critical cosmopolitan identity formation. Such examples demonstrate that EMI has the potential to become an empowering and pluralistic space provided that institutions invest in inclusive pedagogies, teacher education, and reflective language policies. However, such cases still remain rare outliers in the global EMI literature. In various contexts, still shaped by symbolic internationalization and neoliberal governance (Piller & Cho, 2013), EMI continues to function more as a branding strategy than as a transformative mechanism, which constrains EMI's pedagogical potential and calls for deeper critical scrutiny.

2.5 Identity, Belonging, and Global Citizenship

In addition to its frequently mentioned institutional and pedagogical roles, English also significantly influences how individuals perceive themselves, their legitimacy, and their place within the global academic community (Mauranen et al., 2010). English is not neutral; looking back to what Guilherme (2019) states, "there is no such thing as a lingua franca at all, since every language is loaded with heavy luggage" (p. 45), which is packed with questions of visibility, recognition, and

belonging. For many students, English is a linguistic credential while also serving as a form of performative threshold that signals their competence to appear on and participate in the global academic stage. This participation, however, often operates through the filter of native-speaker norms, racialized aesthetic standards, and culturally encoded expectations (Cavanagh, 2017, 2020), exemplifying a form of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu, 1991) that reproduces existing hierarchies rather than dismantling them (Andreotti, 2006; Guilherme, 2019). At this point, dominant linguistic forms, under the guise of neutrality, impose standards of value and legitimacy, thereby enacting a politics of marginalization. Jenkins (2007) further notes that non-native English-speaking teachers and students frequently internalize these standards and experience a kind of "*linguistic schizophrenia*" (Kachru, 1983)-caught between the desire for authentic expression and the pressure to conform to native-speaker norms.

Empirical research in the existing scholarship reports that even though students aspire to GC, they frequently reproduce the existing hierarchical structures mentioned above. This is strongly exemplified in a study conducted in South Korea (Cavanagh, 2017), where students directly associated GC with native-like English proficiency, perceiving linguistic competence as a prerequisite for global legitimacy. The follow-up study (Cavanagh, 2020) showed the persistence of this perception, and although some attempted to reposition English as a flexible and intercultural tool, this was not enough to overcome the broader sense of identity conflict experienced by the majority, who felt that their Korean-accented English limited their sense of global belonging. Similarly, Chinese students in the United Kingdom were found to associate GC with increased English fluency (Baker & Fang, 2021). This was exemplified in the words of one participant: "Maybe I am a global citizen now.", illustrating the perceived identity shift that emerged through the students' engagement in English during their study abroad period in an EMI context, particularly when interacting with the speakers of the language. This reflects the burden English carries as an indicator of self-worth, legitimacy, and upward social mobility, rendering English an ideologically charged signifier rather than a mere tool of communication. This is also evident in the Turkish context, where even academically strong students often experience feelings of inadequacy linked to their accent or style, which exemplifies how not content knowledge but linguistic

performance becomes the measure of inclusion (Haliç et al., 2009; Karakaş, 2016). Given these dynamics, they align with Pavlenko's (2003) view that language learning is not merely a matter of skill acquisition but also a process of identity negotiation situated within power-laden conditions. In their studies based on the Swedish context, Henry and Goddard (2015) suggest that students often construct hybrid global identities in which English is framed not as a colonial legacy but as a lifestyle. Yet, even this hybridity, they argue, requires the constant management of status anxieties and performance expectations.

English as a hierarchically valorized code intersects with and amplifies access gaps rooted in social, financial, and geographic divides. In the case of South Korea, English has been perceived as a gatekeeper that "just favors the rich who can spend whatever amount of money on learning," curbing equitable access to global discourse by making GC ideals unattainable for many (Choi, 2024). Similarly, in the context of Türkiye, the uneven presence of EMI tends to cluster in resource-rich, centrally located institutions (British Council & TEPAV, 2013, 2015; Karakaş, 2016). Existing inquiries (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005; Ekoç, 2020; Kırkgöz, 2014) document how participants from peripheral regions experience layered challenges across both communicative and symbolic domains due to hidden academic norms of EMI settings. These patterns reflect broader critiques stating that while typically portrayed as supporting meritocratic ideals, language policy may act as a framework reproducing unequal social ordering under a neutral guise, if adopted in landscapes defined by disparities (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). A South Korean research furthering the discussion (Park, 2012) sharpens the argument by illustrating that relational identity concerns heavily influence students' linguistic behavior in contexts marked by stratification, where linguistic fluency is downplayed to preserve social harmony. This uncovers implicit cultural negotiations embedded in linguistic self-positioning in EMI contexts (Cavanagh, 2017, 2020).

These ongoing structural limitations fail to suppress the agency of academic actors, as evidenced by diverse inquiries reporting how faculty and students establish pathways for self-expression through acts of challenging, adjusting, and reconstructing, thus destabilizing conventional understandings of power and belonging. According to Korean-based empirical research (Choi, 2021), the use of Korean was documented as emerging occasionally among students during

collaborative tasks, as a way to balance clarity with emotional security, revealing resistance to the institution's rigid English-only policy. In the Japanese higher education context, "*akogare*" (desire) emerged as a critical lens (Nonaka, 2018), capturing the seductive pull of what Motha and Lin (2014) call "the allure of English" as an imagined passport to "West" (p. 332), while simultaneously uncovering how this fantasy-laden shine of English produces experiences of alienation. Additional research (Henry & Goddard, 2015; Park, 2012) has documented how stakeholders in EMI environments take part in deliberate identity positioning between inherited cultural ties and transnational ambitions, resulting in hybrid forms of self-understanding as "*third-space identities*" (Whitchurch, 2008). These "*imagined communities*" (Anderson, 1983) generate platforms for cross-linguistic solidarity where dominant assumptions of linguistic uniformity are confronted, and new visions advocating for pluralistic forms of scholarly belonging are constructed (Jenkins, 2011). Such examples emerging from critical language research reflect the multiplicity of identity negotiations involving English and instead serve as a site of struggle, innovation, and hybridity.

Contemporary GCE frameworks point to equitable and pluralistic alternatives, unsettling normative assumptions that frame global belonging as contingent upon language conformity. In relation to GC discourse, the critical conceptualization of Andreotti (2006) contests the depoliticized portrayal of English as a value-free medium and urges a reorientation toward reflexive engagement, ethical accountability, and epistemological plurality. At this point, Guilherme's (2022a) theorization of glocally informed academia- "*glocademia*"- frames higher education spaces as hybrid domains where multilingual and multicultural practices coexist for global dialogue with methodologies seen as core rather than peripheral. Scholarly inquiries from varied regional settings (Carroll, 2024; Salih & Omar, 2021) provide evidence that EMI enhances GCE if pedagogically framed by inclusive and critical principles such as equity, mutual exchange, and linguistic plurality. Within educational settings informed by these critical pedagogies, English moves away from serving as a static, norm-bound standard, yet emerges as a shared space of negotiation and interaction. In line with Jenkins's observation (2014), unless HEIs implement policies and practices reflecting lived multilingualism, their professed commitments to GC will remain imaginary rather than realized.

2.6 Stratification and Linguistic Inequity

Often hailed as a passport to global opportunities, English yet frequently acts as a velvet rope, granting selective access to academic mobility, prestige, and recognition. Through broader systemic disparities rooted in socio-economics and geopolitics, English renders its role as a stratifier even more visible. In this context, the ideology that positions English as a neutral and merit-based tool operates as a mechanism that obscures how existing inequalities are evaluated and sustained. Rather than ensuring equal opportunities in academia, English frequently reproduces privilege, advantaging students from elite backgrounds who received early English education while marginalizing those from public schools, rural areas, or under-resourced educational systems (Choi, 2024; Le Ha & Barnawi, 2015). At this point, Phillipson's (2009) *linguistic imperialism* comes to the fore, emphasizing that English serves dual roles as a global connector and a selective filter and that such structures facilitate the accumulation of power and capital by privileged groups. Within the landscape of Turkish higher education, this pattern has been labelled as the "*English deficit*" (British Council & TEPAV, 2015), whereby structural weaknesses in English instruction, despite strong institutional demands for internationalization, are reported to hinder the global engagement of stakeholders.

The existing unequal structure becomes particularly evident in access to EMI programs. In the Turkish context, EMI is disproportionately concentrated in well-funded, urban, and private universities, functioning as a structure that restricts access for students coming from public schools or peripheral regions (British Council & TEPAV, 2013; Ekoç, 2020). These institutional geographies reflect deep class-based and regional inequalities by showing that English proficiency is less the result of sufficient individual effort and more the outcome of early access to *linguistic capital* (Bourdieu, 1991). As Doğançay-Aktuna and Kızıltepe (2005) note, English in Türkiye has gradually become a symbol of social status, functioning as a mechanism that differentiates those with global mobility from those who are locally constrained. This symbolic dimension is further reinforced by findings showing that English proficiency is correlated with EMI success in the social sciences, whereas the relationship is weaker in technical disciplines, suggesting that EMI often functions more as a branding strategy than a pedagogical necessity (Altay et al., 2022).

Moreover, a study emphasized that academic achievement in Turkish-medium academic success predicts EMI outcomes more strongly than general English proficiency (Curle et al., 2020). These structural inequalities are reflected not only at the level of institutional implementation but also in national policy trends. Based on the findings emerged from Kırkgöz's (2017) analysis of Türkiye's academic reform efforts, English has been discursively positioned as an emblem of European integration and market-oriented restructuring, despite rhetorical promotion, the enactment of English language initiatives is curtailed by infrastructural deficiencies-notably, deficits in instructional human capital, regional development asymmetries, and excessive emphasis on metric-driven evaluation. In this direction, Sarıçoban's (2012) critique of the top-down nature of Türkiye's language planning reports how educational realities are neglected, resulting in reforms that are symbolically loaded but pedagogically fragile. When evaluated collectively, these studies reveal that the use of EMI in Türkiye emerges not merely as an educational objective but as a practice embedded in stratified systems of access, privilege, and institutional differentiation.

The stratification present in EMI contexts is not unique to Türkiye; examples from other contexts or even the same context can be given. For instance, as a part of this review, it has previously been shown that in South Korea, where access to EMI is associated with private tutoring and high socioeconomic status, English is widely perceived as "a lifelong burden" and "a gatekeeper that favors the rich" (Choi, 2024, p. 151). In a similar manner, a study in Saudi Arabia reported how technical colleges structured around EMI set high, difficult-to-reach language standards, thereby implicitly excluding working-class students (Le Ha & Barnawi, 2015). In such contexts, English as a neoliberal policy often aligns with superficial practices of internationalization, promoted as a sign of modernization, yet it actually serves to gatekeep educational access. As Piller and Cho (2013) critique, English functions "[...] as a terrain where individual and societal worth are established" (Piller & Cho, 2013, p. 23). Another example from Korea reported how compulsory EMI courses, especially in STEM fields, reduced levels of comprehension and decreased classroom participation, indicating that comprehensive EMI policies deepen rather than resolve educational inequalities (Byun et al., 2011). A study from Türkiye (Yılmaz-Virlan & Demirbulak, 2020) similarly documented that students enrolled in

full EMI programs displayed lower academic achievement and decreased motivation compared to those in partial EMI programs, which points to the psychological and cognitive costs that linguistically demanding learning conditions impose on students.

Focusing solely on material access in discussions of English risks overlooking its gatekeeping function, which shapes what counts as legitimate knowledge. Often centering on Anglo-Western epistemologies, academic contexts dominated by English frequently overlook non-Western traditions of thought and knowledge in both pedagogy and research dissemination. The assumption that English is the sole "valid" medium for scholarly output is critically challenged by recent research (Mirhosseini et al., 2024), revealing how this approach silences non-Anglophone academic voices and constrains the plural discursive space available for global scholarship. The gatekeeping in academic publishing is also evident, as noted by Siqueira (2022), who reports how regional researchers targeting English-language journals were rejected for being "too local to be of interest" (p. 134), regardless of the scientific worth of their work. Further research from the Turkish context (Taquini et al., 2017) documented how HEIs operating under EMI models pursue alignment with global academic hierarchies by leveraging symbolic resources for global status, such as branding, faculty mobility, and networking, an effect that primarily favors already privileged institutions, thereby deepening the gap between center and periphery. By constructing epistemic authority, English, in such contexts, plays more than a communicative role by shaping the standards of academic legitimacy and ontological visibility (Canagarajah, 2002).

Limiting inequalities only to the material and epistemic level may also mean ignoring the embodied forms of inequality, as Park and Wee (2012) define them in terms of *communicative labor*. In EMI contexts, faculty are increasingly evaluated based on their capacity to teach and deliver content in English and publish internationally, regardless of their disciplinary expertise or linguistic background, again resulting in symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991), where the norms of the dominant language are internalized and referenced as objective standards. In such contexts, faculty often do not receive meaningful support at the institutional level, yet they are compelled to use English to gain promotion and institutional visibility. Likewise, students are also subjected to this *linguistic labor*. To reach the idealized native English-speaking norms, students invest time, money, and emotional energy.

Those who fail to align with these norms may, at times, struggle with feelings of inadequacy- even if they are academically competent (Haliç et al., 2009; Karakaş, 2016). At this point, EMI does not merely provide a pedagogical environment to its stakeholders; it also transforms them into components of a stratified linguistic labor space where academic hierarchies are restructured and reproduced.

Shohamy's (2006) concept of covert language policy clarifies the process through which subtle forms of linguistic control are legitimized. On the surface, academic contexts dominated by EMI seem inclusive externally, yet English and elitist images are often perpetuated via institutional culture and pedagogical choices such as curricula, assessment, and other relevant norms tied to EMI delivery. In practice, within exam-oriented systems like Türkiye, English functions as a sorting device, establishing inclusion or exclusion in international spaces. At this point, the reliance on English constitutes more than a language policy with implications for structural asymmetry. As proposed by Pennycook (2006), unless the assumptions underpinning English supremacy are disrupted, the global EMI paradigm fails to deliver on its promises of inclusion by promoting diversity in rhetoric but sustaining exclusion in practice.

2.7 Alternative Approaches: Plurilingualism, Critical Pedagogy, and Epistemic Justice

Following prior discussions, the dominant core models of higher education internationalization prioritize cross-border flows, reputational capital, and excellence benchmarking (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Knight, 2004). Within such strategic models, the deployment of EMI is positioned at the core of procedural initiatives, notably in contexts of cross-border collaborations and curriculum internationalization, which elevate English as a self-evident access tool, thereby legitimizing structures of linguistic and epistemic domination. Yet, when looking at alternative models that have recently emerged in the literature, this assumption is increasingly being challenged, with growing emphasis on the need to redefine the role of English to achieve genuinely inclusive and ethical global education. Recent transformative models of language policy refrain from calling for the total abandonment of English; instead, they propose the critical recontextualization of its

status in academic discourse by challenging its construction as the supreme linguistic ideal, yet treating English as a co-actor in a dynamic, heteroglossic academic sphere (Guilherme, 2019, Jenkins, 2013). This reorientation in higher education internationalization opens space for posing fundamental critiques: "*What kind of international order is being engaged with?*" "*On whose terms?*" Following the critical insights derived from an EMI intervention in China (Xu & Knijnik, 2024)- inspired by *Freirean Pedagogy* (1970)- reimagining English as a medium for dialogic and participatory learning has revealed the viability of global engagement unbound by linguistic conformity; in a dialogic EMI course, students selected content, engaged in critical discussions on global issues, and used English as a tool for ethical reflection and intercultural interaction, enabling a shift toward a more critically grounded and socially responsive model of GC.

One of these recent alternative models is *plurilingual pedagogy* (Coste et al., 2009), which proposes the practice of recognizing learners' entire linguistic repertoires as cognitive, cultural, and epistemic resources. Embracing fluid language practices such as translanguaging, this model allows learners to move across languages in order to support comprehension, express their identities, and engage more deeply in learning; thus, going beyond monolingual norms (Sabaté-Dalmau et al., 2024). At this point, an illustrative case emerges in Türkiye, where İnal et al. (2021) documented extensive translanguaging behaviors across different academic actors; despite the absence of institutional validation, translanguaging persisted extensively. Such unofficial bilingual engagement casts multilingualism as a counter-hegemonic educational force, which opposes the semiotic and normative supremacy of English. This pluralistic orientation in language pedagogy does not clash with visions of "*global engagement*" (Knight, 2004), yet critically addresses the unspoken dominance of monolingual norms and linguistic inequalities rooted in global academia (Guilherme, 2022a). One of the best examples of this kind of questioning is a study conducted within the *Glocademia Project* (Siqueira, 2022), which reveals how Brazilian researchers resist the epistemic limitations imposed by English-dominated publication systems and instead advocate for multilingual research collaborations.

Despite the frequently cited merits they offer, pedagogical models advocating for plurilingualism are still met with resistance, sustained by normative assumptions

favoring a singular, monolithic vision of academic English. In relation to this, Jenkins (2013) critically observes that native-speakerism remains a silent architect of international academic structures by pushing non-standard varieties or plurilingual command into the margins of academic discourse. One of the proposed pedagogies mentioned earlier, *translanguaging*, is frequently perceived as informal or deficient, even though it enhances comprehension in instructional settings, bringing into focus the critical requirement for framework-deep and norm-challenging recalibration and pedagogical rethinking. Following Tollefson and Tsui's (2004) depiction of the *hidden curriculum*, where language ideology becomes an undercurrent steering perception of worth and global belonging, the architecture of value is constructed silently through the elevation of English above all other linguistic repertoires. From a distinct interpretative standpoint, an empirical analysis of coursebook content in Türkiye (Akbana & Yavuz, 2022) disclosed the presence of sanitized global topics (e.g., environment, conflict resolution) within curricular materials, leaving minimal space for educational themes centered on peacebuilding and systemic critique- once more illustrating the workings of the *hidden curriculum*, revealing the stealthy operation of epistemic gatekeeping within ostensibly neutral educational structures.

Another example of an alternative model is the *critical GCE*, which aims to go beyond soft GC approaches that prioritize tolerance and mobility and instead centers on structural inequality, colonial legacy, and epistemic justice (Andreotti, 2006). Carroll (2024) contributes to GCE discourse through the portrait of a teacher working in Canada, narrating the shift from conventional to justice-oriented English teaching built on representation, activism, and inclusive design, positioning English as a means of critical empowerment rather than a gateway language. Such a pedagogical space points to the potential of how students' learning transcends linguistic mastery, further encouraging critical reflection on the ideologies embedded in language. At this point, this orientation finds its theoretical anchor in Freire's "*conscientização*" (1970, p. 108), which is "the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence" (p. 108), showing the shift whereby critical consciousness extends beyond mere recognition of social injustices toward transformative engagement. In extension, it reveals that when English is critically framed, it can become a liberating practice rather than a restrictive and binding one. In this respect, a critical inquiry undertaken in a Brazilian public university

(Fernandes, 2019) furnishes a significant case where English evolved into a context-responsive pedagogical medium, enabling local action and allowing for critical and reflective engagement with global discourses. The advancement emerged from a critical redesign of an English teacher education course wherein students were encouraged to question dominant language norms, engage critically with global issues through their local contexts, and develop multiliteracy.

Responding to the ascendancy of English requires more than rectifying inequalities through pedagogical redesign; it also urges a critical reexamination of what constitutes global academic engagement. Relatively, Guilherme's (2022a, 2022c) articulation of "*global academic responsibility*" challenges institutions to ask: "*Who is being internationalized? Through which languages? Under what epistemic conditions?*" Traditional models, such as those by Knight, may share the goal of "*preparing global citizens,*" but often lack the critical depth needed to confront linguistic hierarchies and knowledge inequities. In this context, if English is to contribute to mutual learning and transformative solidarity, it must be critically displaced from the center of academic validation and be situated as one interlocutor within a constellation of diverse linguistic actors. Ferraz (2019) advances this line of inquiry by articulating "*glob(c)alizations*" (Robertson, 1995), echoing Freire's (1985) notion of "*reading the word and the world,*" where critical glob(c)al literacy which is a contested, hybrid, and resistant space becomes the *sine qua non* of language education as a means of social transformation and provision of active citizenship (Ferraz, 2019 p. 198).

2.8 Repositioning English: Conclusions and Underexplored Dimensions

This review has unpacked the variegated roles of English within global higher education discourses as reflected in scholarly work, exposing how English functions as more than a neutral communicative medium, operating instead as a hidden current steering symbols, ideologies, and identities. An examination of the relevant research unveils the fact that English, within global academic circuits, steadily asserts itself as both a conduit for global participation and an arbiter of epistemic legitimacy. Whereas early visions of cross-border higher education (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Knight, 2004) cast English as a primary enabler of mobility and collaboration, this

critical review reveals that the role of English in internationalized higher education is far more complex- shaped by unequal power relations, epistemic hierarchies, and identity negotiations that determine who is included, how, and on what terms (Jenkins, 2011; Phillipson, 2009; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004).

Across institutional policies and semiotic practices, English operates within a symbolic economy that equates its presence with prestige, modernity, and international competence. As shown in sections 2.2 and 2.3, universities do not merely use English as a medium of communication but also as a visual and ideological currency- an emblem of global legitimacy, often detached from pedagogical substance or epistemic inclusivity (Shohamy, 2006; Keleş et al., 2019; Özer, 2022). In classroom contexts, EMI introduces pedagogical friction, emotional burdens, and identity negotiations, especially in semi-peripheral regions where the expansion of EMI exceeds infrastructure, professional development, and student preparedness (Arık & Arık, 2014; Han, 2023; Rose et al., 2022; Taquini et al., 2017). Such critical fault lines in internationalization practices lay bare the inherent flaws of technocratic and Anglocentric frameworks, indicating that English often mediates, not mitigates, the uneven terrains of global academic participation.

Notably, the current review also exposes the way in which English perpetuates intersecting axes of stratification. Following prior discussions (2.6), the allocation of *linguistic capital* remains tethered to social hierarchies, regional inequalities, and early exposure opportunities (Byun et al., 2011; Choi, 2024; Le Ha & Barnawi, 2015; Piller & Cho, 2013). In such contexts, English emerges as a double-edged mechanism: an instructional tool and a gate to global validation, presupposing earlier access to exclusive educational and social capital (British Council & TEPAV, 2013; Ekoç, 2020). At the same time, English-supremacist curricular designs and publishing models solidify Western epistemic traditions, at the expense of indigenous linguistic and knowledge traditions (Guilherme, 2019, 2022b; Mirhosseini et al., 2024). These structures signal the importance of crafting coloniality-critical pathways in global education that interrogate, not replicate, persistent asymmetries forged in global structures (Guilherme, 2022a; Mignolo, 2011)

Yet, as section 2.7 outlines, alternative models such as *plurilingual pedagogies*, *translanguaging*, and *critical GCE* are progressively establishing

themselves within educational discourse, paving the way for internationalized higher education rooted in inclusivity, critical reflexivity, and ethical commitment. At this point, a range of critical perspectives (Carroll, 2024; Ferraz, 2019; Xu & Knijnik, 2024) have introduced contextual sample cases, positioning English as an instrument for critical consciousness (Freire, 1970) and social transformation rather than a mechanism of compliance. Relatively, bridging local realities with global solidarities, *Glocademia* (Guilherme, 2022a) advances a vision of internationalization woven from multiple epistemic threads, where language abandons the straightjacket of uniformity and stretches into a polyphonic dialogue. Otherwise, English will persist in functioning in knowledge production circuits as a subtle apparatus (Canagarajah, 1999), reinforcing *coloniality of knowledge* (Quijano, 1992). At this point, beyond cosmetic adaptations, *Glocademia* necessitates rethinking systems regulating epistemic validation that govern whose knowledges are sanctioned or silenced (Mignolo, 2011; Santos, 2014).

Although existing discourse provides meaningful contributions, several critical gaps are yet to be adequately explored. To begin with, much of the scholarly focus tends to cluster around Anglophone and privileged settings, leaving the role of English in non-core, semi-peripheral, or Global South settings like Türkiye underexplored. Subsequently, current empirical inquiries fail to map how English is understood across different policy scales- from macro-level policy frameworks to meso-level institutional strategies and micro-level lived experiences. Furthermore, the ideological, symbolic, and identity-shaping dimensions of English have received limited scholarly attention. Ultimately, the affective dimension of EMI, particularly in relation to participant experience, is rarely absent from scholarly discussion- yet, these experiences shape not only academic engagement but also feelings of belonging, legitimacy, and self-worth. In this regard, the role of English in shaping internationalization and GCI, as far as current research indicates, has yet to be systematically examined in the global literature- particularly from a critical and multi-scalar lens- capturing how internationalization is enacted, experienced, and contested, which inform the central research questions of this study as follows:

1) What is the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities:

a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE)?

b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?

2) How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization?

3) What is the perceived role of English in Global Citizenship Identity (GCI):

a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE?

b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?

4) How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents in shaping the GCI within the context of internationalization?

Chapter 3

Methodology

Chapter One provided an overview of the problems the study seeks to focus on and their significance, whilst Chapter Two builds upon this by offering an extensive critical review of relevant literature, elaborating on prior research closely aligned with the current research. Chapter Three presents the methodological design of the study, consisting of an in-depth account of the research design, context, participants, data collection, and data analysis procedures employed, while further addressing issues of credibility and trustworthiness, the pilot study, and the limitations inherent in the research process.

3.1 Research Design

The research employed a collective case study methodology, selecting eleven universities to explore shared patterns and contextual nuances within the higher education landscape of Türkiye. Collective case studies are generally "used to provide a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon by examining it across different settings, which allows researchers to identify patterns and variations that might not be apparent in a single case" (Stake, 2006, p. 23). In that sense, the selected institutions are located in different cities across Türkiye, each representing a unique educational environment. Such collective case studies also enable researchers "to refine and extend theory by examining how different contexts impact the phenomenon under study, providing richer and more nuanced insights" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 537). At the same time, examining these universities collectively allowed for an analysis of regional and institutional variations in higher education, empowering the researcher to validate the findings across different contexts (Yin, 2014, p. 56).

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), "In case study research, qualitative data collection methods like interviews, observations, and document analysis provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the case being studied" (p. 159). Therefore, the current research employed pure qualitative methods, enabling the researcher to gain a rich, contextual understanding of the phenomenon being studied, which is

especially beneficial in case studies where depth and detail are critical" (Yin, 2018, p. 145). On the other hand, the attempt of using pure qualitative methods provided the researcher to avoid quantitative data "which may not capture the subtleties and meanings that qualitative data can reveal" (Yin, 2018, p. 148).

Grounded on the above-mentioned methodology, the current research examined eleven HEIs, all of which were designated as pilot universities by the Turkish CoHE within the scope of internationalization (CoHE, 2017a), to identify shared patterns and varying contextual dimensions in Türkiye. By means of adapting a collective case study design, it aimed to provide valuable insights into policies, practices, and perceptions regarding the role of English in internationalization and GCI and utilized qualitative methods to "inform theory and practice" (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 310).

3.1.1 Researcher's role. Since in qualitative research, the researcher is regarded not merely as a data collector but as a subject who co-constructs meaning; it is essential to clearly define the researcher's position in the field, their relationship with knowledge, and their influence on the process. In particular, Creswell (2013) highlights the interpretive nature of the qualitative researcher, underlining that addressing this role prior to ethical considerations is crucial for the methodological integrity of the study. Similarly, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that reflexively explaining the researcher's relationship with the data, both from an insider and outsider perspective- is necessary for ensuring the transparency of qualitative data production. Based on these approaches, this section presents the researcher's position, experiential background, and role in the research process within this doctoral dissertation study.

This study was conducted by a researcher with a master's degree in English Language Education and who has been part of academia since 2014. After completing the undergraduate education in this field, the researcher worked as an instructor of foreign languages at a foundation university for two years. Since 2016, the researcher has been continuing their academic career as a research assistant in the Department of English Language Education at a state university. This uninterrupted academic journey has enabled the researcher to gain significant experience in both teaching practices and research, particularly by allowing them to develop domain

knowledge regarding the structure of higher education institutions, foreign language teaching policies, and the functioning of teacher education programs. This academic background, which involves various roles, has directly influenced the researcher's shaping of the conceptual framework of the study.

This doctoral research directly builds upon the researcher's master's thesis, which examined the integration of global citizenship education (GCE) into English language teacher education pedagogy (Akyüz, 2019). The interest that developed following this thesis led the researcher to question their own perception of English as a language associated with global citizenship and, in this direction, to explore the role of English in the process of internationalization on a broader and institutional level. In this context, the present doctoral dissertation was designed as a collective case study covering 11 universities located in 9 cities of Türkiye. The researcher was not affiliated with any of these institutions and conducted the study as an external observer and field expert. The researcher carried out all stages of the data collection process-from planning to implementation, classification to analysis.

The researcher independently developed all data collection instruments for the study, including the interview protocol, open-ended questionnaire, document analysis forms, and the self-designed data analysis strategy. However, considering the amount of data in the study and the interpretive depth it entails- and the interpretive depth required by the study- the researcher sought support from two experts holding PhDs in English Language Education in order to enhance the reliability of the process. These experts supported the researcher in reviewing the data collection instruments, evaluating the coding structures, and interpreting the analytical findings. Additionally, the thesis advisor continuously monitored the ethical, scientific, and practical dimensions of the study in a holistic manner throughout the process. The researcher specifically valued and adopted this collaborative approach not only for its practical support but also to limit interpretive subjectivity, often emphasized in qualitative research, and to maintain methodological transparency.

In this context, the fact that the researcher is both an academic from within the field and an external observer of the research setting has contributed a reflexive dimension to the study. The potential biases arising from this dual position were consciously managed and intentionally incorporated into the process. Rather than

avoiding the influence of the interpretive subject inherent in the nature of qualitative data generation, the researcher preferred to transparently identify and keep this influence under control. The study was conducted as part of a doctoral program, and the ethical approval and institutional permission processes were carried out through the universities to which the researcher was affiliated. Nevertheless, the scientific design of the study, as well as the data collection and analysis procedures, were planned and conducted by the researcher. There was no external funding or sponsorship support related to the study.

3.1.2 Ethical considerations. During the dissertation study, rigorous ethical standards were adhered to, in line with the best practices outlined by key scholars to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). Initially, ethical approvals were reviewed at the meeting of the Bahçeşehir University Board of Scientific Research and Publishing Ethics dated 29/07/2022 and numbered E-20021704-604.01.02-37656 and found to be in accordance with the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics (Appendix A). Another ethical approval was taken from the Istanbul Medeniyet University Board of Scientific Research and Publishing Ethics (Appendix B), dated 09/05/2922 and numbered 2022/05-07.

The researcher requested permits from the 20 universities where the study was planned to be conducted via an official letter through Bahçeşehir University. For various reasons- including non-responses and refusals to participate- the final sample of the institutions where the research permit process was completed as follows: Anadolu University, numbered E-63784619-605.01-556366, dated 28/07/2023 (Appendix C); Atatürk University, numbered E-39657895-000-2300149115, dated 10/05/2023 (Appendix D); Boğaziçi University, numbered E-84391427-605.01-126002, dated 10/05/2023 (Appendix E); Bursa Uludağ University, numbered E-94390400-044-109204, dated 10/05/2023 (Appendix F); Çukurova University, numbered E-75198635-900-707707, dated 24/05/ 2023 (Appendix G); Ege University, numbered E-85553214-600-1352080, dated 12/07/2023 (Appendix H); Gazi University, numbered E-61737632-903.07.01-657878, dated 17/05/2023 (Appendix I); Gebze Technical University, numbered E-14567315-044-105387, dated 22/05/2023 (Appendix J); İzmir Institute of Technology, numbered E-

99163367-044-2300026029, dated 15/05/2023 (Appendix K); Marmara University, numbered E-16110545-302.08.01-568017, dated 23/06/2023 (Appendix L), and Selçuk University, numbered E-25669789-100-515503, dated 09/05/2023 (Appendix M). Additionally, ethical approval for the piloting process was obtained from the Istanbul Medeniyet University Board of Scientific Research and Publishing Ethics (Appendix B). The permit for the pilot study was also taken from Istanbul Medeniyet University School of Foreign Languages, numbered E-20425557-000-2200065486, and dated 05/12/2023 (Appendix N).

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including the main and pilot studies, ensuring they were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Comprehensive Volunteer Information and Consent Forms were prepared, considering the types of participants (Appendix O, P, & Q). Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), informing the participants that their personal information would be confidential. Data storage was managed with the utmost care, ensuring secure, encrypted cloud storage and restricted access to protect the participants' information (Saldaña, 2012).

3.2 Setting and Participants

3.2.1 Research context. This study was conducted across Türkiye from 2022 to 2025, including various HEIs nationwide in nine distinct cities. It encompassed eleven universities in multiple regions, representing a broad geographical spread and gaining a comprehensive view of the higher education landscape (Figure 2). By engaging with institutions from different parts of Türkiye, the study aimed to explore and analyze the nuances of educational perceptions, practices, and policies within the Turkish context regarding the role of English in the internationalization and development of GCI. The multi-city and multi-university approach allowed for a robust examination of regional commonalities and shared patterns, assessment of academic and administrative practices, and faculty and students' experiences in higher education settings, providing valuable insights into higher education dynamics across Türkiye during the specified academic period (Figure 2).
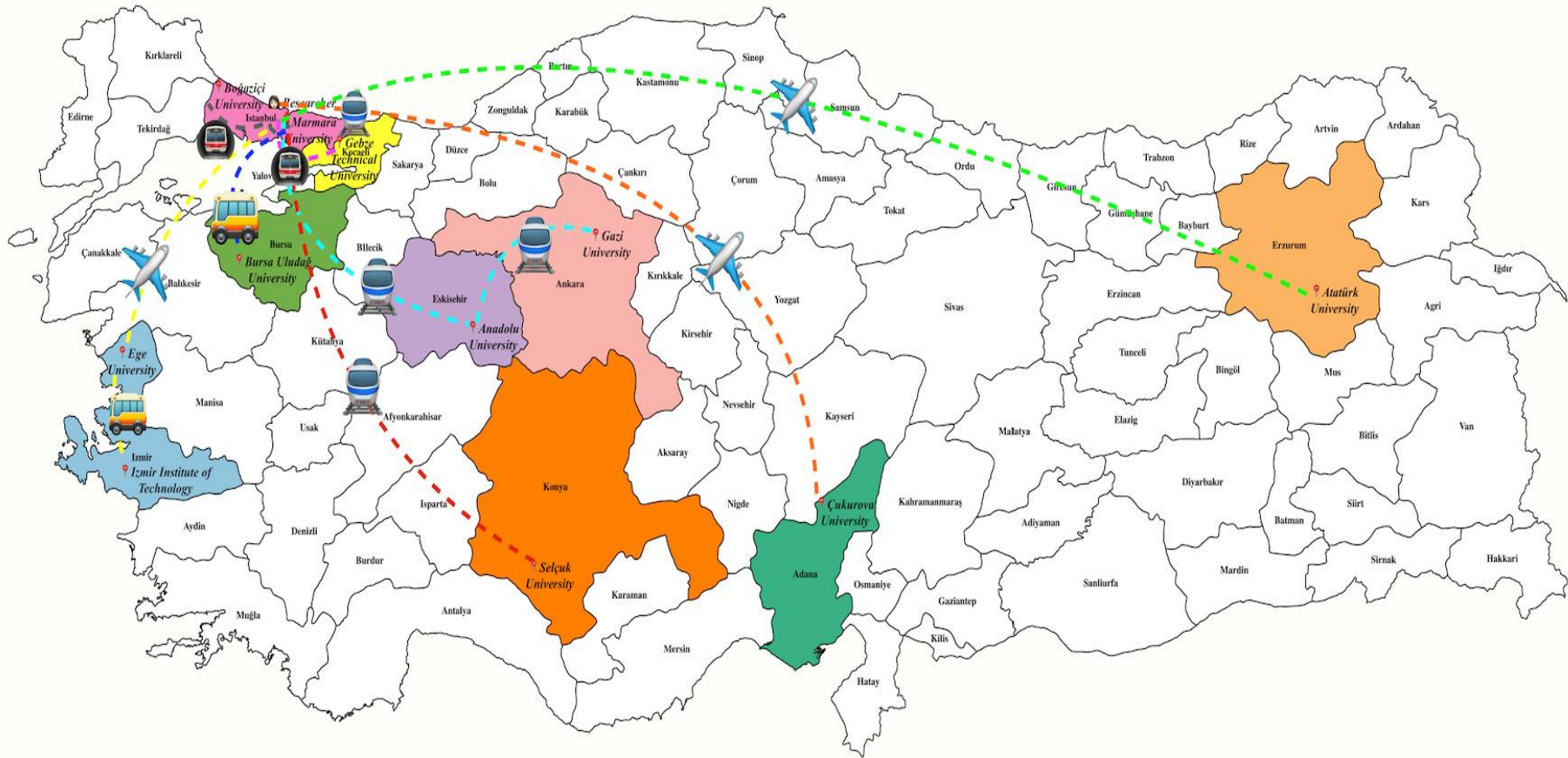
Figure 2. Overview of the research field.

The universities selected for this research were informed by the internationalization report published by the Turkish CoHE, which identified 20 universities with specific criteria stating that these universities were selected as pilot universities (Figure 3) to be supported in the context of internationalization (CoHE, 2017a). For this reason, within the scope of this study, data collection was planned to be conducted at these universities. The researcher initially sought permission to collect data from the 20 universities in the Turkish CoHE report (CoHE, 2017a).

List of Pilot Universities (Planned)

1	Anadolu University	11	Hacettepe University
2	Ankara University	12	Istanbul Technical University
3	Atatürk University	13	Istanbul University
4	Boğaziçi University	14	Izmir Institute of Technology
5	Çukurova University	15	Karadeniz Technical University
6	Dokuz Eylül University	16	Marmara University
7	Ege University	17	Middle East Technical University
8	Erciyes University	18	Selçuk University
9	Gazi University	19	Uludağ University
10	Gebze Technical University	20	Yıldız Technical University

Figure 3. List of pilot universities.

Consequently, the final sample of the institutions comprised eleven universities, selected through a purposive sampling approach. This method ensured that the remaining institutions represented diverse higher education environments across Türkiye. As the approvals of some universities were signed on a unit basis, resulting in documents ranging from 50 to 60 pages, only the permissions of specific units were included in the appendices as examples. The following universities are listed alphabetically, regardless of the order of the data collection procedure and labels used in the current research (Figure 4):

No	List of Participating Pilot Universities
1	Anadolu University
2	Atatürk University
3	Boğaziçi University
4	Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi
5	Çukurova University
6	Ege University
7	Gazi University
8	Gebze Technical University
9	İzmir Institute of Technology
10	Marmara University
11	Selçuk University

Figure 4. List of participating pilot universities.

Data for this research were fastidiously collected from the School of Foreign Languages (SFLs) (the same may be given different names, e.g., School of Languages, Department of Foreign Languages, Foreign Languages Unit/ Department) and EMI Departments at various Turkish HEIs. Specifically, the research focused on the SFLs, which teach multiple languages, including English, to students across different disciplines, and the EMI Departments, which offer programs where English is the primary language of instruction. This criterion was applied to ensure consistency in the linguistic context of the data. While some of the HEIs offered many programs in English, some had only a limited number of programs provided in English. Therefore, the researcher targeted to choose departments where English was the medium of instruction. At the HEIs, which offered multiple EMI programs, the researcher strategically chose the departments where personal contacts or voluntary participants were available, enabling the researcher to conduct a more effective data collection process.

3.2.2 Cases. This section provides information regarding 11 Turkish HEIs included as cases in the current research, which were later coded independently of the data collection order or alphabetical sequence. As much of the information across the cases is similar, the information is presented in profile-defining tables rather than text to avoid repetition (Figure 5a, 5b). The tables in the figures include information on the number of national and international students and staff, THE ranking, the language of instruction, and highlights regarding foreign language education. This information was gathered from universities' websites, the Turkish Higher Education Information Management System (https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/), and platforms such as Study in Türkiye (https://www.studyinturkiye.gov.tr/), and the data collected from participants of the study.

As shown in the figures below (Figure 5a, 5b), a significant number of students are enrolled in vocational training schools and undergraduate programs of 11 HEIs included in the current research. The number of international students varies across these institutions, with Anadolu University having the highest number, totaling 18,474 students. However, it is essential to note that the majority of these are enrolled in the open education faculty. Regarding international academics, Marmara University has the highest concentration, with 70 international academic staff. Among the institutions, Izmir Institute of Technology provides 100% foreign language instruction, followed by Boğaziçi University. All institutions offer preparatory language programs with minimum passing criteria that typically fall within the range of 60 to 70. Only two institutions have EQUALS accreditation, and two others were previously accredited by Pearson Assured, although they are no longer listed among currently accredited programs. Nearly all universities' websites are available in both Turkish and English, with three universities using UK or US flags to represent English in their language selection tabs. As for mobility, all universities primarily implement Erasmus+, Mevlana, and Farabi as their main exchange programs. Additionally, the tables in the figures provide HEIs' THE Rankings, as these rankings are one of the key ranking lists considered by the CoHE in designating these institutions as pilot universities.

Label	Descriptions					
HEIs	**Anadolu University**	**Atatürk University**	**Boğaziçi University**	**Çukurova University**	**Ege University**	**Gazi University**
Numbers						
Undergraduate Programs	91	151	39	93	87	81
Vocational Training School & Undergraduate Students	1765967	545378	13063	43146	48635	31781
International Students	18474	11240	310	1297	2394	1787
Academic Staff	1494	2741	982	2107	3085	3225
International Academic Staff	4	27	69	25	15	12
THE Ranking	1201-1500	1201-1500	601-800	1201-1500	1201-1500	1201-1500
Medium of Instruction	Slightly in English (10/91)	Rarely in English (7/151)	Nearly Fully in English (38/39)	Slightly in English (13/93)	Slightly in English (12/87)	Slightly in English (8/81)
Website Languages	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (UK Flag)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (UK Flag)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)
Preparatory Year Program						
Availability	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Accreditation Status	-	-	EQUALS	-	Pearson Assured (Formerly)	EQUALS
Minimum Passing Criteria	60/100	60/100	60/100	60/100	70/100	60/100
Main Exchange Programs	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi

Figure 5a. Research institutions overview (2023-2024).

Label	Descriptions				
HEIs	**Gebze Technical University**	**Izmir Institute of Technology**	**Marmara University**	**Selçuk University**	**Bursa Uludağ University**
Numbers					
Undergraduate Programs	20	21	110	144	94
Vocational Training School & Undergraduate Students	7170	5821	53242	60422	62298
International Students	207	167	2509	2122	5022
Academic Staff	783	670	3140	2620	2373
International Academic Staff	17	16	70	21	21
THE Ranking	1201-1500	1201-1500	1500+	1201-1500	1500+
English as a Medium of Instruction	Predominantly in English (13/20)	Fully in English (21/21)	Moderately in English (23/110)	Rarely in English (5/144)	Rarely in English (3/94)
Website Languages	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)	Turkish & English (UK Flag)	Turkish & English (No National Flags)
Preparatory Year Program					
Availability	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Accreditation Status	-	-	Pearson Assured (Formerly)	-	-
Minimum Passing Criteria	60/100	60/100	60/100	70/100	60/100
Main Exchange Programs	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi	Erasmus+, Mevlana, & Farabi

Figure 5b. Research institutions overview (2023-2024).

3.2.3 Participants. The study involved 85 participants from various academic roles and levels, categorized into faculty members, instructors, administrators, and students, focusing on home and international participants from the selected 11 universities. Within the scope of the study, to increase data diversity and representational strength, participant diversity was carefully structured both at the beginning of the study and during the implementation process. In this regard, participants were selected from two main units- the SFLs and EMI programs. Within the SFLs, the study included preparatory year program (PYP) administrators, instructors, and students, both home and international. Similarly, in the EMI programs, a diverse participant profile was established, consisting of administrators, academic staff, and students, again comprising both home and international participants. Accordingly, through such a structured and diversity-based approach, the study aimed to enable a multidimensional analysis of the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders at different levels regarding the research topic, thereby strengthening the depth of the study.

The participants involved 39 faculty members and instructors, of whom 34 were affiliated with the home institution, and 5 were international. Among the faculty group, 16 were faculty administrators and members, and 23 were preparatory school administrators and instructors. The student cohort comprised 46 individuals, 25 from the preparatory school and 21 enrolled in EMI programs. There were 36 home and 10 international students within the student participant group. Ultimately, the categorization was formed with the distribution of 70 home and 15 international participants, providing a comprehensive overview of the study's demographic composition (Table 1). This breakdown of participants allowed for a detailed analysis of the practices and perceptions of both home and international participants in the SFLs and EMI programs.

Table 1

Participant Profile

Participant Category	Turkish	International	Total
Faculty Members/ Instructors (Total)	34	5	39
Faculty Administrators/ Members	16	-	16
Instructors	18	5	23
Students (Total)	36	10	46
PYP Students	20	5	25
EMI Faculty Students	16	5	21
Total	70	15	85

Invitations to participate in the study were extended via official channels, including emails, departmental announcements, and personal contacts. Despite extensive efforts to reach potential participants, international participants had a lower response rate than their national counterparts. Therefore, the final number of international participants was smaller than initially anticipated. Participants were recruited voluntarily, providing informed consent to participate in the research (Appendix O, P, & R). The researcher ensured that all participants were fully informed of the study's purpose, their role, and rights, including the option to withdraw at any time. Participant data was anonymized, and research records were securely managed to maintain strict confidentiality throughout the research process.

The figures below (Figure 6a, 6b) present the total participant list for the 85 participants from the 11 universities regarded as cases in the study. In the list, HEIs are coded with letters, and pseudonyms are assigned to the participants. Information related to the participants' nationalities, along with their native languages, has been concealed due to the limited number of international participants to prevent the possibility of their identities being easily identified, and therefore, has not been included in the figures presenting the participant profile. Other than that, the tables shown in the figures include information on participants' age, gender, abroad experience, academic role, education levels, departments, and, for academics, their employment status. As previously mentioned, the order of universities in the list is independent of the data collection schedule or alphabetical order.

Participant Code	Institution Code	Age	Gender	Abroad Experience	Role	Educational Level	Department	Employment Status
P1	University A	38	F	Yes	Asst. Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Chemistry (English)	Full-time
P2	University A	43	M	Yes	Assoc. Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Chemistry (English)	Full-time
P3	University A	20	F	Yes	Student	BA	Chemistry (English)	-
P4	University A	21	M	Yes	Student	BA	Chemistry (English)	-
P5	University A	37	F	Yes	Instructor/ Coordinator (Testing Unit)	MA	Foreign Languages Department (English)	Full-time
P6	University A	38	F	Yes	Instructor	MA	Foreign Languages Department (English)	Full-time
P7	University A	33	F	Yes	Instructor/ Coordinator (BA Unit)	MA	Foreign Languages Department (English)	Full-time
P8	University A	18	F	Yes	Student	PYP	Aeronautical Engineering (English)	-
P9	University A	19	M	No	Student	PYP	Aeronautical Engineering (English)	-
P10	University B	44	F	Yes	Assoc. Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Foreign Language Education (English)	Full-time
P11	University B	22	M	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P12	University B	18	M	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P13	University B	18	M	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P14	University B	46	F	Yes	Instructor/ Coordinator (Language Educaion Unit)	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P15	University B	62	M	Yes	Lecturer	PYP	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P16	University B	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Psychology (English)	-
P17	University B	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Business Administration (English)	-
P18	University C	29	M	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of Academic Affairs	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P19	University C	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Management Information Systems (English)	-
P20	University C	18	M	No	Student	PYP	Industrial Engineering (English)	-
P21	University C	21	F	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P22	University C	24	M	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P23	University C	22	F	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P24	University D	58	F	Yes	Department Chair/ Faculty Member	PhD	Foreign Languages Education (English)	Full-time
P25	University D	33	F	Yes	Assoc. Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Foreign Languages Education (English)	Full-time
P26	University D	21	M	Yes	Student	BA	Foreign Languages Education (English)	-
P27	University D	63	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	School of Foreign Languages/ Foreign Languages Education	Full-time
P28	University D	39	F	Yes	Instructor/ Coordinator (Language Educaion Unit)	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P29	University D	62	F	Yes	Lecturer	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P30	University D	30	M	Yes	Lecturer	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P31	University D	19	M	Yes	Student	PYP	Translation and Interpreting (English)	-
P32	University D	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Translation and Interpreting (English)	-
P33	University D	19	M	No	Student	PYP	Translation and Interpreting (English)	-
P34	University E	34	M	Yes	Faculty Member/ Asst. Director of Department	PhD	International Relations (English)	Full-time
P35	University E	48	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	International Relations (English)	Full-time
P36	University E	19	M	No	Student	BA	International Relations (English)	-
P37	University E	23	M	Yes	Student	BA	International Relations (English)	-
P38	University E	45	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English) / Translation and Interpreting (English)	Full-time
P39	University E	50	M	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of School of Foreign Languages	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P40	University E	43	F	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of School of Foreign Languages	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English) / English Language and Literature	Full-time
P41	University E	18	F	Yes	Student	PYP	Translation and Interpreting (English)	-
P42	University E	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Translation and Interpreting (English)	-

Figure 6a. Demographic and professional characteristics of the study participants.

Participant Code	Institution Code	Age	Gender	Abroad Experience	Role	Educational Level	Department	Employment Status
P43	University F	57	F	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P44	University F	62	M	Yes	Instructor	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P45	University F	18	F	No	Student	PYP	Economics (English)	-
P46	University F	18	M	No	Student	PYP	Economics (English)	-
P47	University F	57	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	Business Administration (English)	Full-time
P48	University F	19	F	Yes	Student	BA	Business Administration (English)	-
P49	University F	18	M	No	Student	BA	Business Administration (English)	-
P50	University G	54	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	Foreign Language Education (English)	Full-time
P51	University G	18	F	No	Student	BA	Foreign Language Education (English)	-
P52	University G	38	M	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Head of School of Foreign Languages	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P53	University G	18	M	No	Student	PYP	Electrical - Electronic Engineering (English)	-
P54	University G	44	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	Medicine (English)	Full-time
P55	University G	21	F	Yes	Student	BA	Medicine (English)	-
P56	University G	21	M	No	Student	BA	Medicine (English)	-
P57	University G	22	F	Yes	Student	BA	Medicine (English)	-
P58	University H	53	F	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	Food Engineering (English)	Full-time
P59	University H	20	M	No	Student	BA	Food Engineering (English)	-
P60	University H	20	F	No	Student	BA	Food Engineering (English)	-
P61	University H	53	F	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of Academic Affairs	BA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P62	University H	44	M	Yes	Instructor	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P63	University H	18	F	No	Student	PYP	American Culture and Literature (English)	-
P64	University H	18	F	No	Student	PYP	English Language and Literature (English)	-
P65	University I	35	M	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of Academic Affairs	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P66	University I	38	F	Yes	Instructor	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P67	University I	19	F	No	Student	PYP	Architecture (English)	-
P68	University I	22	M	No	Student	PYP	Computer Engineering (English)	-
P69	University I	55	F	Yes	Assoc. Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Architecture (English)	Full-time
P70	University I	19	M	No	Student	BA	Architecture (English)	-
P71	University I	19	F	No	Student	BA	Architecture (English)	-
P72	University J	61	F	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	Foreign Language Education (English)	Full-time
P73	University J	53	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member	PhD	Computer Engineering (English)	Full-time
P74	University J	20	M	No	Student	BA	Computer Engineering (English)	-
P75	University J	47	F	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of Academic Affairs	PhD	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P76	University J	38	M	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Director of Academic Affairs	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P77	University J	18	F	No	Student	PYP	School of Foreign Languages (English)	-
P78	University J	18	M	No	Student	PYP	School of Foreign Languages (English)	-
P79	University K	37	F	Yes	Instructor/ Asst. Head of School of Foreign Languages	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P80	University K	38	F	Yes	Instructor	MA	School of Foreign Languages (English)	Full-time
P81	University K	18	F	No	Student	PYP	School of Foreign Languages (English)	-
P82	University K	19	M	No	Student	PYP	School of Foreign Languages (English)	-
P83	University K	57	M	Yes	Prof./ Faculty Member/ Department Chair	PhD	International Relations (English)	Full-time
P84	University K	19	F	Yes	Student	PYP	International Relations (English)	-
P85	University K	19	M	No	Student	PYP	International Relations (English)	-

Figure 6b. Demographic and professional characteristics of the study participants.

In the figures above, the demographic and professional characteristics of the study participants are presented. Of the 85 participants, 43 were female, and 42 were male, with ages ranging from 18 to 63 years. As previously mentioned, 70 participants were Turkish, while 15 were of foreign nationality. Additionally, of the 85 participants, 50 reported having experience abroad. While most of the participants are from the SFLs of HEIs, EMI departments such as chemistry, psychology, business, international relations, architecture, and medicine from HEIs were also represented in the study.

3.3 Procedures

This section offers a comprehensive overview of the data collection instruments, including written documents, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. It further outlines data collection procedures and details the subsequent data analysis steps. Lastly, this section discusses the strategies employed to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study.

3.3.1 Sampling. As mentioned earlier, the universities selected for this research were informed by the internationalization report published by the Turkish CoHE, which identified a number of pilot universities to be supported in the context of internationalization (CoHE, 2017a). Accordingly, the current study adopted purposive sampling, which involved selecting pilot universities as cases and participants with specific knowledge or experience related to the research topic to gather a more focused and relevant dataset (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 158). Within the participant group determined through purposive sampling, an additional convenience sampling was conducted specifically among academic staff and students (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2011), as there were multiple potential participants within these categories, allowing for selection based on accessibility within the same department or unit (Given, 2008). However, such flexibility was not possible for those in administrative positions due to the limited number of participants in these roles. The data collection involved engaging administrative and academic staff, as well as students, within the SFLs and EMI programs to gain insights into policies,

practices, and perceptions regarding the role of English in internationalization and GCI.

3.3.2 Data collection instruments. This study collected qualitative data for the collective case study through document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with participants, including administrators, academic staff, and students. The study examined documents related to the Turkish CoHE, the SFLs, and the EMI programs at the universities where the participants teach or study, including reviewing regulations, guidelines, coursebooks, course syllabi, and exams. Policy and practice-based document review forms prepared by the researcher were used for this purpose (Appendix R, S, T, & U). Open-ended questionnaires were prepared to gather information from administrators and academic staff about their current practices in HEIs (Appendix V & W). Forms for semi-structured interviews concerned how administrators, academic staff, and students in Turkish higher education conceptualize the role of English in internationalization and GCI (Appendix X & Y). The researcher developed all data collection tools used in this study, and no pre-developed tools by other researchers were used. Numerous items were written and juxtaposed before finalizing the data collection tools, some of which were adapted from the reviewed studies. Field experts evaluated the data collection tools, and a pilot study protocol for the data collection tools was completed. All the data collection tools used to answer the pre-determined research questions are presented in Table 2:

Table 2

Data Collection Tools

Research Question	Principal Dataset	Data Collection Tools
RQ1. What is the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities:	Study of Turkish Council of Higher Education policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents	Document Analysis: *Internationalization Policy Document Review Form*
a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE)?		
b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?	A study of documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebook, etc.) of universities, EMI programs, foreign language, and modern language departments	Document Analysis: *Internationalization Practices Document Review Form*
	An open-ended questionnaire administered to administrators and teaching staff	Open-Ended Questionnaires: *Internationalization Practices Open-Ended Questionnaire*
RQ2. How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization?	Transcriptions of the interviews with administrators, teaching staff, and students	Semi-Structured Interviews: *Internationalization Perceptions Interview Form*

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Table 2 (cont'd)

Research Question	Principal Dataset	Data Collection Tools
RQ3. What is the perceived role of English in Global Citizenship Identity:	Study of Turkish Council of Higher Education policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents	Document Analysis: *Global Citizenship Identity Policy Document Review Form*
a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE)?		
b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?	A study of documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebook, etc.) of universities, EMI programs, foreign language, and modern language departments	Document Analysis: *Global Citizenship Identity Practices Document Review Form*
	An open-ended questionnaire administered to administrators and teaching staff	Open-Ended Questionnaires: *Global Citizenship Identity Practices Open-Ended Questionnaire*
RQ4. How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents in shaping the Global Citizenship Identity within the context of internationalization?	Transcriptions of the interviews with administrators, teaching staff, and students	Semi-Structured Interviews: *Global Citizenship Identity Perceptions Interview Form*

3.3.2.1 Document analysis. As indicated by Jankowski and Van Selm (1998), "document analysis provides a systematic way to interpret textual materials, offering insights into the phenomena being studied by revealing patterns, themes, and narratives within the documents" (p. 68). Accordingly, document analysis was one of the data collection methods used in the current research. As part of this study, a comprehensive document analysis was conducted to examine both policy-based and practice-based documents. To address research questions RQ1(a) and RQ3(a), which aimed to explore the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities and GCI within macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE, a total of 24 policy documents were analyzed. These included CoHE policies and higher-level policy documents from the Republic of Türkiye, which were examined to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the broader context. The complete list of analyzed documents is presented in the figures below (Figure 7a, 7b).

No	Issued Regulation/Circular/ Guideline/ Report	Enf. Year	Law/ Reg./Off. Gaz./Circ./ Dec. No	Main Provisions
D1	*"Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye"* (Republic of Türkiye, 1982)	1982	2709	*University operations, faculty roles, and financial matters. (Articles 130, 131, 132.)
D2	*"Law on Higher Education"* (Republic of Türkiye, 1981)	1981	2547	*Establishing HEIs, ensuring autonomy and academic freedom, defining CoHE as the governing body, regulating admissions, managing finances, fostering international cooperation, and stating disciplinary rules for staff and students.
D3	*"Law on Higher Education Personnel"* (Republic of Türkiye, 1983b)	1983	2914	*Classifying academic staff, regulating salaries and allowances, setting criteria for promotions, and establishing procedures for employing foreign academic staff.
D4	*"Law on the Organization of Higher Education Institutions"* (Republic of Türkiye, 1983c)	1983	2809	*Regulating the organization of HEIs
D5	*"Law on Education and Teaching of Foreign Languages and Learning Different Languages and Dialects of Turkish Citizens"* (Republic of Türkiye, 1983a)	1983	2923	*Regulating the principles for teaching foreign languages in educational institutions, schools providing instruction in foreign languages, and the learning of different languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens daily
D6	*"Regulation on the Principles to be Followed in Foreign Language Education and Teaching in Foreign Languages in Higher Education Institutions"* (CoHE, 2014a)	2016	29662	*Defining standards for teaching in a foreign language in HEIs *Setting language proficiency criteria for students and staff
D7	*"Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding the Employment of Foreign National Academic Staff"* (CoHE, 2014b)	2020	4217	*Setting minimum proficiency level for teaching in foreign languages
D8	*"Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding the Central Examination to beApplied for Appointments to Academic Staff Other than Faculty Members"* (CoHE, 2018)	2018	30590	*Establishing criteria for language proficiency for academic appointments *Including foreign language proficiency in the preliminary and main evaluation processes
D9	*"Regulation on Recognition and Equivalence of Foreign Higher Education Diplomas"* (CoHE, 2017b)	2017	30261	*Establishing the procedures and principles for the recognition and equivalence of diplomas from foreign HEIs *Setting proficiency criteria for programs in foreign languages
D10	*"Regulation on Joint Education and Training Programs Between Turkish Higher Education Institutions and Higher Education Institutions Abroad"* (CoHE, 2016b)	2016	29849	*Establishing procedures for Turkish HEIs to collaborate with foreign institutions to offer joint diplomas with quality education or opportunities to study abroad
D11	*"Graduate Education and Teaching Regulations"* (CoHE, 2016a)	2016	29690	*Requiring a minimum foreign language score (e.g., YDS, TOEFL) for doctoral program applications

Figure 7a. Macro-level policy-based documents.

No	Issued Regulation/Circular/ Guideline/ Report	Enf. Year	Law/ Reg./Off. Gaz./Circ./ Dec. No	Main Provisions
D12	*"Internationalization Strategy Document in Higher Education 2018-2022"* (CoHE, 2017)	2017	*	*Setting goals to promote global visibility, attract international students and staff, and promote international collaborations in higher education
D13	*"Target-Oriented Internationalization in Higher Education"* (CoHE, 2021)	2021	*	*Providing a brief history of the internationalization of Turkish HE and sharing examples from successful countries,
D14	*"Regulation on the Procedures and Principles for Determining Foreign Language Proficiency"* (CoHE, 2013)	2013	28518	*Determining the eligible foreign languages for public positions and the procedures and principles for organizing foreign language exams and other relevant matters
D15	*"Higher Education System in Türkiye"* (CoHE, 2019)	2019	*	*Introducing CoHE, including the statistical data, structure, and features of the HE system in Türkiye
D16	*"2022 THEQC Higher Education and Quality Assurance Status Report"* (THEQC, 2022)	2022	*	*A comprehensive analysis of the QA activities conducted in Turkish HEIs during 2022
D17	*"THEQC International Institutional Accreditation Program Directive"* (THEQC, 2023)	2023	*	*Stating accreditation standards for international institutional accreditation program
D18	*"THEQC English Preparatory Schools External Evaluation Pilot Program Guide"* (THEQC, 2018)	2018	*	*Guiding the members of the THEQC and the English Preparatory Schools regarding the External Evaluation Program and how to carry out the process."
D19	*"THEQC Sub-Criteria Guide"* (THEQC, 2020)	2020	*	*Sub-criteria for accreditation standards
D20	*"THEQC 2024-2028 Strategic Plan"* (THEQC, 2024)	2024	*	*Plan designated for the specific period regarding QA
D21	*Turkish Qualifications Framework* (CoHE, 2015)	2015	*	*A framework defining and classifying the qualifications gained through various education and training in Türkiye
D22	*"The Twelfth Development Plan (2024-2028)"* (Presidency of Strategy and Budget, 2023)	2023	1396	*Goals to position Türkiye "as an environmentally friendly, disaster-resilient, high value-added production based on advanced technology, fair distribution of income, stable, robust, and prosperous nation in the Century of Türkiye."
D23	*"The Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023)"* (Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Updated Version, 2021)	2021	1225	*Goals to accelerate and sustain Türkiye's development through key actions such as preparing development plans and budgets, allocating public resources, coordinating and monitoring implementation, and promoting international development corporation."
D24	*"The Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018)"* (Presidency of Strategy and Budget, 2013)	2013	1041	*Targeting to enhance the international position of Türkiye and increase the welfare of the people through structural transformations based on the fundamental values and expectations of our nation in a reshaping world.

Figure 7b. Macro-level policy-based documents.

Following the analysis of the policy documents, the analysis extended to practice-based documents to answer RQ1(b) and RQ3(b), which focused on the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities and GCI in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs concerning the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. This involved reviewing a range of institutional materials such as regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, teaching materials, and course books used in EMI programs and SFLs. The examined practice-based documents are detailed in Figure 8:

No	Institutions (N=11)	Types of Documents[1,2,3,4]
1	Anadolu University	
2	Atatürk University	• Institutional Strategic Plans
		• Institutional Administrative Activity Reports
		• Institutional Academic Performance Reports
3	Boğaziçi University	• Unit-Level Administrative Activity Reports
		• Unit-Level Academic Performance Reports
4	Bursa Uludağ University	• Student Handbooks
		• Staff Handbooks
5	Çukurova University	• Internationalization Policies
		• Quality Assurance Manuals
6	Ege University	• Internal Unit Evaluation Reports
		• Research Policies
7	Gazi University	• Community Engagement Practice
		• Teaching Materials Used in Foreign Language Instruction
8	Gebze Technical University	• Sample Exams
		• Regulations and Directives on Foreign Language Education
9	İzmir Institute of Technology	• Education and Examination Regulations and Directives
		• Institutional Undergraduate Education and Examination
10	Marmara University	Regulations
		• Other Relevant Institutional Directives
11	Selçuk University	
Notes on Collection and Access	[1]A total of 11 HEIs' websites (institutional, faculty, department, and SFL) were reviewed. [2]Nearly 120 documents were analyzed, covering strategic, administrative, academic, and instructional materials. [3]Documents were primarily obtained from HEIs; where access was restricted, publicly available resource were used. [4]In cases where HEIs declined to share documents, missing data was supplemented with website content and alternative resources.	

Figure 8. Meso and micro-level practice-based documents.

Four document review forms were employed to effectively guide the above-mentioned policy and practice-based document analysis procedures through questions categorized into separate sub-sections. This approach was adopted to ensure all relevant documents were carefully examined, enabling a robust and insightful dataset for analysis.

3.3.2.1.1 Internationalization policy document review form. The form (Appendix R) was constructed to answer RQ1(a), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE. The form was used to facilitate the study of policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents through a set of 17 focused questions divided into five sub-sections. Each section addressed specific themes in order, along with the number of questions as follows: *Internationalization* (6), *English Language Policy* (5), *English as a Global Language* (3), *Language Support* (1), and *Assessment/ Evaluation* (2).

3.3.2.1.2 Internationalization practices document review form. The form (Appendix S) was developed to answer RQ1(b), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. The form guided the review of the selected HEIs' documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebooks, etc. of EMI programs and the SFLs) through a set of 22 questions divided into seven sub-sections. Each section addressed specific themes in order along with the number of questions as follows: *Internationalization* (5), *English Language Policy* (6), *English as a Global Language* (3), *Course Content/Focus* (1), *ELT Materials* (3), *Assessment/ Evaluation* (2) and *Language Support* (2).

3.3.2.1.3 Global citizenship identity policy document review form. The form (Appendix T) was constructed to answer RQ3(a), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE. The form was used to facilitate the study of policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents through a set of 7 focused questions divided into two sub-sections. Each

section addressed specific themes in order, along with the number of questions as follows: *Global Citizenship* (3) and *Global Citizenship Policy* (4).

3.3.2.1.4 Global citizenship identity practices document review form. The form (Appendix U) was constructed to answer RQ3(b), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in GCI in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. The form guided the review of the selected universities' documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebooks, etc.) related to the EMI programs and the SFLs through 13 questions divided into six sub-sections. Each section addressed specific focuses in order, along with the number of questions as follows: *Global Citizenship* (3), *Global Citizenship Policy* (4), *Course Content/Focus* (1), *Materials* (3), *Integration of Global Citizenship* (1), and *Assessment/ Evaluation* (1).

3.3.2.2 Open-ended questionnaires. Open-ended questionnaires, "facilitating a deeper exploration of the research topic by allowing participants to articulate their responses freely […] by reflecting on their subjective experiences" (Kvale, 1996, p. 132), were employed to elicit participants' perceptions, defined as the process through which individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences (Given, 2008), in line with the study's focus areas as part of the data collection process. Following the documentation, the administrative and academic staff were asked to complete two open-ended questionnaires focusing on two areas of interest to provide a backup for the data collected for RQ1(b) and RQ3(b). Using open-ended questionnaires was crucial in the current research as they provide rich qualitative data that closed-ended questions often miss (Burgess, 1984, p. 118). In that sense, data collected through document review forms regarding the HEIs' practices of the research interest were supported by open-ended questionnaires. This approach was applied to "capture the subjective meanings that participants attach to their experiences" (Denzin, 1978, p. 45) and enable a robust and rich data set for the analysis.

3.3.2.2.1 Internationalization practices open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire (Appendix V) was developed as a supporting data collection tool to

answer RQ1(b), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. The form given to the administrative and teaching staff consisted of 11 focused questions that addressed the relevant research question. Each question was targeted to elicit comprehensive and reflective responses, with lines of space for research participants to write their answers. The questionnaire was available in English and Turkish to accommodate the participants' language preferences. The time allocated for the questionnaire was approximately 30-40 minutes.

3.3.2.2.2 Global citizenship identity practices open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire (Appendix W) was constructed as a supporting data collection tool to answer RQ3(b), aiming to reveal the perceived role of English in the GCI in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. The form given to the administrative and teaching staff consisted of 11 focused questions that addressed the relevant research question, and each question aimed to collect comprehensive and reflective responses, providing lines for participants' responses. The questionnaire was again offered in English and Turkish to cater to the participants' language preferences. The staff was expected to take the questionnaire in approximately 30-40 minutes.

3.3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews. Interviews "providing a rich and detailed set of data about perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and impressions of people in their own words" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 140) were utilized to capture participants' perceptions, which involve the interpretation and meaning-making of lived experiences within their personal and social contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The ones utilized in the current study were semi-structured in design, which allowed the researcher to construct "a balance between the rigidity of structured interviews and the unbounded nature of unstructured interviews" (McCracken, 1988, p. 21). In this respect, the interview framework incorporated both strong and weak focus approaches (Scott & Usher, 2011), with structured questions ensuring consistency across participants while allowing flexibility for unanticipated themes to emerge through open-ended discussions. Upon completing the questionnaires, the

staff were scheduled for a follow-up semi-structured interview to answer RQ2 and RQ4. Semi-structured interviews were vital as they enabled the researcher to steer the conversation (Merriam, 2009) and allowed the participants to express their perspectives while following a general guide (Shkedi, 2005). The adopted approach enabled the researcher to delve deeply and maintain flexibility (Kvale, 1996), gain contextual understanding (Burgess, 1984), and collect rich data (McCracken, 2003). The researcher created the interview forms by writing their own and adapting them from the reviewed studies. Field experts evaluated the interview forms, and a pilot study protocol was also completed for the interview questions. The finalized questions were constructed as easy to understand, short, and devoid of jargon (Kvale, 1996), truly open-ended (Patton, 1987), and from general to specific (Cohen & Manion, 1994) to achieve better comprehensibility.

3.3.2.3.1 Internationalization perceptions interview form. The form (Appendix X) was constructed to answer RQ2, aiming to reveal how administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization. The form was only available to the researcher, and the participants had yet to see the questions. There were 12 structured questions, but the number of questions varied in each unique conversation. The semi-structured nature of the questions enabled the researcher "to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). Accordingly, the researcher adapted and probed further based on the participants' responses (Shkedi, 2005).

3.3.2.3.2 Global citizenship identity perceptions interview form. The form (Appendix Y) was constructed to answer RQ4, aiming to reveal how administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents in shaping the GCI within the context of internationalization. Again, the form was only available to the researcher, and the participants had not seen the questions. There were 12 structured questions, but the number of questions varied in each unique conversation. Accordingly, the participants' responses determined the flow of the interviews.

3.3.3 Data collection procedures. The data collection procedure for this research, involving eleven universities across Türkiye, was a meticulously constructed effort that required extensive planning and coordination. The data collection began with developing a comprehensive work plan aligned with the research objectives. As previously mentioned, the researcher identified the selected universities based on an internationalization-themed report with reference to the Turkish CoHE (2017a), which initially designated 20 universities as pilot institutions to support internationalization. Because of various challenges, such as non-responses and refusals from some institutions, 11 out of 20 participated in the current research. The fact that some of the universities were situated in different cities added a layer of complexity to the work itself.

A detailed timeline was created to effectively manage the data collection procedure, logically scheduling on-site visits to each city to optimize travel and eliminate downtime. While planning the data collection sessions, the researcher carefully considered academic calendars, local holidays, and the availability of the participants to ensure a smooth procedure. Budgeting was also essential, as the researcher covered all travel expenses, accommodation, and additional costs. After obtaining the research permit to travel across Türkiye from their institution, the researcher established the schedule for data collection. Initial contact was made with administrators or contact persons from the selected universities, followed by persistent follow-up to confirm appointments and ensure participant access. The initial contact consisted of detailed information about the research, the objectives, the methods, and the significance of the participation of the universities.

The data collection procedure began upon arrival in each city. The researcher arrived a day before or on the same day as the appointments. Various qualitative data collection methods were utilized during the visit, including document collection, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with administrative and academic staff and students to gather detailed insights into their perceptions, aligning with the research's objectives. At the same time, open-ended questionnaires and document collection enabled the researcher to gain a contextual understanding of universities' institutional policies and practices.

The first stage of the data collection procedure was the collection of documents involving context-specific regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers,

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instructional materials, and coursebooks (or sample pages) from universities' EMI programs and the SFLs. Initially, the researcher requested access to these specified types of documents. To make the process easier, both physical and electronic formats were accepted. Upon receipt of documents, the researcher stored physical and electronic documents for data integrity and confidentiality. During the process, it was noted that some documents from certain institutions were unavailable. Additionally, some institutions expressed reluctance or declined to share the requested documents due to institutional policies or preferences. Where feasible, these gaps in the data were addressed by the researcher through the HEIs' websites, if possible. Despite these challenges, the document collection process remained robust to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the EMI programs and the SFLs.

Following the documentation, the administrative and academic staff were asked to complete two open-ended questionnaires focusing on two areas of interest: the role of English in *Internationalization* and *Global Citizenship Identity* practices. The researcher prepared detailed open-ended questionnaire guides to enable participants to respond at their ease. Each questionnaire included 11 questions addressing the issues mentioned above. Each question was targeted to elicit comprehensive and reflective responses, with lines of space for research participants to write their answers. The questionnaire was available in English and Turkish to accommodate the participants' language preferences, allowing them to respond in the language they were most comfortable with. The staff was advised to allocate approximately 30-40 minutes to complete each questionnaire. Upon completion of the questionnaires, the staff were scheduled for a follow-up semi-structured interview to elaborate on the insights provided in their answers and reveal their perceptions regarding the mentioned issues. The submission of the questionnaires facilitated an in-depth collection of qualitative data, contributing to a better understanding of the institutional policies and practices within the EMI programs and the SFLs.

Semi-structured interviews were another critical component of the data collection procedure. The interviews with the administrative and academic staff and students were designed to gather in-depth data regarding how students and academic staff in Turkish universities perceived the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization and GCI. Each interview was conducted one-on-one with each

participant to facilitate a focused and personalized interview experience. The interviews were conducted in a conducive environment, typically in a quiet, comfortable office room or class that provided privacy, thus fostering a relaxed and open atmosphere conducive to candid responses (Seidman, 2013). All the participants had the option to participate in the interviews in either Turkish or English, depending on their language preference, which ensured clarity and comfort. The length of the interviews varied considerably, ranging from 22 minutes to 117 minutes, reflecting the depth of the responses. This variability in interview length allowed the researcher to be flexible in exploring emerging topics and gave participants enough time to express their thoughts (Patton, 2015). Additional questions were asked during the interviews, especially when the researcher needed further details to interpret the interviewee's responses better. Besides, as the main aim and scope of the current study were about the participants' own experiences, the researcher mindfully avoided asking any sensitive questions that might make the participants feel restless and avoid responding (Cicourel, 1964). Finally, the interviewees were allowed to ask questions or raise on-topic issues if they would like to. Interviews were recorded with the consent of participants and transcribed verbatim for thorough analysis to capture the nuances of their experiences and perceptions (Creswell, 2014). Detailed notes were also taken to document key themes of participants' responses. The data were shared with the participants, allowing them to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which provided an additional layer of credibility to the data (Creswell, 2014). The interview protocol ensured a comprehensive understanding of the practices of the stakeholders within the EMI programs and the SFLs.

Upon completion of the data collection sessions, the researcher meticulously organized and secured all collected data, including physical and electronic documents, open-ended questionnaires, and transcription and translation of the semi-structured interviews. Data was backed up to prevent data loss. Any necessary follow-up contact with the participants was conducted to ensure the completion and accuracy of the collected data.

Overall, the data collection procedure in this study was complex and iterative. However, the researcher did their best to ensure the careful planning, flexible implementation, and thorough management required for this study. It resulted in

gathering rich, qualitative insights from diverse participants across eleven universities and nine cities across Türkiye.

3.3.4 Data analysis. The data collection tools used in this research (e.g., document analysis review forms, open-ended questionnaires, and interview questions) served as guiding tools in the data collection process, facilitating a more selective and structured engagement with the material. While these instruments informed the selection and focus of the data, the thematic structure ultimately developed inductively from the data itself. Accordingly, the data analysis procedure utilized *Thematic Analysis*, employing a data-driven approach that allowed themes to emerge organically from the responses and textual materials. Before presenting information related to the data analysis procedure, the following table (Table 3) represents a glossary of terms frequently used in the analysis procedure:

Table 3

Key Terms in Data Analysis Procedures

Terms	Definitions
Code	"The most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63)
Category	"Broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" (Creswell, 2013, p. 186)
Theme	"An abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations" and "capturing and unifying the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole" (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000, p. 362)

After the data collection sessions, the researcher systematically and rigorously organized and classified the collected data to answer the four main research questions, including sub-questions (a) and (b) for the first question and sub-questions (a) and (b) for the third question. The analysis began with an immersive reading of the data set, ensuring a deep understanding of the participants' narratives and national and institutional contexts. Rather than relying on a pre-determined coding framework, the data were systematically examined for recurring concepts and meanings. As the researcher delved into the data, themes and patterns emerged, requiring an inductive approach to the coding. According to such a bottom-up approach responsive to the data, "Data builds concepts, hypotheses or theories rather

than deductively testing hypotheses" (Merriam, 2009, p. 15). Thereby, *Thematic Analysis*, referring to "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6), came to the stage as the themes were developed from the data. In this regard, coding was conducted in two cycles at this stage (Saldaña, 2012). For the first cycle, one of the elemental methods, *initial coding*, was applied for the provisional and tentative codes to emerge after the first code-checking (Saldaña, 2012). The second cycle necessitated coding strategies that "require such analytic skills as classifying, prioritizing, integrating, synthesizing, abstracting, conceptualizing, and theory building" (Saldaña, 2012, p. 58). Accordingly, *pattern coding* was employed to find patterns among generated codes regarding commonalities and similarities (Miles & Huberman, 1994) per the study's aim and scope. While some questions (e.g., 1a-1b, 3a-3b) are structurally interconnected, examining macro, meso, and micro-level dimensions, each dataset was analyzed independently. Thematic overlaps may be observed due to the nature of the data; however, all categories, themes, and sub-themes inductively emerged through an organic, data-driven process. In this regard, inductive thematic analysis is used to serve as a robust and adaptable analytical tool in the current research, ensuring that the emergent themes comprehensively reflect the complex and multifaceted role of English in Turkish higher education. The table (Table 4) on the following page presents detailed information regarding the preparation, organization, and reporting stages of the data analysis procedures described above. It outlines the research questions, principal data sets, procedures for preparing data for the analysis, and the analysis methods applied.

Table 4

Data Processing and Preparation for Analysis

Research Question	Principal Dataset	Data Preparation	Data Analysis
RQ1. What is the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities: a) In the macro-level policies of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE)?	Study of Turkish Council of Higher Education policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents	Document Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis
b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?	A study of documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebook, etc.) of universities, EMI programs, foreign language, and modern language departments	Document Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis
	An open-ended questionnaire administered to administrators and teaching staff	Open-ended Questionnaire Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2)	
RQ2. How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization?	Interviews with administrators, teaching staff, and students	Audio Recordings' Transfer to PC (By researcher) Turkish-English Transcriptions (By researcher) Transcription Language Check (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Linguist 1) Translation Check (By Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis

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Table 4 (cont'd)

Research Question	Principal Dataset	Data Procedure	Data Analysis
RQ3. What is the perceived role of English in Global Citizenship Identity: a) In the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE?	Study of Turkish Council of Higher Education policies, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents	Document Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis
b) In the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs?	A study of documents (regulations, directives, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebook, etc.) of universities, EMI programs, foreign language, and modern language departments An open-ended questionnaire administered to administrators and teaching staff	Document Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2) Open-ended Questionnaire Data Entry (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (Linguist 1) Translation Check (Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis
RQ.4 How do administrators, academic staff, and students enrolled in Turkish Higher Education perceive the role of English and its agents in shaping the Global Citizenship Identity within the context of internationalization?	Interviews with administrators, teaching staff, and students	Audio Recordings' Transfer to PC (By researcher) Turkish-English Transcriptions (By researcher) Transcription Language Check (By Researcher) Data Translation (Turkish to English) (By researcher) Translation Check (By Researcher) Translation Check (By Linguist 1) Translation Check (By Linguist 2)	Inductive Thematic Analysis

In qualitative research, the reliability of coding increases when multiple coders are involved (Krippendorff, 2018). Therefore, in the current research, the researcher was supported by two experts holding PhDs in English Language Education to show that the applied analyses are not subjective but grounded in systematically reliable processes (Nowell et al., 2017). As multiple coders were involved, calculating intercoder reliability became crucial (Neuendorf, 2017). In this context, *Krippendorff's Alpha*, a more robust measure of reliability than simple percentage agreement (Neuendorf, 2017), was used as more than two raters were involved in the coding procedure. When the consistency across coders was measured, the level of agreement yielded a score of .83, indicating a high level of consistency, as .80 or above is considered acceptable in the relevant literature (Krippendorff, 2018).

3.3.5 Credibility and trustworthiness. In qualitative research, four key criteria are typically used to ensure the trustworthiness of data: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The current research uses three distinct data sets: documents, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews- each required strategies to ensure the above-mentioned criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

The study ensured *credibility* through various strategies appropriate to the nature of each data set, with the aim of reinforcing the validity of the findings and the accuracy of interpretation. Inductive thematic analysis was independently conducted for interviews, open-ended questionnaires, and documents, allowing themes to emerge naturally based on participant narratives, institutional texts, and written responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the interview data, member checking was conducted by sending full transcripts back to participants to verify the accuracy of meanings and to provide clarification (Janesick, 2000; Patton, 2015). Given the large number of participants, about half were contacted, prioritizing those who had requested it to ensure that the analyses accurately reflected the meanings intended by the participants. For the open-ended questionnaires and practice-based documents, methodological triangulation was used to compare thematic alignments and divergences across the micro and meso levels of practices which supported the identification of convergences between stakeholder perspectives and institutional

documentation, thereby enhancing internal consistency and analytical depth (Denzin, 2017; Merriam, 2009).

Various strategies were implemented for *transferability*, aiming to enhance the contextual richness and applicability of the findings. First, in line with the principle of thick description (Geertz, 1973; Shkedi, 2005), detailed information was provided regarding the researcher's role, institutional contexts, participant profiles, and the processes of data collection and analysis. In particular, the purposive sampling method ensured the selection of participants with relevant knowledge and experience on the subject, while efforts toward the principle of maximum variation allowed for the inclusion of individuals with different participant roles (e.g., administrator, academic staff, or student), both home and international, within the study group (Patton, 2015; Palinkas et al., 2015). Furthermore, the incorporation of verbatim quotations enabled readers to assess the authenticity of interpretations and make contextual comparisons (Tracy, 2010). Together, these strategies provided a sufficient level of detail for assessing the transferability of the findings to similar educational or institutional contexts within higher education systems, further supported by a clear and transparent methodological account (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To ensure the study's *dependability*, each dataset was independently analyzed through inductive thematic analysis; accordingly, the codes and themes derived from the data were constructed based on the unique characteristics of each data source. Although the data sets were not merged during the analysis process, inter-coder agreement was assessed using the codes derived from all sources to conduct a cross–data set reliability check. *Krippendorff's Alpha* was calculated based on this combined corpus of codes, yielding a coefficient of .83, which reflects a high level of agreement across the entire coding process (Krippendorff, 2018), allowing for a unified reliability measure without compromising the data-set-specific analytical integrity. *Krippendorff's Alpha* was preferred over other measures (e.g., Cohen's Kappa), as it allows for more than two coders and accommodates various data types and missing values (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007).

Finally, in terms of *confirmability*, multifaceted strategies were employed to ensure analytic transparency and minimize researcher bias. This was achieved through ongoing peer debriefing (Shenton, 2004), during which regular consultation

sessions were held with the thesis advisor and two doctoral researchers specialized in the field of ELT, allowing for a critical review of the emerging codes, thematic patterns, and interpretive decisions. The presence of these consultations was considered to have made a significant contribution to the impartiality and robustness of the analysis process. In addition, an audit trail was maintained to systematically document methodological decisions, coding phases, and the theme construction process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, throughout the coding process, the researcher kept analytic memos to record evolving interpretations, questions and issues identified for further resolution, and theoretical reflections (Saldaña, 2016). All these methods- expert input, traceable documentation, and analytical reflections- were implemented with the aim of strengthening the confirmability of the study and positioning it on a solid foundation.

Overall, the procedures applied were exemplified above since similar processes were experienced across different data sets. Each data set derived from document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews followed a tailored but consistent approach to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as suggested by reputable scholars in the field of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These were used to illustrate how specific procedures were applied for the nature of each data set in the study.

3.4 Pilot Study (December 12-31, 2022)

Before the actual research, the pilot study was conducted with six participants (two administrators, two instructors, and two preparatory school students) enrolled at a state university during the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year and lasted three weeks. The pilot study aimed to assess the feasibility of the data collection tools, including document analysis forms, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interview questions, in generating relevant insights into the research context. The pilot study's participants were selected to create a representative sample of the expected participants who shared characteristics similar to those in the actual research itself. Before this process, ethical approval was taken from the Istanbul Medeniyet University Board of Scientific Research and Publishing Ethics (Appendix B). Besides, all necessary permissions were taken from Istanbul Medeniyet

University School of Foreign Languages (Appendix N). All ethical issues were considered during the process, and all participants were informed that their responses would be kept anonymous via a verbal protocol and written consent forms (Appendix O & P).

During the piloting, different procedures were conducted for different types of participants. Initially, both administrators and instructors received two types of open-ended questionnaires (Appendix V & W) to reveal the role of English in internationalization and GCI in the meso and micro-level practices of their institution. Additionally, the administrators were asked to submit specific documents (regulations, directives, strategy reports, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, coursebooks, etc.) that reveal the perceived role of English in the internalization and GCI within meso and micro-level practices. They were then invited to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews (Appendix X & Y), expressing their views on the perceived role of English and its agents in internationalization and shaping GCI in this context. On the other hand, the students were only asked to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews and follow the same interview protocol.

For the administration of the piloting, no specific time was allocated to answer both open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and all participants were free to take their time answering the verbal and written questions. In line with these, the piloting procedure lasted three weeks, including completing four open-ended questionnaires and six participant interviews. To this end, some technical and timing issues for future experimentation were eliminated thanks to the pilot study. Additionally, it gave the researcher invaluable insight into the required procedures and effective ways to collect data that were most convenient for the participants.

3.4.1 Pilot study implementation process. As indicated beforehand, initially, the researcher applied for permission from the institution to pilot the questionnaires and interview questions. After getting the required official approvals, the pilot study procedure began. The implementation period of the piloting study was planned to last for a week. However, the piloting lasted for three weeks because of the workload of participating administrators and instructors. Within this process, six participants (two administrators, two instructors, and two preparatory school students) took part in the pilot study (Table 10).

Table 5

Pilot Study Participant Profile

Code	Age	Gender	Nationality	Title	Ed. Level	Dept.	Empl.
P1	59	M	Turkish	Professor	PhD	ELT	Full-time
P2	39	F	Turkish	Assistant Professor	PhD	ELT	Full-time
P3	35	F	Turkish	Instructor	MA	ELT	Full-time
P4	32	F	Turkish	Instructor	MA	ELT	Full-time
P5	18	F	Turkish	Student	PYP	Molecular Biology & Genetics	-
P6	18	F	Turkish	Student	PYP	Molecular Biology & Genetics	-

3.4.2 Procedure. *Week 1 (December 12-18, 2022):* After official approvals, open-ended questionnaires were administered to administrators and instructors. The questionnaires were sent online, and the participants were informed about the research aim, questionnaire procedure, and follow-up interviews. Both English and Turkish versions of the questionnaires were sent, and the interviewees completed the questionnaires in Turkish. No specific time was allocated for answering the open-ended questionnaires; however, participants were asked to take notes on their time to complete the questionnaires. The replies were sent online, and the time and place for the follow-up interviews were scheduled. Additionally, the administrators were asked to provide information in specific documents such as regulations, directives, strategy reports, lesson plans, exam papers, materials, and coursebooks. The researcher was directed to the institution's website to access documents such as strategy reports, coursebooks, and sample exam papers. Furthermore, the researcher was provided with information about the coursebook used at the preparatory school, and a sample coursebook was given for the researcher's use. On the other hand, the researcher was not allowed to examine actual exam papers for test security reasons. Instead, the researcher was provided with sample exam papers available on the institution's website.

In the same week, face-to-face interviews were conducted with two voluntary students within the school campus at their convenience. At first, the students were

asked to give informed consent for audio recording and transcription of the interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Turkish, per the interviewees' request. During the interview sessions, the researcher asked students a series of questions about how they view the role of English and its agents in relation to internationalization, as well as how they perceive the role of English in shaping GCI within that context. During the interviews, participants were asked to be in an empty classroom at pre-arranged times. One student's interview lasted 30 minutes, while the other lasted only 15 minutes. Even though all the interviews were audio-recorded, the researcher also took notes during the interviews to capture significant informal utterances, surprising or interesting points, and repetitive themes. Additional questions were posed during the interviews, mainly when the researcher required further details to better understand the interviewee's responses and enhance the data's richness. Finally, the interviewees were allowed to ask questions or raise on-topic issues, but no additional questions were asked.

Week 2 (December 19-25, 2022): The second week comprised face-to-face interviews with two voluntary instructors at their convenience. The entire interview protocol was repeated for the instructors. The interviews were again conducted in Turkish, per the interviewees' request. In interview sessions, the researcher asked questions regarding how English language learning and teaching activities were planned at the meso and micro level by their university, how they view the role of English and its agents in relation to internationalization, as well as how they perceive the role of English in shaping GCI within that context. Interviews in semi-structured design lasted for almost an hour per participant. The interviewees asked no additional questions.

Week 3 (December 26-31, 2022): Face-to-face interviews were conducted with two voluntary administrators during the final week of the pilot study at their convenience within the school campus. The same interview procedures within the first and second weeks were repeated. Unlike the others, one of the administrators requested to conduct interviews on two different days. The total amount of time for both interviews was 72 minutes. On the other hand, the other administrator completed the interview within one and a half hours. In interview sessions, they were also asked questions regarding how English language learning and teaching activities are planned at the meso and micro level by their university, how they view the role

of English and its agents in relation to internationalization, as well as how they perceive the role of English in shaping GCI within that context. The interviewees asked no additional questions.

3.4.3 The results of the pilot study. This section outlines the modifications implemented for the main study based on the insights gained from the pilot study. It also provides information about the codes that emerged during the analysis of the pilot data. These adjustments and emerging codes contributed to refining the study's methodological framework and enhancing the overall data collection process.

3.4.3.1 Methodological refinements for the main study. The primary significance of the pilot study for the researcher was to refine strategies for the main study phase, leading to a series of refinements and adjustments based on its outcomes. First, the researcher recognized the need to refine the participant selection criteria, as the pilot group lacked representation from international participants. Therefore, to enhance the quality of data generation, the researcher prioritized this issue as a key criterion for participant selection in the main study, ensuring greater diversity among participants. Subsequently, revisions were made to the questions in the open-ended questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews in response to issues identified during the pilot study. Accordingly, some questions were rephrased and sequentially aligned, and topical probes were made to interpret the data better. Thereby, the interview framework was revisited, and two additional questions were added to the interview framework to allow for the quality of data and more profound responses from the participants. Also, two interview questions were deleted to avoid repetition. Next, the duration of the interviews was carefully evaluated, as some participants exhibited signs of fatigue right after completing two consecutive sessions. Consequently, it was determined that, for the main study, interviews addressing different topics should be conducted on separate days to ensure participant engagement and data quality. Furthermore, the pilot study highlighted that a single day was insufficient for data collection at each institution, necessitating at least two consecutive days for the main study. Finally, demographic questions were incorporated into the interview protocol to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the participant profile.

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3.4.3.2 Emerging codes from the data. Emergent codes are insights derived from the reported experiences of research participants, detected through interactive reading and a process of abstraction, and result in creating categories from complex data (William, 2008). The current research dealt with emergent categories from the data, so the pilot study's findings were not directly related to the main research. Still, some gave an idea of the categories that may emerge during the main study.

3.4.4 Conclusion. This small-scale pilot study was conducted to assess the feasibility of the data collection tools, including document analysis forms, open-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interview questions, in generating relevant insights into the research context. As a result of the piloting process, several refinements and adjustments were made to enhance the tools and procedures. Notably, the pilot study enabled the researcher to refine interviewing techniques and further improve the interview guide. Overall, the data collection tools proved appropriate for the research objectives, and the methodology remained consistent for the main study.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

Conducting a collective case study dissertation across 11 universities in 9 cities across Türkiye, within a defined time frame, with 85 participants, presented several limitations and required carefully planned strategies. Within the framework of the research, the on-site visits, spanning two months, employed document analysis, interviews, and open-ended questionnaires as primary data collection methods. These methodological choices and the study's geographic and temporal scope necessitated addressing some challenges and ensuring the consistency and depth of the data collected.

First, the extensive geographical scope of the research introduced variability due to differences in academic contexts, which could affect the findings' generalizability (Yin, 2018). Even though qualitative case studies, which typically prioritize depth and context over generalizability, may not produce generalizable findings, their use offers valuable, context-specific knowledge that can inform future research and practice (Stake, 2006). Still, the researcher tried to mitigate it by

developing a robust qualitative research design considering contextual factors and carefully analyzing variations (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Second, one of the research's notable limitations was the extended period to obtain permits from 20 pilot universities, which took significantly longer than anticipated. This bureaucratic delay reduced the overall time available for the data collection procedure, limiting the period to just two months. While the time constraints underscore the necessity of meticulously planning administrative processes and securing approvals well in advance to allow sufficient time for comprehensive data collection and analysis in future research, bureaucratic challenges often remain beyond the control of researchers.

Next, although the researcher aimed to collect more robust contextual data by involving all the selected pilot universities listed in the Turkish CoHE report (2017a), for various reasons, such as including non-responses and refusals to participate, nine universities could not be included in the study as anticipated. These institutions were excluded from the scope of the study's data. The universities omitted from the study are as follows:

- Ankara University
- Dokuz Eylül University
- Erciyes University
- Hacettepe University
- Istanbul University
- Istanbul Technical University
- Karadeniz Technical University
- Middle East Technical University
- Yıldız Technical University

Then, challenges arose despite careful planning for sampling and selecting participants, especially in recruiting international participants. The researcher needed help finding and engaging international staff and students, which required additional effort. In that sense, the researcher tried to reach international participants through existing networks and personal contacts. Nevertheless, the final sample of international participants was smaller than anticipated.

Afterward, the methodological tools used in the research, document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and interviews, posed specific challenges. During the

documentation process, some documents from certain institutions were unavailable. Also, some institutions expressed reluctance or declined to share the requested documents due to institutional policies or preferences. That is why, as suggested by Bowen, by cross-referencing various sources to ensure comprehensive data coverage (2009), the researcher managed these gaps in the data through other resources, if possible. As for open-ended questionnaires, the researcher faced issues such as low response rates or incomplete answers. To mitigate these challenges, the researcher used follow-up reminders (Dillman et al., 2014). Nevertheless, despite all reminder emails and messages, some administrative and academic staff participants did not send the completed open-ended questionnaires. When it comes to the interviews, as they are generally considered open to interview bias or misinterpretation, the researcher tried to minimize it by employing a rigorous and standardized interview protocol (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In that sense, the researcher preserved the semi-structured design of the interviews by asking a set of questions in the same order to maintain the focus of the research objectives. Also, as mentioned above, the researcher conducted a small-scale pilot study to test the interview protocol, refine questions, identify potential biases, and adjust the protocol in line with the given feedback (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, the researcher used a standard method to uniformly record research data obtained from the interviews (Silverman, 2016).

Finally, the analysis procedure also had some limitations. One significant challenge of the diverse sources and data types was the potential risk of inconsistent interpretation. Document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and interviews are different types of data sources, and that is why there were difficulties in ensuring consistency and coherence across different cases, complicating the practical synthesis of findings (Stake, 2006). To address this limitation, the researcher utilized MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software. The software enabled the researcher to manage this large volume of data efficiently by ensuring a comprehensive and reliable synthesis of the diverse data collected (Kuckartz, 2014). In addition to the limitations caused by involving different data sets, such as document analysis, open-ended questionnaires, and interviews, the research faced significant delays due to the vast volume of the data. Procedures like preparing for the data analysis by transcribing and translating, data confirmation, expert opinion, and the actual data

analysis took longer than initially anticipated. To mitigate the process, the researcher benefited from some software: For transcriptions, the researcher used Microsoft 365's transcription feature. Three advanced AI language models- Grammarly, DeepL, and ChatGPT- were employed to translate the empirical data into English. The tools were utilized for the translation of (a) the verbatim transcriptions of interviews conducted with 85 participants, b) selected illustrative excerpts drawn from over 120 institutional documents concerning practices and 24 documents related to policies, and c) the responses provided by 22 staff participants to open-ended questionnaires. However, the researcher checked each translation verbatim and then sent it to linguists for confirmation. Finally, to organize, code, and categorize data, the researcher used the software MAXQDA. By using the software mentioned earlier, the researcher tried to reduce the time constraints and enhance the efficiency of data handling and analysis.

Chapter 4

Findings

As outlined in Chapter 3, which details the methodological framework of the study, Chapter 4 presents the findings derived from the analysis of multiple qualitative data sources. The chapter explores four research questions, two of which have sub-questions, focusing on the role of English in Turkish higher education, particularly regarding internationalization and GCI. While some questions (e.g., 1a-1b, 3a-3b) are structurally interconnected- examining macro, meso, and micro-level dimensions- each data set was analyzed independently. Thematic overlaps may be observed due to the nature of the data; however, all categories, themes, and sub-themes inductively emerged through an organic, data-driven process. The findings are reported in line with the research questions and supported with illustrative excerpts where relevant.

4.1 The Perceived Role of English in the Internationalization of HEIs in the Macro-Level Policies of the Turkish CoHE (RQ1a)

This section reports the findings related to RQ1a, investigating the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the macro-level policy discourse of the Turkish CoHE. As indicated in Chapter 3, the data were gathered through the collection of 24 policy documents, including policy texts, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents. The data, analyzed through an inductive thematic approach, revealed not predetermined but organically emerging categories from repeated patterns and discursive constructions within the documents. The analysis aimed to reveal how English is positioned, legitimized, and framed regarding the connection with internationalization at the policy level.

Eight overarching categories emerged from the analysis of data collected through policy documents: *Political Considerations*, *Ideological Considerations*, *Epistemological Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations*, *Socio-Cultural Considerations*, *Financial/ Economic Considerations*, *Ethical Considerations*, and *Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations*. An overview of the categories, themes, and sub-themes derived from the data analysis related to RQ1a is presented in Table

6 below, detailed by the statements retrieved from the policy documents that map out the higher education landscape in Türkiye.

Table 6

English in Macro-Level Internationalization Policies of the Turkish CoHE

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Political Considerations	1. English Shaping Türkiye's International/ Internationalization Policies	1.1 English as a Policy Instrument for Higher Education Diplomacy and Global Engagement
		1.2 English as a Strategic Tool for Higher Education Internationalization
		1.3 English as a Means of Aligning Turkish Higher Education with European Quality Assurance Standards and International Norms
		1.4 English as a Medium Positioning Türkiye as a Global Higher Education Hub
		1.5 English as a Tool for Global Visibility and Recognition
Ideological Considerations	2. English Impacting National Ideologies	2.1 English as a Legally Regulated Medium of Instruction within the Framework of National Language Policies
		2.2 English as a Mediator Between National Identity and Globalization
Epistemological Considerations	3. English Shaping Knowledge Production and Epistemologies	3.1 English as a Standard for Academic Excellence and Research Innovation
		3.2 English as a Source of Academic Innovation and Global Knowledge Production
Sociolinguistic Considerations	4. English Shaping Linguistic Hierarchies and Multilingual Practices	4.1 English as a Lingua Franca in Turkish Higher Education
		4.2 English as a Native-Speaker-Oriented Standard
		4.3 English as a Challenge to Türkiye's Monolingual Ideology

Table 6 (cont'd)

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Socio-Cultural Considerations	5. English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange	5.1 English as a Tool for Türkiye's Soft Power and International Influence
		5.2 English as a Medium for Cultural Exchange and Cross-Cultural Dialogue
Financial/ Economic Considerations	6. English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth	6.1 English as a Financial Asset in Higher Education
		6.1.1 English as a Driver of Economic Growth Through International Student Enrollment
		6.1.2 English as a Driver of Economic Growth Through a Skilled International Workforce
		6.2 English as a Key to Global Market Competitiveness
Ethical Considerations	7. English Impacting Educational Equity and Access	7.1 English as a Policy Mandate for Fair Language Education
Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations	8. English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices	8.1 English as a Core Component of Foreign Language Educational Reform and International Standards
		8.2 English as a Mandatory and Monitored Component in Higher Education Curricula
		8.3 English as an Academic and Professional Competency
		8.3.1 English as a Core Language Competency
		8.3.2 English as a Field-Specific Professional Competency
		8.4 English as a Benchmark for Higher Education Standards and Accreditation
		8.5 English as a Prerequisite and Qualification Standard for Foreign Language Programs
		8.6 English as a Certified Teaching Qualification with Native-Standard Norms
		8.7 English as a Standard Criterion in National and Higher-Level Assessments

4.1.1 Category 1: Political considerations. The first emergent category pertains to *Political Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Türkiye's International/ Internationalization Policies*- has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the political considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.1.1 Theme 1: English shaping Türkiye's international/ internationalization policies. The main theme that emerged under the *Political Considerations* is *English Shaping Türkiye's International/ Internationalization Policies*. The data revealed that the perceived role of English in shaping Türkiye's internationalization policies is multifaceted in the policy documents, as there appeared five sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping Türkiye's International/ Internationalization Policies: English as a Policy Instrument for Higher Education Diplomacy and Global Engagement, English as a Strategic Tool for Higher Education Internationalization, English as a Means of Aligning Turkish Higher Education with European Quality Assurance Standards and International Norms, English as a Medium Positioning Türkiye as a Global Higher Education Hub,* and *English as a Tool for Global Visibility and Recognition.*

4.1.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a policy instrument for higher education diplomacy and global engagement. The document analysis revealed that English is deeply embedded in Türkiye's higher education policies as a diplomatic tool to enhance global collaborations and partnerships, as well as to establish international academic networks. Consequently, the use of English as a common language in agreements, global collaborations, and cooperation serves as a diplomatic asset in higher education diplomacy, underscoring Türkiye's efforts to remain integrated into global education frameworks:

> "Programs offering instruction in foreign languages play a crucial role in attracting international students. It is evident that for the effective implementation of the project aimed at meeting other countries' needs for academic staff, the number of English-taught programs at the master's and doctoral levels must be increased. To achieve this goal, a series of action plans will be developed to provide special support to universities selected as

pilots for internationalization. Reaching Türkiye's target of achieving a graduate student ratio of approximately 45%—similar to the ratio of international graduate students in higher education institutions in developed countries—is also essential to this endeavor." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 61)

"In line with our higher education goals and vision, the CoHE is establishing a foundation for student and faculty mobility by signing agreements and memorandums of understanding with ministers or heads of higher education councils responsible for higher education in various countries. Visits and meetings are also conducted for this purpose. The aim is to facilitate more student and faculty exchanges, initiate joint programs, appoint co-advisors for graduate theses on topics or fields of mutual interest, and carry out collaborative projects to further strengthen our relations. All our external relations and visits are planned with specific objectives, and the agreements signed establish an institutional framework for cooperation in higher education between countries." (CoHE, 2021 [D13], p. 28)

"Public, cultural and educational diplomacy activities will be deepened and effective studies will be carried out to promote Türkiye in international public opinion in order to increase Türkiye's international visibility and strengthen its image." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023 [D22], p. 247)

4.1.1.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: English as a strategic tool for higher education internationalization. Although it is not often explicitly mentioned in most documents, the data analysis revealed that English has been strategically positioned as a crucial component of Türkiye's higher education internationalization policies. In this regard, the policies often point to the importance of EMI in promoting the internationalization of higher education through collaboration and mobility on an international scale. Furthermore, Türkiye's efforts to expand English-medium programs are viewed in the light of its vision for global engagement, aiming at attracting international bodies, both academic staff and students, to its HEIs. Moreover, the documents reveal that English serves as a standard linguistic medium in most programs, aiming to foster global research cooperation and knowledge exchange. Considering these, the document analysis points to the fact that in Turkish higher education policies, English is positioned not merely as a language but also as a policy mechanism driving internationalization:

"To achieve these strategic objectives and enhance the recognition and quality of our universities, the New CoHE aims to increase the number of

programs offered in foreign languages over the five-year period ending with the 2021-2022 academic year. (p.2) [...] In addressing the current state of internationalization in higher education, a SWOT analysis has been conducted to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. [...] Weaknesses: […] 2. Insufficiency of the number of programs in a foreign language; […] 6. Insufficiency of academic and administrative personnel who speak foreign languages; […] 7. Lack of information in a foreign language." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 43)

"Study in Türkiye" is a new website (www.studyinturkiye.gov.tr/) launched by the Council of Higher Education to inform international students about the Turkish higher education system. Through the search engine developed on this site, students can find the most suitable university for them based on criteria such as language of instruction, type of education, city, or field of study. In addition to general information about the Turkish higher education system, the website provides details on scholarships, international student experiences, living conditions, Turkish culture, and more. The website is available in Turkish and English, with Arabic to be added soon. [...]" (CoHE, 2019, [D15])

4.1.1.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: English as a means of aligning Turkish higher education with European quality assurance standards and international norms. As previously mentioned, Türkiye's efforts to remain integrated into global education frameworks require alignment with European and global education systems, including the Bologna Process, Erasmus+ exchange programs, and joint degree initiatives. In this regard, the documents reveal that English is systematically embedded in all aspects of quality in higher education, ranging from faculty hiring to research output and from student admissions to institutional evaluations, serving as a benchmark for quality:

"Since joining the Bologna Process in 2001, our higher education system has integrated into the European Higher Education Area, demonstrating full participation in the European Commission's educational programs, benefiting from exchange programs at various levels, promoting joint research projects and joint degree programs, and significantly increasing the number of international students and faculty members each year. This has allowed Turkish higher education to accumulate a positive track record in internationalization." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 47)

"In the process of globalization in higher education, the number of international students has increased with efforts to ensure the international

integration of the higher education system. With the registration of the Higher Education Quality Council as a European Higher Education Quality Assurance Registry, the Turkish higher education system has been harmonized with the quality definitions of the European Higher Education Area, and quality qualifications in the higher education system have been improved by closely following global trends and technological developments. In addition, investments for the qualitative transformation of universities, especially research infrastructures, were accelerated by giving special importance to research-oriented specialization. In 2018, the number of international students increased from 125 thousand to 302 thousand." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 40; 2021, [D23], p. 210)

4.1.1.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: English as a medium positioning Türkiye as a global higher education hub. The policy documents frequently highlight Türkiye's efforts to transform itself into a global center for higher education. In this context, English is strategically embedded into internationalization policies and occupies a central position in achieving Türkiye's goal of attaining global status. Accordingly, the initiatives to expand EMI programs are seen as closely linked to Türkiye's vision for global recognition and visibility. In this regard, the policies emphasize the necessity of EMI programs as a branding tool, aiming to attract international bodies and enhance global competitiveness:

> "Strategic Aim and Objectives: […] Aim 1. To make Türkiye a hub of attraction in the field of higher education: […] 1.8 Increasing the number of educational programs in foreign languages; […] 1.9 Increasing the capacity of academics to teach in foreign languages." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 52)

> "In line with global developments in the field of internationalization, the Turkish higher education system has also seen significant progress in recent years. Various strategies are being developed to make the Turkish higher education system an international hub, attracting more students and faculty from a wider range of countries, while policies are being implemented to maintain robust internationalization dynamics. Key initiatives strengthening this process include the Bologna Process, Erasmus and Erasmus+ programs, Türkiye Scholarships, the Mevlana Exchange Program, Joint Degree programs, the Project-Based International Exchange Program, the "Study in Türkiye" project, the TURQUAS Project, the School Recognition and Equivalence Regulation, extending the stay of doctoral graduates in Türkiye, and the Council of Higher Education's (CoHE) introduction of scholarships for international students." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 25)

4.1.1.1.5 Sub-theme 1.5: English as a tool for global visibility and recognition.
Building on earlier visions for Türkiye, the country's efforts to sustain and expand EMI programs are seen as direct attempts to enhance its global visibility, thereby reinforcing its standing in international university rankings. In this context, the ability to teach, publish, and engage in research in English is often a prerequisite for global recognition, making English a de facto requirement for global academic engagement:

> "SWOT Analysis– Dimensions– Recognition and Collaboration at National and International Levels– [...] Having an English version of the THEQC website." (THEQC, 2024, [D20], p. 48)

> "THEQC's social media accounts are actively used as an effective tool for communication with the public and stakeholders. By the end of 2022, the number of Twitter followers reached 17,419, marking a 22% increase compared to the previous year. The English-language Twitter account, launched in 2020 alongside the Turkish THEQC account to enhance international visibility, has 705 followers. Additionally, in 2022, the Twitter account received the blue checkmark, signifying verification. The LinkedIn account, which provides content in both Turkish and English, reached 2,089 followers, achieving a 100% increase compared to the previous year. On YouTube, the subscriber count reached 573 by the end of 2022. Since the end of 2021, an official Instagram account was created to increase reach to a younger target audience, and by the end of 2022, the Instagram account had 2,097 followers." (THEQC, 2022, [D16], p. 78)

> "The year 2020 saw significant developments for the THEQC (Turkish Higher Education Quality Council) in terms of internationalization efforts. One of the most important achievements of the year was THEQC's acceptance as a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). In addition, THEQC completed its full membership processes for the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG). These memberships, which have significantly contributed to THEQC's international visibility, are considered major successes toward the goal of establishing a robust quality assurance system that meets the needs of our country while engaging globally." (THEQC, 2022, [D16], p. 12)

4.1.2 Category 2: Ideological considerations. The second emergent category is *Ideological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Impacting National Ideologies*- has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the ideological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.2.1 Theme 2: English impacting national ideologies. The theme that emerged under the *Ideological Considerations* is *English Impacting National Ideologies*. There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Impacting National Ideologies: English as a Legally Regulated Medium of Instruction within the Framework of National Language Policies* and *English as a Mediator Between National Identity and Globalization.*

4.1.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1: English as a legally regulated medium of instruction within the framework of national language policies. The document analysis reveals that although English is widely used in Turkish higher education, it remains a heavily regulated medium of instruction under state policies. Accordingly, the documents explicitly state where, how, and to what extent English can be used in HEIs, ensuring that the use of English as a medium does not replace Turkish as the dominant language. In this context, the role of English is perceived as a regulated component rather than a freely expanding language in Turkish higher education, reflecting a policy of cautious engagement with English without weakening the national language and relevant policies:

> "ARTICLE 42– No language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institution of education. Foreign languages to be taught in institutions of education and the rules to be followed by schools conducting education in a foreign language shall be determined by law. The provisions of international treaties are reserved." (Republic of Türkiye, 1982, [D1], p. 40)

> "Article 44 – (Amended: 13/2/2011-6111/171 art.) b. In higher education institutions,[…] how foreign language proficiency will be acquired through preparatory classes or other means and how the level of foreign language knowledge will be measured, […] as well as other matters related to the continuation of education, are determined by the senates of higher education

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institutions in accordance with the basic principles set by the Higher Education Council on these matters." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

"Article 2 – a) (Amended: 30/7/2003-4963/23 art.) In educational institutions, no language other than Turkish can be taught or used as the mother tongue for Turkish citizens. However, special courses can be opened under the provisions of the Private Education Institutions Law No. 625 for the learning of different languages and dialects traditionally used in the daily lives of Turkish citizens; language courses for the same purpose can be established in these courses and other language courses. In these courses and classes, no instruction contrary to the fundamental characteristics of the Republic as specified in the Constitution, or to the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, may be conducted. The principles and procedures for the opening and inspection of these courses and lessons will be regulated by a regulation to be issued by the Ministry of National Education." (Republic of Türkiye, 1983a, [D5])

4.1.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2: English as a mediator between national identity and globalization. Based on the statements in the policy documents, the analysis reveals that Türkiye interacts with global academic networks with a dual commitment, strategically engaging in global academia through English while carefully managing its expansion to preserve and not to overshadow national identity:

"While the activities of international organizations in the field of education are increasing, the understanding of restructuring education policies on the basis of national values is strengthening." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 14)

4.1.3 Category 3: Epistemological considerations. Following the ideological considerations, the third emergent category relates to the *Epistemological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme, *English Shaping Knowledge Production and Epistemologies*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the epistemological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.3.1 Theme 3: English shaping knowledge production and epistemologies. The theme that emerged under the *Epistemological Considerations* is *English Shaping Knowledge Production and Epistemologies.* Two sub-themes appeared

under the main theme, *English Shaping Knowledge Production and Epistemologies: English as a Standard for Academic Excellence and Research Innovation* and *English as a Source of Academic Innovation and Global Knowledge Production.*

4.1.3.1.1 Sub-theme 3.1: English as a standard for academic excellence and research innovation. In Turkish higher education, English proficiency is often regarded as a benchmark for academic excellence in HEIs, influencing academic advancements, research evaluations, and rankings through the requirement to publish in internationally recognized, primarily English-language journals. Besides, the perceived role of English as a key determinant of academic status expands to faculty hiring and international research grants, which points to the role of English not just as an asset but a necessity for scholarly advancement in Turkish higher education:

> "ARTICLE 130- For the purpose of training manpower to meet the needs of the nation and the country under a system of contemporary education principles, universities comprising several units and having scientific autonomy and public legal personality shall be established by the State and by law, to educate at different levels based on secondary education, to conduct research, to issue publications, to act as consultants, and to serve the country and humanity." (Republic of Türkiye, 1982, [D1], p. 98)

> "The qualified researchers, conducting high-level scientific and technological studies abroad, will be supported to come to Türkiye and educate researchers within the scope of International Fellowship for Outstanding Researchers Programme." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2021, [D23], p. 110)

4.1.3.1.2 Sub-theme 3.2: English as a source of academic innovation and global knowledge production. The document analysis reveals that English is perceived and used as the major language of scholarly discourse, with internationalization efforts prioritizing English-language publications, programs, and projects, positioning English as an essential component of epistemic authority in global knowledge production:

> "While internationalization in academic staff constitutes a driving force for student-oriented internationalization, it also prepares the ground for sharing advanced technology and knowledge." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12])

> "With a quality and result-oriented management approach, it is aimed to create an innovative and competitive higher education system that will make

our universities a center of attraction for international students and academicians who are successful in their fields, aiming to train academic staff and qualified manpower with the competence to contribute to universal knowledge production in line with the needs of Türkiye." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 159)

4.1.4 Category 4: Sociolinguistic considerations. The fourth emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Linguistic Hierarchies and Multilingual Practices*-has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.4.1 Theme 4: English shaping linguistic hierarchies and multilingual practices. The theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping Linguistic Hierarchies and Multilingual Practices*. Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Linguistic Hierarchies and Multilingual Practices: English as a Lingua Franca in Turkish Higher Education*, *English as a Native-Speaker-Oriented Standard*, and *English as a Challenge to Türkiye's Monolingual Ideology*.

4.1.4.1.1 Sub-theme 4.1: English as a lingua franca in Turkish higher education. As mentioned earlier, the documents reveal that English is strategically embedded and employed as the primary medium for Türkiye's international academic communication in higher education diplomacy, instruction, collaborations, exchange programs, projects, and as the language used in high-impact international publications, highlighting English as an academic lingua franca.

4.1.4.1.2 Sub-theme 4.2: English as a native-speaker-oriented standard. The analyzed documents reveal that, although it is not explicitly stated, English in Turkish higher education is practiced as a standard oriented toward native speakers. As seen in criteria of student admissions, foreign faculty hiring, especially in PYPs, and academic assessments, the evaluation of English proficiency is often shaped by linguistic models based on inner-circle varieties of English (e.g., American or British English):

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"ARTICLE 6 – (3) The following students are exempt from the foreign language level determination and proficiency tests: a) Those who have completed their secondary education at educational institutions in a country where the determined instruction language is natively spoken, for at least the last three years." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"ARTICLE 8 – (7) In higher education institutions, courses given in a foreign language are provided by instructors proficient in that language. [...] a) The foreign language of instruction is the native language of the instructor. b) The instructor has completed their bachelor's or doctoral studies in a program taught in the language of instruction in a country where this language is spoken as a native language. c) In a country where the language of instruction is officially recognized, the instructor has worked and taught for at least one year (two semesters) as a faculty member at a higher education institution recognized by the Higher Education Council, has documented this officially, and no more than two years have passed since leaving that institution." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

4.1.4.1.3 Sub-theme 4.3: English as a challenge to Türkiye's monolingual ideology. As explicitly stated in the constitution, Türkiye's official language policy designates Turkish as the first and foremost language of governance, reflecting a strong commitment to monolingualism. However, the strategic role attributed to English regarding the country's internationalization goals, such as offering education in a foreign language and increasing the number of foreign language programs to attract international entities, shapes the state's approach to English as an implicitly embedded policy tool in a nation where language is deeply connected to national identity:

"ARTICLE 42– No language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institution of education. Foreign languages to be taught in institutions of education and the rules to be followed by schools conducting education in a foreign language shall be determined by law. The provisions of international treaties are reserved." (Republic of Türkiye, 1982, [D1], p. 40)

"ARTICLE 3– The State of Turkiye, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish. [...] IV. Irrevocable provisions [...] ARTICLE 4– The provision of Article 1 regarding the form of the State being a Republic, the characteristics of the Republic in Article 2, and the provisions of Article 3 shall not be amended, nor shall their amendment be proposed." (Republic of Türkiye, 1982, [D1], p. 17)

4.1.5 Category 5: Socio-cultural considerations. Beyond the sociolinguistic considerations explored in the previous category, the data also revealed that the documents point to socio-cultural considerations when English is used as a medium of their academic, professional, and social environments. In this regard, the fifth emergent category pertains to *Socio-Cultural Considerations* associated with English. One major theme, *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the socio-cultural considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.5.1 Theme 5: English impacting soft power and cultural exchange. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* is *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange: English as a Tool for Türkiye's Soft Power and International Influence* and *English as a Medium for Cultural Exchange and Cross-Cultural Dialogue:*

4.1.5.1.1 Sub-theme 5.1: English as a tool for Türkiye's soft power and international influence. The policy documents reveal that English is embedded in Turkish higher education policies as an implicit, strategically integrated tool to enhance its internationalization strategies aimed at strengthening its influence in international higher education. In this regard, by offering English-medium programs to attract international bodies and foster global academic collaboration and mobility, English is positioned not merely as a language but also as a soft power policy mechanism targeting cultural and intellectual influence:

> "Internationalization is defined as the approach in recent years where higher education, both nationally and internationally, embraces and internalizes principles such as solidarity, cooperation, and collaboration. It involves conducting internationalization efforts with an emphasis on social justice and global citizenship, producing new knowledge with these values at the forefront. […] Internationalization is one of the most effective tools used by higher education institutions to enhance intercultural dialogue, negotiation, and interaction, thereby fostering an outward orientation through the sharing of research and knowledge. International students and exchange programs also hold ideal value for the two-way approach of public diplomacy. Upon

assuming office, the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) immediately prioritized internationalization as one of its key objectives." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 5)

"Public, cultural and educational diplomacy activities will be deepened and effective studies will be carried out to promote Türkiye in international public opinion in order to increase Türkiye's international visibility and strengthen its image." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 247)

4.1.5.1.2 Sub-theme 5.2: English as a medium for cultural exchange and cross-cultural dialogue. According to the statements in the documents, the data indicates that Turkish HEIs engage with various academic and cultural communities through cross-cultural academic initiatives (e.g., exchange programs, international student mobility, and global research collaborations) in English. Furthermore, EMI programs are presented as a means to facilitate cultural dialogue, allowing students and faculty to interact beyond linguistic and national boundaries:

> "Key competences are the defined eight competences that each individual is supposed to achieve within the scope of life-long learning. […] 2) Communication in foreign languages: Shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue; and is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests." (VQA, 2015, [D21], p. 23)

4.1.6 Category 6: Financial/economic considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the sixth emergent category relates to the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to financial and economic opportunities, with the emergent theme—*English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth*—revealing the financial/ economic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.6.1 Theme 6: English shaping financial strategies and economic growth.
The theme that emerged under the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* is *English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth: English as a Financial Asset in Higher Education* and *English as a Key to Global Market Competitiveness.*

4.1.6.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1: English as a financial asset in higher education. The first sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth* is *English as a Financial Asset in Higher Education.* There appeared further sub-themes under the main sub-theme *English as a Financial Asset in Higher Education: English as a Driver of Economic Growth Through International Student Enrollment* and *English as a Driver of Economic Growth Through a Skilled International Workforce.*

6.1.1 English as a driver of economic growth through international student enrollment. As reported in the documents, international student enrollment plays a crucial role in Türkiye's economic strategy, with EMI programs serving as a primary factor in attracting and retaining international students. In this regard, Türkiye reveals plans to double the number of international students by a certain period, positioning EMI programs as a driver of economic growth:

> "Policies aimed at increasing the number of international students annually will be pursued, and efforts and initiatives by our higher education institutions in this regard will be supported. According to the five-year plan, action plans to increase the number of international graduate students at Turkish higher education institutions will be implemented, with the goal of doubling the current number of international graduate students in Türkiye by 2022. Assuming global student mobility reaches 8 million in 2022, the target is to raise the proportion of international students in Türkiye to 2.5% of the worldwide international student population." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 54)

> "On the other hand, becoming an attraction center in education and health will provide Türkiye the opportunity to benefit maximally from international mobility." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 10)

> "Calculation of Current Service Costs, Student Contributions, and Tuition Fees: Article 46 – (Amended: 13/2/2011-6111/172 art.) (a) Foreign students

are charged tuition fees for each semester, without distinction between first or second shift education. (b) Those who will be exempt from the student contribution or tuition fees, as well as the minimum tuition fees to be charged to foreign students, are determined by the decision of the President." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

6.1.2 English as a driver of economic growth through a skilled international workforce. The document analysis reveals that Türkiye values the presence of skilled international faculty and researchers who contribute to knowledge production, innovation, and economic development. Policies indicate that Türkiye aims to increase foreign faculty recruitment while also addressing issues of brain drain and international mobility. Furthermore, the existence of regulations governing foreign faculty hiring criteria, quotas, salaries, scales, and work permits reveals that English is regarded as a strategic asset in workforce policies:

> "It is undoubtedly true that enabling qualified international faculty members, researchers, and international students to work in our country and facilitating this process will make our higher education field more attractive, significantly contributing to the collective knowledge and development of the country. In this context, the International Workforce Law No. 6735, which came into effect as published in the Official Gazette on August 13, 2016, is considered a substantial contribution toward achieving our goals of becoming a center of attraction for skilled foreign labor." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 31)

> "Resource Allocation: Article 10 – (Additional paragraph: 18/6/2008-5772/1 art.) The amounts recorded as appropriations are primarily used to support the scientific research projects of higher education institutions, domestic and international faculty and student exchange programs, the training of faculty members and researchers domestically and abroad, and to strengthen the physical and human infrastructure of the Higher Education Council." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

4.1.6.1.2 Sub-theme 6.2: English as a key to global market competitiveness. The document analysis also reveals that Türkiye incorporates vocational and technical English instruction into its foreign language education to enhance graduate competitiveness within the global market. Accordingly, policies ensure that Turkish graduates are prepared for international career opportunities with the English education provided for vocational purposes:

"The education system aimed at improving foreign language skills will be strengthened, focusing particularly on curricula and teacher competence. [...] By providing education in foreign languages at international standards, students will acquire advanced reading, comprehension, speaking, and writing skills. [...] Vocational foreign language education will be emphasized in vocational and technical education." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

4.1.7 Category 7: Ethical considerations. The seventh emergent category relates to the *Ethical Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to issues such as equity and access, with the emergent theme- *English Impacting Educational Equity and Access*- revealing the ethical considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.7.1 Theme 7: English impacting educational equity and access. The theme that emerged under the Ethical Considerations is English Impacting Educational Equity and Access. One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, English Impacting Educational Equity and Access: English as a Policy Mandate for Fair Language Education.

4.1.7.1.1 Sub-theme 7.1: English as a policy mandate for fair language education. The document analysis reveals that policies regulating foreign language testing, preparatory programs, and academic mobility position English as a structural requirement to ensure fair language education in higher education:

"Foreign language education will begin at an earlier age; necessary measures will be taken to ensure that individuals learn at least one foreign language at a decent level." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 32)

"By providing education in foreign languages at international standards, students will acquire advanced reading, comprehension, speaking and writing skills." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

"National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye / 6. Level (Associate's) Qualifications/Competencies/ Communication and Social Competence/ - Monitor the developments in the field and communicate with peers by using a foreign language at least at a level of European Language Portfolio B1 General Level." (VQA, 2015, [D21])

However, the analysis also reveals that policy documents highlight structural deficiencies in foreign language education, including the insufficiency of foreign language programs, the lack of academic and administrative personnel proficient in foreign languages, and the absence of information available in a foreign language:

> "In addressing the current state of internationalization in higher education, a SWOT analysis has been conducted to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. [...] Weaknesses: [...] 2. Insufficiency of the number of programs in a foreign language; [...] 6. Insufficiency of academic and administrative personnel who speak foreign languages; [...] 7. Lack of information in a foreign language." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 43)

4.1.8 Category 8: Instructional/pedagogical considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived in terms of instructional/pedagogical policies and practices, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices-* revealing the instructional/pedagogical considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.1.8.1 Theme 8: English shaping national instructional policies and practices. The theme that emerged under the *Instructional*/ Pedagogical *Considerations* is *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices.* The data revealed that the perceived role of English in shaping Türkiye's *national instructional policies and practices* is multifaceted, as there appeared seven sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices: English as a Core Component of Foreign Language Educational Reform and International Standards, English as a Mandatory and Monitored Component in Higher Education Curricula, English as an Academic and Professional Competency, English as a Benchmark for Higher Education Standards and Accreditation, English as a Prerequisite and Qualification Standard for Foreign Language Programs, English as a Certified Teaching Qualification with Native-Standard Norms,* and *English as a Standard Criterion in National and Higher-Level Assessments.*

4.1.8.1.1 Sub-theme 8.1: English as a core component of foreign language educational reform and international standards. The document analysis shows that English has been central to foreign language education reforms in Türkiye over the past two decades. In this regard, the relevant policy documents reveal that English is not only viewed as a foreign language but also as a critical skill necessary for academic success, employment, and international mobility. At this point, D24 indicates that, while not explicitly specified as English, English takes precedence over foreign languages in higher education policies, reinforcing its status as the default foreign language even at the pre-higher education levels. Additionally, it is evident in the D21 that English proficiency is based on international competency standards, highlighting it as a requirement for integration into global academic and professional fields, which reveals that English is systematically embedded into educational reforms as a benchmark for global competitiveness. Furthermore, D22 (p. 164) refers to the expansion of EMI programs to align with global educational trends:

> "National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye / 6. Level (Associate's) Qualifications/Competencies/ Communication and Social Competence/ - Monitor the developments in the field and communicate with peers by using a foreign language at least at a level of European Language Portfolio B1 General Level." (VQA, 2015, [D21])

> "Foreign language education will begin at an earlier age; necessary measures will be taken to ensure that individuals learn at least one foreign language at a decent level." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 32)

> "By providing education in foreign languages at international standards, students will acquire advanced reading, comprehension, speaking, and writing skills." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

4.1.8.1.2 Sub-theme 8.2: English as a mandatory and monitored component in higher education curricula. The analysis of the documents reveals that English, strategically and systematically integrated into Turkish higher education, is reinforced by legal mandates requiring its inclusion in all university curricula. At this point, D2 (Article 5) reveals that English is established as a compulsory subject in all HEIs, regardless of primary language instruction. On the other hand, D6 outlines the regulatory framework for EMI programs, ensuring they adhere to quality control

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mechanisms, reflecting the role of English as an essential component of academic programs, with systematic oversight to maintain teaching and learning standards:

"ARTICLE 7 – (1) It can be determined through a separate mandatory foreign language exemption exam, as well as the proficiency and/or placement test specified in Article 6 of this Regulation, whether students enrolling for the first time in a higher education program where the instruction language is Turkish are exempt from the foreign language courses required under paragraph (1) of the first subsection of Article 5 of Law No. 2547. Students who do not meet the exemption conditions are required to take and pass these courses. (2) Mandatory foreign language courses are scheduled to last at least two semesters so as to meet the foreign language proficiency level envisaged for that level within the Framework of Qualifications of the Turkish Higher Education System. (3) Elective foreign language courses may be offered in subsequent semesters for students who are exempt from the mandatory foreign language courses or have taken and successfully completed these courses." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"ARTICLE 8 – (1) In higher education institutions, preparatory classes in a foreign language can be partially or fully conducted in undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate programs with the approval of the Senate and the Higher Education Council. These preparatory classes, following the protocol arranged between compulsory preparatory classes and the higher education institutions, may be recognized by another protocol approved by the Higher Education Council. [...] (3) The senates of higher education institutions determine the regulations related to gaining foreign language proficiency through preparatory classes or other means and measuring the level of foreign language knowledge. (4) In programs partially or entirely conducted in a foreign language: a) Attendance in the preparatory class is mandatory. b) Students who pass the foreign language proficiency and/or placement tests or are exempt from the test and have registered in pre-approved undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate programs are obliged to continue in the foreign language preparatory class. However, with the decision of the governing board of the higher education institution, continuation in the program can be made mandatory based on the successful completion of the exams set by the institution. c) Students who fail to successfully complete the preparatory class within one year will be disassociated from the program." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"ARTICLE 9 – (1) The quality of instruction conducted in a foreign language is monitored by the Higher Education Council. Based on the results of this inspection, the permission to conduct associate, bachelor's, or postgraduate

programs in a foreign language may be revoked by the decision of the Higher Education Council." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"Basic Principles: Article 5 – (i) (Amended: 29/5/1991 - 3747/1 art.) In higher education institutions, Atatürk's Principles and History of Reforms, Turkish language, foreign language, and occupational health and safety (in faculties that train graduates who can become occupational safety specialists according to the Occupational Health and Safety Law No. 6331 dated 20/6/2012) are mandatory courses. Additionally, one of the courses in physical education or fine arts may be offered as an elective. All of these courses are scheduled and implemented for at least two semesters." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

4.1.8.1.3 Sub-theme 8.3: English as an academic and professional competency. The third sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices* is *English as an Academic and Professional Competency.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main sub-theme *English as an Academic and Professional Competency: English as a Core Language Competency* and *English as a Field-Specific Professional Competency.*

8.3.1 English as a core language competency. As stated in the relevant documents, it is regulated that English is taught based on the four language skills:

"By providing education in foreign languages at international standards, students will acquire advanced reading, comprehension, speaking and writing skills." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

"ARTICLE 5 – (1) The purpose of foreign language instruction is to teach students the basic rules of the foreign language they are learning, to develop their foreign language vocabulary, to enable them to understand what they read and hear in that language, and to express themselves in oral or written form [...]." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

8.3.2 English as a field-specific professional competency. Building on its role as a core language competency, the relevant documents reveal that English is also recognized as a fundamental skill in vocational and professional education that can be developed beyond its academic dimension:

"Vocational foreign language education will be emphasized in vocational and technical education." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

"ARTICLE 5 – (1) [...] the purpose of instruction in a foreign language is to ensure that associate, bachelor, and postgraduate diploma program graduates acquire foreign language competencies related to their fields. [...] ARTICLE 8 – (2) In programs where the instruction language is entirely in Turkish, compulsory foreign language preparatory classes are not opened, but vocational foreign language courses can be given." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"ARTICLE 8 – (12) Students enrolled in associate, undergraduate, or graduate programs, including those with vocational foreign language courses in their program where the language of instruction is Turkish, can continue in these programs even if they do not pass the foreign language exam conducted at the end of the second semester of an optional preparatory class […]Vocational foreign language courses in programs where the language of instruction is Turkish are provided by taking into account the foreign language proficiency of students during their associate, undergraduate, and graduate education." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

4.1.8.1.4 Sub-theme 8.4: English as a benchmark for higher education standards and accreditation. As previously mentioned, Türkiye's efforts to remain integrated into global education frameworks, in this regard, the documents reveal that English is systematically embedded in all aspects of quality in higher education-ranging from faculty hiring to research output, and from student admissions to institutional evaluations- and serving as a benchmark for quality. In this context, English is perceived as one of the key performance indicators in accreditation and quality assurance processes in Turkish higher education:

"This guide has been prepared for the purpose of providing guidance to the members of the Higher Education Quality Council of Türkiye (THEQC) and the English Preparatory Schools to be visited on the details of the External Evaluation Program and how to carry out the process. In the guide, "English Preparatory School" refers to all schools, units, departments or programs within higher education institutions that provide preparatory English language training." (THEQC, 2023, [D17], p. 1)

"The "New CoHE" has updated the employment conditions for foreign faculty members with a quality-oriented perspective, aiming to raise the quality standards in higher education, produce the qualified knowledge necessary for the country's development goals, and train skilled human resources. New regulations have been introduced to ensure the employment of more qualified international faculty members, and the procedures and principles developed in this context were redefined to take effect as of

January 2020. The circular titled "Procedures and Principles Regarding the Employment of Foreign Faculty Members" was subsequently sent to universities. The improvements in these procedures introduce new criteria regarding academic achievement and experience requirements for employing international faculty. Additionally, these updates encourage the recruitment of highly qualified, research-focused international scholars." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 46)

4.1.8.1.5 Sub-theme 8.5: English as a prerequisite and qualification standard for foreign language programs. The document analysis reveals that English proficiency is a formal requirement for both faculty and students for EMI programs. The documents also establish similar criteria for all domestic and international instructors teaching English in SFLs. In this context, the documents reveal the conditions to be applied in the case of insufficient proficiency or the criteria for faculty to demonstrate their language competence through standardized exams (e.g., YDS, TOEFL) or certifications, ensuring that international linguistic and academic standards are met:

"Foreign Language Preparatory Education: Article 49 – Higher Education Institutions that conduct education partially or entirely in a foreign language administer a proficiency exam in the foreign language to be used in education for newly registered students. For students found to be insufficient, a foreign language preparatory education of up to one year is implemented according to principles determined by the Higher Education Council. (The last sentence was repealed: 19/11/2014-6569/33 art.) Throughout the duration of regular education, necessary measures are continuously taken by educational institutions to improve students' foreign language proficiency." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

"Article 6 – (4) Candidates for teaching positions in programs conducted in a foreign language are required to have a minimum score of 85 in a central foreign language exam recognized by the Higher Education Council or an equivalent score in an exam recognized as equivalent for at least one language. This requirement applies to appointments in teaching positions for programs taught in a foreign language, positions related to foreign languages in academic fields, teaching positions for mandatory foreign language courses as specified in paragraph (1) of the first subsection of Article 5 of the Higher Education Law No. 2547 dated 4/11/1981, and teaching positions in international relations or applied units related to foreign languages within higher education institutions." (CoHE, 2018, [D8])

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4.1.8.1.6 Sub-theme 8.6: English as a certified teaching qualification with native-standard norms. The analysis revealed that the expectations for foreign faculty members employed in foreign language preparatory programs at HEIs are regulated with internationally recognized teaching credentials such as DELTA, CELTA, and TESOL. As the accepted certificates pertain to English and are designed based on the native English speaker standards, the data reveals that foreign language preparatory education refers specifically to English, and the norms underlying the designated certificates are based on native speaker norms:

> "The minimum requirements for foreign faculty members to be employed in foreign language preparatory classes at higher education institutions are as follows: [...] The Higher Education Executive Board, at its meeting on 17/02/2021, approved the amendment to subparagraph (b) of Articles 1 and 2 under the title "Employment in Foreign Language Preparatory Classes" of the "Procedures and Principles Related to the Employment of Foreign Faculty Members," which was approved and put into practice at the Higher Education Executive Board meeting on 15/01/2020, to read as: "b) Possess a DELTA, CELTA, or TESOL certificate." (CoHE, 2014b, [D7])

4.1.8.1.7 Sub-theme 8.7: English as a standard criterion in national and higher-level assessments. The analysis revealed that English proficiency is a standardized criterion in academic and professional advancement in Türkiye. In this regard, while D14 identifies English as the dominant language tested in foreign language examinations, D11 (Article 16) mandates English proficiency for doctoral admissions. Additionally, D2 reveals that English is also a criterion for academic promotions such as associate professorship and full professorship, reinforcing its role as an academic gatekeeper mechanism:

> "ARTICLE 5 – (1) The Foreign Language Proficiency Exam is administered by the Presidency of the Measurement, Selection, and Placement Center (ÖSYM); (2) Amended: OG-2/12/2014-29193) The Foreign Language Proficiency Exam is held at least twice a year for German, Arabic, French, English, and Russian; for other languages, it is held at least once a year." (CoHE, 2013, [D14])

> "ARTICLE 16 – (5) For admission to doctoral programs, it is mandatory to obtain a minimum score of 55 in a central foreign language exam recognized by the Higher Education Council or an equivalent score in an international foreign language exam recognized as equivalent by ÖSYM. University

senates may decide to increase these minimum scores based on the specific requirements of the programs." (CoHE, 2016a, [D11])

"Associate Professorship and Appointment: Article 24 – (Amended: 22/2/2018-7100/5 art.) (2) To have obtained a minimum score of fifty-five in a central foreign language exam determined by the Higher Education Council or an equivalent score in a foreign language exam with international validity recognized by the Higher Education Council; if the academic field of the associate professorship is related to a specific foreign language, this exam must be taken in another foreign language." (Republic of Türkiye, 1981, [D2])

4.2 The Perceived Role of English in the Internationalization of Universities in the Meso and Micro-Level Practices of HEIs in Relation to the Macro-Level Policies of the Turkish CoHE (RQ1b)

This section reports the findings regarding RQ1b, which examines how the role of English and its agents in the internationalization of HEIs is perceived within the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. For RQ1b, as reported in Chapter 3, data was collected through the analysis of more than 120 institutional documents (e.g., regulations, syllabi, materials, and exam papers) and open-ended questionnaires (OEQ) administered to 39 administrative and academic staff of whom 22 provided usable responses. Although RQ1b is structurally connected to RQ1a- focusing on the practical reflections of macro-level policy discourses- it must be noted that the data were analyzed independently. Accordingly, the categories, themes, and sub-themes were not shaped by the findings of RQ1a but rather emerged inductively from the meso and micro-level data itself. Due to the nature of the sources, some thematic similarities may be observed; however, those arose organically through the data-driven thematic analysis process rather than through any pre-structured framework.

Based on the analysis of data collected from relevant print and online documents and administered open-ended questionnaires, eight overarching categories emerged: *Political Considerations*, *Ideological Considerations*, *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations*, *Epistemological Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations*, S*ocio-Cultural Considerations*, *Emotional Considerations*, and *Financial Considerations*. Each category included relevant themes and sub-themes,

as shown in Table 7. Each was further elaborated upon through statements extracted from the relevant documents and open-ended questionnaires, which illustrate the perceived role of English in the internationalization of HEIs concerning the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

Table 7

English in the Meso and Micro-Level Internationalization Practices of Turkish HEIs and Its Relation to CoHE's Macro-Level Policies

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Political Considerations	1. English Shaping the Higher Education Policies	1.1 English as a Requirement of National Policies
		1.2 English as a Policy Regulated and Framed by CoHE
		1.3 English as a Strategic Tool for Alignment with CoHE's Internationalization Goals
		1.4 English as a Component of International Quality Assurance and Accreditation
		1.5 English as a Symbol of Integration into the European Higher Education Area
		1.6 English as a Tool for Global Academic Visibility
Ideological Considerations	2. English Shaping the Ideology of Global Academic Engagement	2.1 English as a Prestige Language in Higher Education
		2.2 English as a Marker of an "International" University
		2.3 English as an Accompanying Academic Language Alongside Turkish
Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations	3. English Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks	3.1 English as the Major Foreign Language in Institutional Practices
		3.2 English Language Planning as an Autonomous Practice of HEIs
		3.3 English as a Monolingual Classroom Language Policy
		3.4 English as a Core Component of Preparatory and EMI Programs
		3.5 English as a Key Driver of Preparatory Programs Before Specialization
		3.6 English as the Basis for Competency-Oriented Curriculum Design in Higher Education
		3.6.1 English as an Academic Language Competency
		3.6.2 English as a General Communicative Skill
		3.6.3 English as a Field-Specific Professional Competency

Table 7 (cont'd)

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
		3.7 English as the Benchmark of Academic Success
		3.8 English as an Element of Professional Development
		3.9 English Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization
		3.10 Native English as the Standard for Teaching and Assessment
		3.10.1 English as a Certified Teaching Qualification Based on Native-Speaker Norms
		3.10.2 English as Practiced and Assessed with Standardized Native-Speaker Norms
Epistemological Considerations	4. English Shaping the Epistemologies	4.1 English as the Language of Scientific Knowledge and Research
Sociolinguistic Considerations	5. English Shaping the Linguistic Norms	5.1 English as a Lingua Franca in Global Academia
		5.2 Native English Varieties as Normative Standards in Language Practices
Socio-cultural Considerations	6. English Shaping Social Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Exchange	6.1 English as a Determinant of Social Integration
		6.2 English as a Bridge for Cultural Exchange and Cross-Cultural Dialogue
Emotional Considerations	7. English Shaping Academic Emotional Well-being	7.1 English as a Source of Faculty and Student Stress
Financial Considerations	8. English Shaping Financial Standing	8.1 English as an Academic Asset to Financial Growth
		8.2 English as a Gateway for International Employment

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4.2.1 Category 1: Political considerations. The first emergent category relates to *Political Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the political considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.1.1 Theme 1: English shaping the higher education policies. The theme that emerged under the *Political Considerations* is *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies*. The data revealed that the perceived role of English in shaping Turkish HEIs internationalization practices is comprehensive, as there appeared six sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies: English as a Requirement of National Policies, English as a Policy Regulated and Framed by CoHE, English as a Strategic Tool for Alignment with CoHE's Internationalization Goals, English as a Component of International Quality Assurance and Accreditation, English as a Symbol of Integration into the European Higher Education Area,* and *English as a Tool for Global Academic Visibility.*

4.2.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a requirement of national policies. The document analysis revealed that in Türkiye, language policies and practices in HEIs are shaped by national policies that govern foreign language education and education through foreign languages. In this regard, the integration of foreign languages in HEIs' curricula- specifically, English as the medium of instruction in most institutions, along with English preparatory programs in place across all HEIs- aligns with broader national government strategies to enhance global competitiveness and academic quality, with varying degrees of implementation among different HEIs, as reported in the statements below:

> "Legal Obligation: "Utilizing its specialized expertise and financial resources rationally, efficiently, and economically, and in line with the principles and objectives of national education policies and development plans, as well as the plans and programs formulated by the Council of Higher Education, to train the necessary human resources in the required fields and numbers for the country. Basis: [Article 12-b of Law No. 2547 on Higher Education] Findings: The number of programs and courses offered in collaboration with

interdisciplinary, international, and industrial sectors, as well as those taught in a foreign language, is insufficient. Needs: Reviewing educational programs to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and internationalization efforts." (University F, Strategic Plan)

"High-Level Policy Document Name: 12th Development Plan Relevant Section/ Reference: 685.1 Assigned Task: Providing education in a foreign language. Needs / Actions Required: Strengthening academic competencies to enhance the number and quality of existing foreign-language programs offered by departments." (University K, Strategic Plan)

"Education in a Foreign Language ARTICLE 38 – (1) Education in a foreign language is conducted in accordance with Article 49 of Law No. 2547 and the provisions of the Regulation on Foreign Language Teaching and Teaching in a Foreign Language at Higher Education Institutions, published in the Official Gazette dated 4/12/2008 and numbered 27074." (University B, Undergraduate Education, Teaching, and Examination Regulation)

4.2.1.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: English as a policy regulated and framed by CoHE. The data analysis showed that the role of English in Turkish higher education is greatly influenced by the Turkish CoHE, from setting the standards for language instruction to establishing criteria for accreditation and developing strategies for internationalization. Therefore, HEIs align their language policies and practices with relevant directives by incorporating English into their curricula. This is provided through pre-faculty English preparatory programs, required language courses, and academic and vocational foreign language classes at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, as well as the criteria for recruiting faculty, shaping institutional approaches to language education, and aligning with broader goals such as internationalization initiatives across HEIs. The following statements from various HEIs provide concrete evidence of how HEIs interpret and operationalize CoHE's principles within their own contexts:

"Education in a Foreign Language ARTICLE 21 – (1) With the approval of the Senate and CoHE (Council of Higher Education), departments and programs may be established that offer instruction exclusively in a specific foreign language or in a bilingual format, combining Turkish and a foreign language. The principles of this education are determined by the Senate." (University E, Education, Instruction, and Examination Regulation)

"The medium of instruction and/or English courses in a department must be approved by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), a 22-member corporate public body responsible for the planning, coordination, and supervision of higher education in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Higher Education Law, provided that all the requirements specified in the relevant regulation are met." (University F, Website)

"CoHE establishes the general framework for English language teaching, specifically for preparatory classes. While CoHE provides this structure, it is up to the universities themselves to determine the specifics within that framework. This means that certain aspects, such as weekly class hours, may vary, and the organization of preparatory programs differs from one institution to another. Some universities implement skill-based programs; others do not; some follow a modular system, while others use an annual program. Essentially, CoHE allows universities considerable flexibility in this area. Additionally, there is limited oversight, and no definitive standards are set—such as "Students must achieve X level of English proficiency" or "Students who start the preparatory program at X level must reach Y level by the end." These decisions are left entirely to the discretion of each university." (P14, OEQ)

4.2.1.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: English as a strategic tool for alignment with CoHE's internationalization goals. The document analysis revealed that English is often positioned as a strategic tool for aligning Turkish HEIs with the Turkish CoHE's internationalization goals. HEIs that take the most relevant references from the Internationalization Strategy Report (CoHE, 2017a) highlight their efforts to expand EMI programs, promote student and faculty mobility, and collaborate and research with international institutions and partners. Accordingly, the promotion of English in HEIs indeed reflects a broader ambition of the Turkish CoHE to position Turkish higher education within the global academic landscape. In this regard, the excerpts below exemplify how HEIs promote English in line with CoHE's broader vision of internationalization:

"As a research university identified by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE), [...] increasing the number of courses and academic programs offered in English, aligned with an updated international curriculum, to promote linguistic diversity and provide educational opportunities for both local and international students." (University K, Internationalization Policy)

"TARGET CARD 1.2 – Objective (A1): Continuous improvement of the quality of educational activities. Goal (H1.2): To develop internationalization in education and teaching. Performance Indicator: PG1.2.4 – Number of programs offered in a foreign language. Strategies: The number of programs offered in a foreign language and the number of students enrolled in these programs will be increased to enhance the capacity for internationalization. Findings: The necessity of knowing a foreign language at an academic level in a globalized world has led to an increase in the number of students in programs offered in a foreign language beyond the targeted value. Needs: Increasing the number of programs offered in a foreign language, developing accommodation opportunities for international students in higher education institutions, and increasing institutional capacity in internationalization." (University F, Strategic Plan)

"As a research university aiming for internationalization and internalizing it at the levels of education, research, societal contribution, and students, University [G] adopts an approach that encourages activities to increase the number of programs offering education in foreign languages and those with international recognition." (University G, Internationalization Policy)

4.2.1.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: English as a component of international quality assurance and accreditation. The data analysis revealed that HEIs incorporate English as a key criterion for international accreditation and quality assurance processes in Turkish higher education. In this regard, many institutions, particularly their English preparatory programs, seek international accreditation to enhance their global reputation in language education. Besides, in departments where the medium of instruction is English, evaluations regarding the quality of English instruction are also included in quality manuals and strategic plans. In this context, the institutional excerpts provided below reveal how HEIs leverage English within their quality assurance frameworks to align with global benchmarks:

"EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services) is an independent international organization. It is a stakeholder of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), a member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and has played a significant role in the development of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). EAQUALS Quality Standards are specifically designed for language teaching, with a strong focus on the educational quality experienced by learners. EAQUALS only accredits institutions recognized for demonstrating high-quality performance across all 12 categories defined by

its "Excellence in Language Education" framework. Additionally, EAQUALS is the only international foreign language accreditation body recognized by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC). The School of Foreign Languages (SFL) [...] has been accredited by EAQUALS in three languages (German, French, and English) under the following 12 categories." (University K, SFL Student Handbook)

"Our university aims to provide students with the foreign language proficiency they will need after graduation by offering education and training opportunities in accordance with international standards. [...] To become an internationally recognized academic unit by maintaining high standards in the foreign language education services it provides. [...] Our school prioritizes maintaining the international accreditation eligibility of its current educational activities. [...] With the acquisition of EAQUALS accreditation, the necessary work has been completed to certify the language proficiency of students who have completed the preparatory education at our school, and the issuance of certificates has begun." (University G, SFL Unit Self-Evaluation Report)

"[...] University [B] School of Foreign Languages has been awarded the internationally recognized "Pearson Assured Certificate" and has achieved accreditation. The approval of the quality of education in the English, German, and French preparatory programs, as well as the administrative excellence of our school, by Pearson Assured, is a significant development. (University B, SFL Activity Report)

4.2.1.1.5 Sub-theme 1.5: English as a symbol of integration into the European higher education area. The analysis revealed that the adoption of English as the medium of instruction in Turkish HEIs is closely linked to the EHEA and the Bologna Process. As part of this integration, HEIs promote EMI and align their curricula with European standards. This alignment aims to facilitate academic mobility for both faculty and students, while also promoting recognition within the broader European framework. The following excerpts, obtained from multiple data resources, provide concrete evidence of HEIs' efforts to comply with EHEA standards:

"The Diploma Supplement Label, one of the documents that enhance the quality and prestige of higher education institutions while providing international credibility, was awarded to our university by the European Commission in 2009, along with seven other universities. As a result, the

diplomas of our graduates have gained a universal qualification." (University A, Website)

"Our university, with its deep-rooted history and institutional identity, envisions becoming a world-class research university that continuously adds value to society and humanity as its core objective. To achieve this goal, key targets have been set within the framework of internationalization and fulfilling the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requirements, as one of the key instruments of this objective has shaped our strategies. [...] Plans are being developed to expand the number of undergraduate and graduate programs conducted in a foreign language. (University E, Administrative Activity Report)

"For a considerable time, I have also served as the coordinator for both departments and the faculty within the Bologna Process, where our bilateral agreements are mainly aimed at allowing our students to complete a semester or a year of their undergraduate or graduate education at reputable universities in Europe both to enhance their vision and English skills." (P69, OEQ)

4.2.1.1.6 Sub-theme 1.6: English as a tool for global academic visibility. The analysis revealed that HEIs place a strong emphasis on English as a means of gaining international recognition and enhancing their reputation. What follows are examples of how HEIs employ English in their digital presence and quality assurance in the pursuit of institutional recognition and international appeal:

"Keeping the English versions of university websites up to date and conducting social media promotions in English. [...] Institutional websites, academic catalogs, and promotional materials are available in both Turkish and English to enhance international accessibility." (University H, Strategic Plan)

"The official website of University G, [...] actively operates in both Turkish and English to inform the public about events and developments taking place at the university that are of public interest, promote the university at national and international levels, announce scientific activities, and present the institution's perspective on emerging events in the media and public sphere in a timely and accurate manner." (University G, Institutional Self-Evaluation Report)

"Aiming to provide the highest quality in teaching methods, curriculum design and general language education services, [University C] School of Foreign Languages [SFL] English Preparatory Unit started its efforts to be

accredited by EAQUALS [...] in order to prove the high quality language education it has been practicing for many years, to increase the international reputation of [SFL] and to make it more attractive to prospective students and faculty members worldwide." (University C, SFL Website)

4.2.2 Category 2: Ideological considerations. The second emergent category pertains to *Ideological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme-*English Shaping the Ideology of Global Academic Engagement*- has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the ideological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.2.1 Theme 2: English shaping the ideology of global academic engagement. The theme that emerged under the *Ideological Considerations* is *English Shaping the Ideology of Global Academic Engagement*. There appeared three sub-themes under the main theme: *English Shaping the Ideology of Global Academic Engagement*: *English as a Prestige Language in Higher Education, English as a Marker of an "International" University,* and *English as an Accompanying Academic Language Alongside Turkish.*

4.2.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1: English as a prestige language in higher education. The data analysis revealed that in Turkish higher education, English is often framed as a marker of prestige. Consequently, HEIs emphasize their use of English as the medium of instruction; the availability and number of EMI programs, along with international research output and exchange counts, serve as indicators of academic excellence, contributing to the institutional branding of universities. These institutional statements below illustrate how English is positioned in Turkish HEIs to project prestige, relevance, and academic quality:

"Strengths: [...] Conducting education and training activities in English. [...] Widespread recognition at national and international levels and strong global competitiveness. [...] Maintaining its academic prestige and recognition as a leading institution in Türkiye and abroad by offering education in English in specific fields." (University H, Strategic Plan)

"At [University C], the use of English as the international language of science in undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs contributes significantly to the university's openness to international collaboration and facilitates the establishment of international research partnerships. Despite the challenges encountered in recruiting foreign faculty members and instructors for foreign language instruction, the opportunities that teaching in a foreign language brings to the university, its academic staff, and its students are considered among the institution's key strengths." (University C, Institutional Self-Evaluation Report)

"As part of the Erasmus program, which facilitates student and faculty mobility at our university, we have agreements with 80 universities across Europe. Within the scope of these agreements, 1 out of every 5 of our students has the opportunity to spend one year of their academic life at prestigious universities in Europe." (University A, Website)

4.2.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2: English as a marker of an "international" university. The documents revealed that the presence of EMI programs is often perceived as a measure of universities' international status. Accordingly, those providing 100% English medium instruction explicitly position themselves as international universities, while those offering English medium programs in some of their faculties or departments reference their goals of becoming international universities. Moreover, HEIs refer to their international research initiatives as part of the global academic experience on their path to being regarded as international. At this point, what follows are institutional statements of how HEIs use English as a key indicator of their international character:

"University [I], where the medium of instruction is 100% English, employs advanced educational models in the fields of engineering, science, and architecture. Through high-level research, it has achieved significant success at both national and international levels." (University I, Website)

"The vision of University [G] SFL is to equip our students with the necessary foreign language skills required at a global level, in accordance with the respectable national and international status of University [G], which assists their future studies in their academic life in the most effective way." (University G, SFL Website)

"The Preparatory Program provides an immersive English-learning environment that prepares students for an international academic experience." (University C, SFL Student Handbook)

4.2.2.1.3 Sub-theme 2.3: English as an accompanying academic language alongside Turkish. The analysis revealed that although there has been an increasing internationalization effort to integrate English-medium programs into Turkish HEIs, Turkish remains the primary language of instruction, while English is positioned as a parallel academic language, particularly in research, partnerships, and graduate education. In this context, while some institutions prioritize English to enhance their global reach, others maintain bilingual policies, offering programs in both languages. The following excerpts demonstrate the institutional mechanisms through which the coexistence of Turkish and English is navigated:

> "Our faculty consists of the Departments of Business Administration, Economics, Finance, Labor Economics and Industrial Relations, and Political Science and Public Administration. Among these, the Business Administration and Economics Departments also offer 100% English-taught programs." (University F, Website)

> "Quality, Scope, and Types of Education and Instruction ARTICLE 12 – (1) The medium of instruction at the University is Turkish. However, upon the recommendation of the Unit Board, the decision of the Senate, and the approval of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), programs may offer instruction entirely or partially in a foreign language." (University K, Associate and Undergraduate Education and Instruction Regulation)

> "Education in a Foreign Language ARTICLE 21 – (1) With the approval of the Senate and CoHE (Council of Higher Education), departments and programs may be established that offer instruction exclusively in a specific foreign language or in a bilingual format, combining Turkish and a foreign language. The principles of this education are determined by the Senate." (University E, Education, Instruction, and Examination Regulation)

4.2.3 Category 3: Policy and pedagogy-based considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the third emergent category relates to *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is viewed as associated with internationalization practices. The emerging theme, *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks*, highlights policy and pedagogy-based considerations concerning the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.3.1 Theme 3: English shaping the institutional academic frameworks.
The theme that emerged under the *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* is
English Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks. The data revealed that the
perceived role of English in shaping HEIs internationalization practices is
multifaceted, as there appeared ten sub-themes under the main theme, *English
Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks: English as the Major Foreign
Language in Institutional Practices, English Language Planning as an Autonomous
Practice of HEIs, English as a Monolingual Classroom Language Policy, English as
a Core Component of Preparatory and EMI Programs, English as a Key Driver of
Preparatory Programs Before Specialization, English as the Basis for Competency-
Oriented Curriculum Design in Higher Education, English as the Benchmark of
Academic Success, English as an Element of Professional Development, English
Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization,* and *Native-
English as the Standard for Teaching and Assessment.*

*4.2.3.1.1 Sub-theme 3.1: English as the major foreign language in institutional
practices.* The document analysis revealed that in many universities, while there are
some limited alternative options for foreign language instruction, English remains
the dominant foreign language taught in preparatory programs, colleges, and
graduate institutions. This reflects English as the primary foreign language used in
the Turkish higher education landscape. The following sample statement underscore
HEIs' institutional emphasis on English, despite the presence of other language
offerings:

> "At [University J], the medium of instruction in many departments and
> programs is English. In order to follow their courses effectively, students
> must have a certain level of English proficiency. At the beginning of each
> academic year, all students are required to take an
> exemption/placement/proficiency exam. Based on the exam results, students
> in associate and undergraduate programs who do not meet the required
> English proficiency level to attend their courses continue in the English
> Preparatory Program to improve their English before starting their first
> semester in their faculties." (University J, SFL Website)

> "[...] The School of Foreign Languages has a total of 189 academic staff
> members, including 2 foreign nationals. Among them, 147 teach English, 8
> teach German, 8 teach French, 6 teach Russian, 3 teach Spanish, and 2 teach

Italian. Additionally, 13 faculty members from other departments of our university also teach foreign language courses." (University F, SFL Internal Evaluation Report)

"University [B] is the only multilingual university in Türkiye that offers education in five languages—Turkish, English, French, German, and Arabic—across its academic units.[...] Student Distribution in the Foreign Language Preparatory Department: English: 2,230 German: 382 French: 210" (University B, Strategic Plan/ Administrative Activity Report)

4.2.3.1.2 Sub-theme 3.2: English language planning as an autonomous practice of HEIs. The document analysis revealed that, despite national regulations defining the framework for implementing foreign language instruction, HEIs have varying degrees of autonomy in enacting English language policies. As long as they meet or exceed the standards set by the Turkish CoHE, HEIs establish their own EMI standards, assessment criteria, and faculty hiring policies. They also apply for preparatory programs in various instructional formats, such as modular, annual, or semester-based, demonstrating a tailored approach to integrating English into the academic frameworks of higher education. What follows are concrete examples of how HEIs are left to structure their EMI policies independently:

"15-Week Modular System (Tiered Course System) [...] In the 2024-2025 academic year, the course content, assessment, and evaluation for Program 1, 2, and 3 level groups have been restructured according to a two-term modular system. The weekly lesson hours are planned as follows: P1 level group: 26 hours per week P2 level group: 24 hours per week P3 level group: 22 hours per week." (University J, SFL Student Handbook)

"In the English Preparatory Class, education is provided at three levels: Alpha (Advanced Level), Gamma (Lower-Intermediate Level), and Delta (Beginner Level). In the German Preparatory Class, education is also offered at three levels: A1, A2, and B1. The fall semester begins at the A1 level, and by the end of the academic year, students are expected to graduate at the B1+ level. [...] Students in the English Preparatory Class take Integrated Skills, Reading, and Writing courses throughout the year." (University H, SFL Student Handbook)

"[University B] School of Foreign Languages [...] Preparatory Program has been designed based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The program outlines the estimated time required to achieve the learning outcomes at different language proficiency levels (A1 -

Breakthrough, A2 - Waystage, B1 - Threshold, and B2 - Vantage) and specifies the learning/teaching activities to be utilized." (University B, SFL Quality Book)

4.2.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3.3: English as a monolingual classroom language policy. The data analysis revealed that many HEIs adopt an "English-only" policy in the classroom as a deliberate effort to create a consistent linguistic environment where English is the exclusive medium of instruction and communication. Accordingly, HEIs point to their targets to equip students with the necessary linguistic proficiency and confidence for effective academic engagement and participation in global contexts, as reflected in the following sample statements:

"In our preparatory program, all courses, materials, and classroom interactions are conducted exclusively in English. The aim is to support language acquisition by ensuring constant exposure to the target language. Although students face difficulties especially at the beginner level, over time they start using English not only as the language of instruction but also as a means of daily communication. This principle is also maintained in extracurricular activities. Students are encouraged to speak only English during speaking clubs, film analyses, and project-based activities. Through these practices, we aim to reinforce what has been learned by promoting the natural use of the language." (P66, OEQ)

"Our program relies heavily on communicative language teaching approach; hence, the medium of instruction is English at all times. [...] Efforts are made to ensure that the language of communication both for in-class and extracurricular activities is English." (University G, SFL Website)

"These in-house materials provide students with foundational linguistic tools and conceptual familiarity to engage in academic discussions and follow their departmental lectures, which are delivered entirely in English." (University C, SFL Website)

Documents and statements regarding meso and micro-level implementations of HEIs also revealed that there is no mention of the possibility of using any language other than English in EMI programs. In such a context, where this type of practice is not officially recognized, some participants, in their responses to open-ended survey questions, stated that- even though it is not officially acknowledged and, in fact, neither supported nor encouraged by their institutions- they occasionally switched to the mother tongue, Turkish, in their classes to facilitate understanding, interact with

students, or provide examples relevant to the Turkish context. These respondents also emphasized that such practices are generally not preferred. Similarly, it was noted that in such contexts, students also occasionally shift to Turkish for similar purposes. The following examples illustrate that, despite institutional norms mandating exclusive English use, occasional unofficial use of Turkish for pedagogical purposes are evident in various HEI settings:

> "[...] However, sometimes, the foreign language may not be sufficient—for both us and the students—to fully express ourselves. In such cases, we may make use of the mother tongue, even briefly or quickly, to facilitate understanding. However, in assessment and evaluation practices, students are strictly required to write in English. The use of Turkish is allowed only in a very limited way." (P66, OEQ)

> "There are situations where it becomes necessary to provide local examples, and at that point, we sometimes use Turkish. This is done not only by us, but also by the students. However, we make sure to keep it very limited, because the administration requires that all instruction and activities within the course be conducted entirely in English." (P83, OEQ)

4.2.3.1.4 Sub-theme 3.4: English as a core component of preparatory and EMI programs. As mentioned earlier, English is the primary foreign language taught and practiced in HEIs in Türkiye and is considered essential for equipping students with the language skills necessary for undergraduate studies. The documents revealed that the structure and effectiveness of preparatory programs vary; some universities offer intensive preparatory education, leading to B2 level proficiency, while others incorporate English instruction into disciplinary coursework after achieving B1 level proficiency at the preparatory program. The institutional accounts below illustrate the centrality of English in preparatory curricula, fostering language competence for disciplinary learning:

> "Our Mission – The primary aim of the undergraduate English preparatory education at the University [A] School of Foreign Languages is to equip newly admitted students, whose English proficiency is insufficient, with fundamental language skills through an intensive and high-quality instructional program, enabling them to pursue their undergraduate studies effectively. In addition, we are committed to creating a learning environment where students can acquire and develop the language skills necessary for their

professional lives after completing their university education. (University A, SFL Student Handbook)

"The preparatory program [...], which is implemented by the Department of Basic Languages in [...] SFL, aims to ensure that students have the language skills at B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the end of the academic year. [...] The main purpose [..], which is aligned with the mission and vision of University G, is to provide students who have got into departments requiring good level of foreign language but who do not have it, with an effective and efficient language learning process and to enable them to continue their undergraduate education program more efficiently." (University G, SFL Staff Handbook)

4.2.3.1.5 Sub-theme 3.5: English as a key driver of preparatory programs before specialization. The practice-based document analysis revealed that English preparatory programs at Turkish HEIs serve as a foundational stage for students before they transition into their undergraduate studies. The rationale behind the existence of these programs is to ensure that students possess sufficient language proficiency to engage with academic content in English in their specialized fields, as reflected in the following excerpts:

"We formally request the School of Foreign Languages to conduct the preparatory year for our English-taught undergraduate program students with a focus on the basics of our field. This way, students starting in their first year become familiar with fundamental concepts specific to our discipline. Therefore, I can say we have achieved partial success in this regard." (P34, OEQ)

"Purpose of Preparatory Class Education and Instruction ARTICLE 5 – (1) The purpose of the preparatory class education is to provide students with essential proficiency in the foreign language required to follow their academic programs, including reading, comprehension, writing, and speaking skills, to enable them to understand various publications related to their fields, and to equip them with the necessary language communication skills for their academic and social lives." (University K, Foreign Language Education, Instruction, and Examination Regulation)

"The mission of the School of Foreign Languages is to provide students with the necessary foreign language proficiency to succeed in courses taught in a foreign language, ensuring they can follow their undergraduate education effectively." (University H, SFL Website)

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4.2.3.1.6 Sub-theme 3.6: English as the basis for competency-oriented curriculum design in higher education. The sixth sub-theme that emerged under the main theme of *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks* is *English as the Basis for Competency-Oriented Curriculum Design in Higher Education.* Three sub-themes appeared under the sixth sub-theme*, English as the Basis for Competency-Oriented Curriculum Design in Higher Education: English as an Academic Language Competency, English as a General Communicative Skill,* and *English as a Field-Specific Professional Competency.*

3.6.1 English as an academic language competency. The document analysis revealed that HEIs mainly perceive English as a key academic competency, necessitating students to demonstrate proficiency in essential skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The documents demonstrated that Academic English courses are incorporated into many EMI program curricula to enhance students' engagement with English language research and coursework throughout their undergraduate studies to varying extents. The excerpts below reflect how HEIs conceptualize English as an academic competence essential for success in higher education:

> "A student who successfully completes the English Preparatory Program is one who has developed proficiency in engaging effectively with academic language, employing useful strategies through mediation, constructing meaning collaboratively in interactions, and mastering skills such as note-taking, facilitating discussions, enhancing others' ideas, and leading group discussions. Such students understand that language learning is a lifelong process requiring continuous effort, recognizing the importance of developing foreign language competencies that will serve their academic and professional careers beyond university." (University K, SFL Student Handbook)

> "The aim of the Academic English courses is to provide students with the academic English content they will need throughout their academic lives, including their undergraduate education. [...] The course content includes materials designed to develop skills in academic writing, reading academic texts, and listening to academic lectures in a foreign language. Through these materials, students are prepared for academic life." (University G, SFL Quality Handbook)

"Based on the feedback received in 2023, the Academic English course, requested by L3 students, was added to the curriculum. Topics suggested for the Speaking Club were incorporated into its planning, and selected readers for the Reading Circles were integrated into other relevant course levels to enhance the activity's implementation." (University I, Institutional Self-Evaluation Report)

3.6.2 English as a general communicative skill. The documents also revealed that beyond academic contexts, in HEIs, especially in English preparatory programs, English is also promoted as a general communicative skill essential in students' daily social lives, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

"A student who successfully completes the English Preparatory Program is defined as one who engages in information exchange and collaborative tasks essential to an action-oriented approach, has improved their general and communicative language proficiency, and effectively employs suitable strategies with confidence, spontaneity, and fluency to perform a variety of General English tasks." (University K, SFL Student Handbook)

"General English courses are conducted five days a week at all levels, with a total of 24 hours per week. Course Content: At all levels, Main Course, Reading, Writing, Listening & Note-taking, and Proficiency courses are offered. [...] Additionally, various speaking activities, which differ for each semester, are carried out to integrate the use of English into social life." (University A, SFL Course Information Form)

3.6.3 English as a field-specific professional competency. The document analysis also revealed that in most disciplines, English is positioned as an essential professional competency. Accordingly, fields such as engineering, business, medicine, and international relations place a strong emphasis on their students' English language proficiency as a prerequisite for career advancement, particularly in international contexts. What follows are institutional approaches to frame English as a discipline-specific professional skill, reflecting its value for institutional career readiness:

"The European Language Portfolio Global Scale B2 level is targeted, aiming for individuals to attain foreign language proficiency that allows them to follow and apply developments in their field, comprehend relevant information, and communicate effectively with colleagues." (University E, Website)

"Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences – English Business Administration Program Field Qualifications- Uses a foreign language at a minimum of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) B1 General Level to follow information in their field and communicate with colleagues." (University F, Website)

"Chemistry Department- English Medium Undergraduate Program – ENG 111 English for Business Life" (University A, Website)

4.2.3.1.7 Sub-theme 3.7: English as the benchmark of academic success. The document analysis revealed that in Turkish HEIs' practices, English proficiency is increasingly associated with academic success, with language requirements incorporated into admission, graduation, as well as faculty recruitment and promotion criteria, as reported in the below excerpts:

"Yes, there is an English language requirement. All national or international students are expected to demonstrate a certain level of English proficiency before advancing to their department upon enrollment. They can prove this by taking the language exam administered by our school or through national/international exams. Students who do not achieve the required score in these exams must complete an English Preparatory year. There is no difference in expectations based on the student group. Regardless of their origin or initial English level at enrollment, all students are held to the same standard of success." (P65, OEQ)

"The passing grade for our students at the end of the academic year is 70. [...] Students cannot begin their studies in their departments unless they achieve the required passing grade of 70." (University H, SFL Student Handbook)

"For faculty appointments in programs where education is conducted in a foreign language, candidates must obtain a minimum score of 80 in the central foreign language exam recognized by the Council of Higher Education in the language of instruction of the program, or an equivalent score in an exam accepted as equivalent." (University B, SFL Quality Book)

4.2.3.1.8 Sub-theme 3.8: English as an element of professional development. The document analysis, particularly of strategic plans, quality handbooks, and internal self-evaluation reports from faculty, revealed that English is often emphasized as a core component of faculty professional development initiatives aimed at improving the quality of foreign language instruction, enhancing the appeal of departments, fostering global partnerships, and supporting international

publications in high-impact journals, thereby positioning HEIs within international rankings, as illustrated by the institutional statements below:

> "Strategic Goals Goal 3: Enhancing Academics' Capacity to Teach in a Foreign Language Action 1: Providing in-service foreign language courses for faculty members who are expected to teach in a foreign language, prioritizing those with an existing level of proficiency, to help them reach the required language level. Facilitating language education abroad for faculty members with potential for foreign language instruction, if necessary. Action 2: Utilizing external resources (such as TÜBİTAK) and foreign instructors to improve the language skills of current faculty members and enhance their ability to teach in a foreign language. Action 3: Increasing incentives for faculty participation in joint exchange programs. Action 4: Attracting internationally trained PhD holders to the university through targeted promotional activities. Action 5: Granting additional points in faculty appointment and promotion criteria and providing financial incentives for faculty members teaching in a foreign language." (University J, Internationalization Strategy Document)

> "To increase the number of training programs, activities, and similar initiatives aimed at improving faculty members' foreign language proficiency, free training activities will be planned for faculty members in strategically important languages such as German, Russian, and Arabic, in addition to English, at specified standards." (University G, Strategic Plan)

> "Academics also need support to ensure they can teach and communicate effectively in English. Support for academic writing and conference presentations, particularly international ones, benefit the entire institution's internationalization goals." (P2, OEQ)

4.2.3.1.9 Sub-theme 3.9: English language deficiency as a barrier to institutional internationalization. While proficiency in the English language is often emphasized in practice-based documents, many of them, including strategic plans, institutional and departmental self-evaluation reports, and quality handbooks, also reveal that English language proficiency acts as a barrier to the internationalization initiatives of institutions. Accordingly, the documents reported limited English proficiency among students, academics, and administrative staff, creating obstacles in academic collaboration, research dissemination, and student mobility. The following statements from different HEIs underscore the perception of limited

proficiency as a critical barrier to advancing the implementation strategies of internationalization:

> "The insufficient proficiency of academic staff in foreign languages and the inadequate quality of programs offered in a foreign language, along with the lack of full integration of an internationalization culture, are factors that hinder the increase in the number of international students and activities." (University B, Strategic Plan)

> "The limited number of programs offered in a foreign language may negatively affect the university's attractiveness for national and international students, reducing their preference for our institution." (University K, Strategic Plan)

> "The insufficient foreign language proficiency of some researchers for international communication and academic work is one of the factors negatively affecting the research infrastructure." (University J, Internationalization Strategy Document)

> "The foreign language barrier is a significant obstacle in pursuing international academic endeavors such as doctoral studies." (University D, Strategic Plan)

4.2.3.1.10 Sub-theme 3.10: Native English as the standard for teaching and assessment. The tenth sub-theme that emerged under the main theme of *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Frameworks* is *Native English as the Standard for Teaching and Assessment.* There emerged two sub-themes under the tenth sub-theme, *Native English as the Standard for Teaching and Assessment: English as a Certified Teaching Qualification Based on Native-Speaker Norms,* and *English as Practiced and Assessed with Standardized Native-Speaker Norms.*

3.10.1 English as a certified teaching qualification based on native-speaker norms. The document analysis showed that the English language education practices at Turkish HEIs align with the higher-level policies of the Turkish CoHE regarding the definition of English teaching qualifications. Accordingly, these qualifications (e.g., DELTA, CELTA) often adhere to native speaker standards, influencing international staff recruitment practices, as illustrated in the sample institutional statements below:

"The minimum requirements for foreign faculty members to be employed in foreign language preparatory classes at higher education institutions are as follows: "b) Possess a DELTA, CELTA, or TESOL certificate." (University K, Institutional Regulation)

"International foreign language instructors are expected to possess an internationally recognized certificate such as DELTA, CELTA, or TESOL." (P75, OEQ)

3.10.2 English as practiced and assessed with standardized native-speaker norms. The document analysis also revealed that English language practices and assessments in HEIs often rely on standardized English practices and exams without integrating English varieties. In this respect, the analysis reported the use of standardized English proficiency tests, such as the TOEFL iBT, Pearson PTE, CAE, and CPE exams, assessing the language competence of non-native speakers based on native speaker norms. Additionally, the analysis regarding PYPs' course materials indicated that PYPs prefer materials oriented toward native speakers in their language instruction, leaving little or no room for English varieties; all these illustrate the focus on English as practiced and assessed with standardized native-speaker norms. The excerpts below reveal an apparent reliance on native-speaker proficiency benchmarks, as the primary reference in both pedagogical and evaluative processes:

"Course materials: Doff, Adrian, et al. Empower C1 Advanced Coursebook Second Edition. Cambridge University Press, 2022. Print. Empower C1 combines course content from Cambridge University Press with validated assessment from the experts at Cambridge Assessment English. The unique mix of engaging classroom engaging classroom materials and reliable assessment of the book enables learners to make consistent and measurable progress." (University H, SFL Website)

"In the past, British English was the preferred variety when choosing teaching materials. Now, both British and American varieties are equally accepted. I do not think non-standard varieties are acceptable." (P14, OEQ)

"Foreign Language Equivalency Table – TOEFL iBT, PEARSON PTE (Pearson Test of English), CAE (Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English), CPE (Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English)" (University F, SFL Foreign Language Equivalency Document)

4.2.4 Category 4: Epistemological considerations. The fourth emergent category relates to the *Epistemological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping the Epistemologies*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the epistemological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.4.1 Theme 4: English shaping the epistemologies. The theme that emerged under the *Epistemological Considerations* is *English Shaping the Epistemologies.* One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Epistemologies: English as the Language of Scientific Knowledge and Research.*

4.2.4.1.1 Sub-theme 4.1: English as the language of scientific knowledge and research. The document analysis revealed that English is perceived as the primary language for international academic publishing and research dissemination. In this respect, HEIs encourage faculty and graduate students to publish in English-language journals and collaborate with international institutions to promote institutional international visibility and reputation. What follows are concrete examples of the institutional mechanisms of Turkish HEIs through which English is centered in global knowledge circuits:

> "In the field of medicine, the scientific research and academic literature used and discussed in courses are entirely in English. English-language content facilitates students' access to scientific literature and enables them to acquire knowledge at global standards." (P54, OEQ)

> "Management of Research Processes: There is no dedicated team or entity responsible for managing research processes within the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. Instead, these processes are carried out by the dean's office and department chairs. However, since 2021, a new editorial team has been formed for the faculty's journal, which has been indexed in TR-Dizin, based on research performance evaluation. Additionally, with the aim of being indexed in prestigious international databases in the coming years, the journal's language has been entirely changed to English." (University F, Departmental Quality Report)

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"English Editing and Support Commission The English Editing and Support Commission aims to increase the acceptance rate of scientific studies conducted at our university in high-impact journals and enhance their readability and visibility within the scientific community." (University J, SFL Unit Activity Report)

4.2.5 Category 5: Sociolinguistic considerations. The fifth emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. One major theme-*English Shaping the Linguistic Norms*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.5.1 Theme 5: English shaping the linguistic norms. The theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping the Linguistic Norms.* Two sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping the Linguistic Norms: English as a Lingua Franca in Global Academia,* and *Native English Varieties as Normative Standards in Language Practices.*

4.2.5.1.1 Sub-theme 5.1: English as a lingua franca in global academia. The document analysis shows that English is used as a global academic lingua franca in Turkish higher education. This encompasses all international activities, including English instruction, research dissemination, and collaborative projects across global fields and settings, as demonstrated by the concrete instances below:

"Within the framework of internationalization, English, as the primary common language for collaboration and knowledge sharing in today's academic world, enables joint research and publications. Here, all international conferences, seminars, and workshops are conducted in English." (P1, OEQ)

"Having 100% English as the language of undergraduate education provides our students with significant advantages in accessing up-to-date information in their field and following global academic literature." (University A, Website)

"In today's world, access to information has become considerably easier due to the Internet. Around 85% of information available online is in English, making proficiency in a foreign language the golden key to directly accessing knowledge. Furthermore, foreign language skills provide crucial opportunities to engage in international scientific activities and facilitate participation in international exchange programs such as Erasmus+. Therefore, effective language education is essential for those seeking international academic opportunities through student exchange programs." (University K, SFL Student Handbook)

4.2.5.1.2 Sub-theme 5.2: Native English varieties as normative standards in language practices. The data analysis also revealed that while English is used as a global academic language, native English varieties remain dominant in teaching, assessment, recruitment, and publication standards. The following statements are specific examples of how native English norms continue to shape both institutional and informal linguistic environments:

"Of course, standard English is used in written communication. While the institution does not mandate a single variety, we typically choose either American or British English for things like website translations based on personal preference. The textbooks and articles we use also follow either British or American English, depending on the publication company's policy. Including signage and notices around campus, other varieties are not used within the institution." (P61, OEQ)

"Database List (Current subscriptions, past subscriptions, purchases, open access, and free resources). Database Name: Grammarly Type: Tool Description: Grammarly is a tool that checks English texts for grammatical accuracy, identifies grammar mistakes, and also performs plagiarism checks. A subscription for 500 users has been obtained, primarily for academic staff use." (University I, Administrative Activity Report)

"The English Speaking Club is an activity club designed for preparatory students. The aim of this extracurricular activity is to provide students with the opportunity to practice speaking English with a native English-speaking instructor." (University H, SFL Student Handbook)

4.2.6 Category 6: Socio-cultural considerations. Beyond the sociolinguistic considerations explored in the previous category, the data also revealed that the documents refer to socio-cultural interactions when English is used as a medium of their academic, professional, and social environments. One major theme- *English*

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Shaping Social Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Exchange- has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the socio-cultural considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.6.1 Theme 6: English shaping social inclusion and cross-cultural exchange. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* is *English Shaping Social Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Exchange.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping Social Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Exchange: English as a Determinant of Social Integration* and *English as a Bridge for Cultural Exchange and Cross-Cultural Dialogue.*

4.2.6.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1: English as a determinant of social integration. The analysis of the data also revealed that being proficient in English is believed to influence students' social integration, particularly within EMI programs with international participant concentration. In this context, language barriers are thought to affect students' participation in academic and extracurricular activities, which may lead to isolation. The excerpts below illustrate institutional recognition of how language barriers can impede student engagement in both academic and social spheres:

> "As we are a social sciences department, expressive language is more critical. We expect them to communicate effectively. We observe that students who struggle with language proficiency face challenges not only in their courses, especially during classroom discussions, but also tend to isolate themselves socially. The deficiency in language skills appears to hinder their ability to engage fully in their social environment." (P83, OEQ)

> "Attracting students and academic staff from diverse countries to enhance cultural diversity on campus and facilitating the smooth integration of international students into the university's academic, social, and economic environment by promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, offering comprehensive support, and fostering an inclusive atmosphere. [...] Ensuring seamless integration of international students into the academic, social, and economic fabric of the university through comprehensive support services

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and a culturally inclusive environment. (University K, Internationalization Policy)

"The School of Foreign Languages aims to provide high-quality educational experiences to equip students with the language knowledge and skills they need to use the target language effectively as a means of communication in academic, social, professional, and international settings. Recognizing that foreign language proficiency has become a necessity in various aspects of life, the school is committed to ensuring that students can navigate these environments with confidence." (University J, SFL Unit Activity Report)

4.2.6.1.2 Sub-theme 6.2: English as a bridge for cultural exchange and cross-cultural dialogue. The document analysis also revealed that in Turkish HEIs, English is positioned as a means of fostering cultural exchange, enabling students and staff to engage in cross-cultural academic discourse, as revealed in the following institutional accounts:

"We recognize the inseparable connection between language and culture, promoting the study of language through culture and culture through language. [...] We aspire to foster a community of lifelong learners who not only excel in multiple foreign languages but also possess profound insights into diverse cultures, empowering them to navigate and contribute meaningfully to our increasingly complex global society." (University C, SFL Website)

"The primary objective of the speaking club is to create a supportive and engaging environment where participants can enhance their spoken English skills through various interactive activities. The club aims to: [...] Promote Cultural Exchange: [...] Create a platform for participants from different backgrounds to share their cultures and perspectives, thereby enriching the learning experience for all." (University J, SFL Website)

"Computer Engineering (English) Undergraduate Program – Faculty of Engineering – 2024-2025 Academic Year Course Plan – Coordination of Non-Field Courses Undergraduate Program – Rectorate SD0692 English Speaking and Interaction Understanding the communication styles, values, and beliefs of people from different cultures. Intercultural Interaction: Engaging with people from diverse cultural backgrounds by respecting cultural differences and using effective communication strategies." (University J, Website)

4.2.7 Category 7: Emotional considerations. The seventh emergent category relates to the *Emotional Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to issues such as academic emotional well-being, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping Academic Emotional Well-being*- demonstrating the emotional considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.7.1 Theme 7: English shaping academic emotional well-being. The theme that emerged under the *Emotional Considerations* is *English Shaping Academic Emotional Well-being*. One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Academic Emotional Well-being: English as a Source of Faculty and Student Stress.*

4.2.7.1.1 Sub-theme 7.1: English as a source of faculty and student stress. The document analysis also revealed that English is viewed as a source of stress for both faculty and students. In this regard, HEIs engage in stress-relief activities and support students in their language learning experiences to alleviate the pressure of meeting English proficiency requirements, as illustrated by the following institutional excerpts from different HEIs:

> "Some students experience significant stress over the issue and may feel like failures when they struggle. This feeling undermines their self-confidence. For such reasons, it is important to require a certain level of language proficiency during admissions to the departments." (P5, OEQ)

> "The fact that the medium of instruction is English at our Institute increases the significance of foreign language education and it means a challenging preparatory class for our students." (University I, SFL Student Handbook)

> "Clinical Psychologist [...] delivered a seminar on stress management as part of in-service training for academic staff and employees upon the invitation of SFL. The seminar included scientifically based insights on stress management to raise awareness, along with practical exercises. [...] Stress-Relieving Activities: Games and Thought Sharing Objectives: Engage in self-reflection throughout the semester on academic and personal development, identifying strengths, challenges, and areas for further improvement in the English learning journey. Develop personal strategies to integrate stress-

relieving games and activities into study habits and personal routines to establish a balanced approach to managing stress during academic challenges." (University J, SFL Website)

4.2.8 Category 8: Financial considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Financial Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to financial opportunities, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping Financial Standing*- revealing the financial considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the internationalization of universities, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.2.8.1 Theme 8: English shaping financial standing. The theme that emerged under the *Financial Considerations* is *English Shaping Financial Standing.* Two sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Financial Standing: English as an Academic Asset to Financial Growth,* and *English as a Gateway for International Employment.*

4.2.8.1.1 Sub-theme 8.1: English as an academic asset to financial growth. The document analysis, especially institutional strategic reports, revealed that EMI programs are often viewed as revenue-generating assets, attracting international students and funding opportunities. What follows are institutional narratives reflecting how HEIs associate proficiency and EMI with economic benefits for financial sustainability and growth:

> "Publishing in high-impact international journals and participating in projects such as European Union-funded initiatives will enhance institutional prestige, thereby attracting greater financial resources both locally and globally. In this regard, investments in English-medium education and academic activities strategically contribute to the university's sustainable financial growth." (P47, OEQ)

> "High-Level Policy Document: Twelfth Development Plan (2024-2028) Relevant Section / Reference: 636.1 The architecture and engineering curricula in universities will be restructured to train a qualified and foreign language-proficient workforce in areas such as Building Information Modeling, Circular Economy, and Energy Efficiency, as well as in legal, contract management, project management, and risk management topics.

Assigned Task / Needs: The curricula of architecture and engineering programs and the law faculty at our university will be updated in line with the requirements for a qualified and foreign language-proficient workforce." (University J, Strategic Plan)

4.2.8.1.2 Sub-theme 8.2 English as a gateway for international employment. The document analysis revealed that English language education practices are framed as essential for international employability in the global market, as illustrated by the institutional statements below:

"Why Should I Learn English? In today's globalized world, English is the primary language of communication. International conferences, fairs, exhibitions, and business meetings are often conducted in English. Consequently, proficiency in English has become essential for advancing professionally and progressing in your career. In addition to your professional qualifications, having sufficient English proficiency opens up opportunities for employment in multinational companies or working abroad." (University K, SFL Student Handbook)

"Strategic Goal 4: Developing an Internationalized Curriculum -Our curricula must be updated to meet internationally recognized professional competency standards. These curricula should be designed to equip both Turkish and international students with the necessary skills and professional competencies that will be beneficial in their home countries. [...] Education programs should be developed with the awareness that our graduates will serve in the "Global Village" in the future while also considering the diversity within our society. The significance of the common ground between universal and local communities must be taken into account" (University J, Internationalization Strategy Document)

"At our university, we offer language proficiency programs and integrate language courses into the curriculum to enhance our students' communication skills. Proficiency in widely used languages like English can significantly increase our students' employability in a global context." (P43, OEQ)

4.3 The Role of English and Its Agents With Regard to Internationalization as Perceived by Administrators, Academic Staff, and Students (RQ2)

This section presents the findings related to RQ2, which explores how administrators, academic staff, and students in Turkish HEIs perceive the role of English and its agents in relation to internationalization. As detailed in Chapter 3,

data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 85 participants from 11 different institutional contexts. An inductive thematic approach was employed for the analysis, allowing the researcher to address the themes that directly emerge from the participants' narratives without imposing any pre-defined coding structure. The themes in this section represent recurring conceptual patterns and discursive emphasis across interviews, and they aim to capture the complexity of how English functions in the Turkish higher education landscape as perceived by stakeholders such as administrators, academic staff, and students.

Based on data analysis collected through semi-structured interviews, four overarching categories organically emerged from the data: *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations, Socio-Emotional Considerations,* and *Financial Considerations*. Each category encompassed relevant themes and sub-themes, as shown in *Table 8.* Each was detailed by the voices of those directly involved in the context of Turkish higher education.

Table 8

English and Its Agents in Internationalization: Perceptions of Administrators, Academic Staff, and Students

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations	1. English Shaping the Global Academic Context	1.1 English as a Global Lingua Franca
		1.2 English as a Driver of Academic Prestige
		1.3 English as a Driver of Knowledge Dissemination
		1.4 English as the Primary Medium for Global Academic Engagement
		1.5 English as an Indicator for Global Positioning
		1.6 English Medium Instruction as Synonymous with Internationalization
		1.7 English Proficiency Seen as the Benchmark of Academic Success
Sociolinguistic Considerations	2. English Shaping Linguistic Identity	2.1 English as a Source of Linguistic Imperialism
		2.2 Native English as the Standard Outweighing Non-Native Varieties
	3. English Shaping Cultural Identity	3.1 English as a Threat to Cultural Identity
	4. English Shaping Social Identity	4.1 English as a Symbol of Social Prestige
		4.2 English as a Bridge to International Social Communities
		4.3 English as a Facilitator of Social Inclusion
Socio-Emotional Considerations	5. English Shaping Socio-Emotional Well-being	5.1 English as a Catalyst for Self-Efficacy
		5.2 English as a Builder of Grit
		5.3 English as a Source of Stress and Anxiety
Financial Considerations	6. English Shaping Financial Positions/Gains	6.1 English as a Pathway to Financial Growth

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4.3.1 Category 1: Policy and pedagogy-based considerations. The first emergent category pertains to *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping the Global Academic Context*- has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the policy and pedagogy-based considerations regarding the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.3.1.1 Theme 1: English shaping the global academic context. The theme that emerged under the *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* is *English Shaping the Global Academic Context.* The data revealed that the perceived role of English in shaping the global academic context is multifaceted, as there appeared seven sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping the Global Academic Context: English as a Global Lingua Franca, English as a Driver of Academic Prestige*, *English as a Driver of Knowledge Dissemination, English as the Primary Medium for Global Academic Engagement, English as an Indicator for Global Positioning, English Medium Instruction as Synonymous with Internationalization,* and *English Proficiency Seen as the Benchmark of Academic Success.*

4.3.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a global lingua franca. The obtained data revealed that the participants perceive English as an ownerless, neutral, practical, and inclusive tool that enables interaction and communication across different linguistic and cultural contexts. As expressed in the participants' responses, the widespread and dominant use of English is generally seen as a consequence of the interconnected and globalized world and recognized as an important facilitator of all forms of international academic engagement. The following excerpts illustrate how participants' narratives frequently reflect a shared understanding of English as the de facto medium of global institutional communications (e.g., aviation, academia) and English as a personal, culturally unbound medium of communication:

> "Oh, most certainly. Well, it is like I told my students out here, you know, for every plane that lands at the new Istanbul airport. You know, they got a plane coming from Korea. You got a plane, you know, coming from India; you got a plane coming from France. Are those pilots speaking Turkish because they are landing in a Turkish airport? No. Everyone speaks English because it is

the chosen global language of the airline industry. […] You know, and that is just one example of how English has become the chosen language to communicate in most fields. So that is just one example. However, most likely, the situation will be the same for most fields in which they will look for opportunities to work." (P15)

"I have spent my entire life learning and teaching English. Moreover, it is my children's second language, even though they were born in Turkey. Nevertheless, I tried to, you know, give them the language to like and raise them as bilingual. So, to me, English is everything.[...] This is the language of the world, communication, and academia; it belongs to everyone." (P80)

4.3.1.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: English as a driver of academic prestige. The participants' responses revealed that English is perceived as a way to enhance the academic standing and reputation of HEIs. In this respect, HEIs offering EMI programs are often perceived as more prestigious, competitive, and internationally recognized. According to the participants' perceptions, the higher rankings of HEIs, their ability to attract more international students, and their increased visibility are strongly linked to the presence of English as a key driver in establishing and maintaining the academic prestige of HEIs worldwide. Such interpretations are evident in the following excerpts illustrating how responses from different participant groups converge around a shared belief that English is essential to institutional recognition, reputation-building, and access to international platforms:

"Actually, today, it is undeniable that English holds significant power in the landscape of higher education. Most of the time, it serves as the primary means to enhance the prestige of higher education institutions. The global nature of English enables us to reach a broader audience in terms of student recruitment, publications, and collaborations. Look at the best universities in the world. Most of them are either from the UK or the US. Look at the children of wealthy families and royalty; they are all sent to countries where English is the native language and, naturally, the medium of instruction is also English. Think of the Arab royals, for instance. The emirs always receive their education in the UK or the US. The impact of education quality is undeniable. However, I don't think this is a coincidence. They have reached this point today by offering high-quality education in a common language and with their deep-rooted histories." (P35)

"[...] Of course, universities also play a role in shaping their global presence, and the use of English is key to this. When we consider the impact of

language on academic prestige, it's clear that having a high level of foreign language proficiency, particularly in English, is crucial. Academics should be trained to have foreign language proficiency, and the number of universities with such academics and students should be increased. [...] These determine your prestige. This not only enhances your global recognition but also opens doors for international acts such as collaborations, conferences, and exchanges. English is important at this point. Without it, the impact and visibility are limited. Based on this, students will either choose you or not. How well-known you are and what you are doing are both important. If these are not presented in English, the world will never know about you." (P14)

"English is the global language. If you have only Turkish-speaking students or, for example, only Turkish-speaking academics, you can neither create an image as a country nor a university that engages in any exchange program or international collaboration. Nor can you create a brain drain. [...] Imagine how prestigious it would be to achieve all of these. [...] None of these things will happen without English. The role of English is significant in this regard." (P11)

4.3.1.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: English as a driver of knowledge dissemination. In this context, the participants' perceptions regarding English referred to its role in facilitating the spread and sharing of knowledge globally. The participants stated that English enables the rapid and widespread dissemination of research and academic information. Its use in the publication of scientific papers, academic journals, books, and international conferences is considered to make knowledge accessible across borders, accelerating progress and innovation in various domains. In this context, as illustrated below, across participant accounts, the responses point to a shared recognition of English as vital for the dissemination and exchange of scholarly knowledge:

"A university's academic output is only valuable when it is shared globally. Sometimes, what we produce locally remains confined because we are unable to communicate it to the wider world. [...] When you publish in Turkish, it does not have the same reach or impact as publishing in English, which enables a broader audience. This is why academics who publish in English are often more advantaged regarding appointments, projects, or scholarships. [...] When your work is in English, your audience expands automatically. In this sense, English is a powerful tool for showcasing your work to the world and connecting with international peers." (P83)

"One step towards internationalization is to achieve quality locally and in all international publications, ensuring inclusion in prominent indexes and increasing the number of academics who can publish in English in those indexes. As is the nature of our field, we always share what we do with other academics in the same discipline. We speak the same language, share a foundation, and walk a mutual path together. Thanks to this, we can quickly access what has already been said and also have the opportunity to reach a wider audience, allowing us to compare and contrast our work with others, regardless of where we are." (P14)

4.3.1.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: English as the primary medium for global academic engagement. According to the participants' utterances, English, accepted as the lingua franca of academia, is seen as the backbone of global academic engagement, facilitating international collaboration, research, mobility, partnerships, and access to international standards for staff and students. In this regard, the following excerpts from participants at different HEIs commonly portray English as the operational language through which global participation occurs, suggesting that English serves as a prerequisite for legitimacy and inclusion in global academic engagement:

"English facilitates every action across borders, and it makes sense that internationalization, of course, means adopting English as the academic lingua franca. Using English signals that we are modern, globally competitive, and aligned with international standards." (P6)

"So, we use English when lecturing, reading, researching, finding partners, presenting a research article, applying for a conference—everything. I mean, these days, we do not have any partnerships without English. How else, I mean, how would a French, or a Romanian, or a Swedish person come together and contribute to academia? Restricting ourselves to our own languages—how can we academically expand, you know?" (P65)

4.3.1.1.5 Sub-theme 1.5: English as an indicator for global positioning. As shared by the participants, academic engagement through English is perceived as a marker of HEIs' global standing and recognition in the context of internationalization. The participants verbalized that English is viewed as a symbol of academic prestige and alignment with international higher education standards. Here, the idea that English signals international orientation is articulated differently by participants. While some emphasized the symbolic power of English for

institutional visibility, others mentioned its role in transnational academic engagement, as exemplified by the excerpts presented below:

"Offering programs in English and encouraging your staff to publish in English clearly demonstrates a university's commitment to internationalization. When a university adopts English as the global academic language, it establishes a position within the international higher education landscape. [...] It becomes accessible to students worldwide and strives to meet international standards. By engaging in these efforts, you can attract international students, thus strengthening your global positioning. When you attract students from different countries, your position among global universities changes, and the likelihood of being selected from the list of universities increases. For a short period of time, I had the opportunity to serve as a coordinator in the International Office at our university, and I observed that when the language of instruction is English, incoming students refer to your university as an international one. This is because they perceive the potential of the institution to host students from different countries, with English as the common language. However, in reality, this may not always reflect the actual situation, as our students may not be able to speak English as expected. But in terms of visibility and positioning as an international university, English is crucial." (P52)

"When English is the language of instruction, what you are promoting is that I can accept students from all over the world and provide them with courses in a language everyone can understand. That is the whole point behind having programs in English. The number of EMI programs and their quality are key factors pushing a university toward internationalization. But here, I want you to understand that it is not just about having the programs in English, but the way we create opportunities for students from different countries to come together and learn a common language in our country. We aim to attract students in this regard. Furthermore, this not only provides opportunities for international students here and our students if they speak English but also opens many doors for them. They can take full advantage of the courses offered in English and use international academic resources written by international scholars. Then, they prepare themselves to compete on a global level. Plus, if they decide to, they can study abroad more easily. Since they already have that foundation for language proficiency." (P73)

4.3.1.1.6 Sub-theme 1.6: English medium instruction as synonymous with internationalization. The data revealed that the participants perceive a predominant link between English, facilitated by EMI, and internationalization through adopting English as the medium for instruction, research, and communication in higher

education. The participants see such alignment as a reflection of a broader institutional commitment for institutions seeking international visibility, reflecting stakeholders' perceptions of EMI as a way to promote academic excellence and reputation. As indicated in the excerpts below, a bifocal perspective on EMI is evident, with participants typically equating English with personal and institutional internationalization and participation in international environments:

"In the last few years, I've personally experienced how providing education through English-medium instruction has shaped our university's position in the higher education landscape. Even the profiles of Turkish students have changed; we have begun attracting Erasmus students from European countries. We started collaborating with international academics, and our research has gained a wider audience. I also remember when we hosted an international symposium. These have resulted from the availability of English programs at our department. When the education is in English, the instruction, research, and collaborative efforts are also in English. That's why adopting EMI has made our university more international, not just in terms of students, but also in academic collaborations and efforts." (P54)

"As I mentioned earlier, studying in EMI programs offers significant advantages by broadening access to academic resources and materials. Each discipline has its own specialized terminology and jargon, and being exposed to these terms in their authentic context, where instruction is delivered directly in English, enhances both familiarity and conceptual understanding. This linguistic immersion is undoubtedly beneficial. A lack of alignment between English and native-language terminology can be particularly problematic in critical fields such as medicine. For instance, in an operating room scenario, miscommunication could occur despite all parties having equal expertise if a surgeon refers to a procedure as 'trepanation' but the supporting medical staff is unfamiliar with this term because they only know its Turkish equivalent. Such discrepancies in terminology highlight the importance of English proficiency in ensuring effective international communication, particularly in high-stakes professional environments." (P11)

4.3.1.1.7 Sub-theme 1.7: English proficiency seen as the benchmark of academic success. As stated by the participants, English proficiency is perceived as an inevitable determinant of academic success, shaping access to opportunities such as scholarships, research collaborations, and career advancement. In this regard, for students, strong English skills are often considered to determine who secures exchange opportunities and engages actively in academic requirements. As for

academics, it is perceived that publishing in high-impact journals, attending international conferences, and receiving research funding largely depend on their ability to communicate in English. At this point, the following faculty excerpts exemplify how English acts as an implicit filter, amplifying or constraining the impact of academic expertise, often shaping who gets seen, heard, and funded on the international stage:

> "In academia, having expertise isn't sufficient; your capability to convey that expertise in English greatly influences your success. I've witnessed colleagues with exceptional research ideas face challenges when trying to publish in prestigious journals solely due to inadequate English proficiency. Conversely, researchers who can articulate their work effectively in English tend to secure funding more easily, receive invitations to international conferences, and collaborate with global institutions. It's evident that English serves not merely as a tool but as a gatekeeper to academic success. English establishes the standard in an environment where global academic visibility is crucial." (P2)

> "Those who speak English have the chance to access much more resources. Speaking that foreign language is important in terms of being able to learn what is written in that book or research, especially when it is written in a foreign language. Another important thing for students is that when they graduate, especially when they want to work in international companies, they say they must speak at least one foreign language. When you speak English, they ask you what other languages you can speak, but English takes the lead here." (P47)

4.3.2 Category 2: Sociolinguistic considerations. The second emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. Three major themes- *English Shaping Linguistic Identity*, *English Shaping Cultural Identity* and *English Shaping Social Identity*- have emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.3.2.1 Theme 2: English shaping linguistic identity. The first theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping Linguistic Identity.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping*

Linguistic Identity: English as a Source of Linguistic Imperialism and *Native English as the Standard Outweighing Non-Native Varieties.*

4.3.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1: English as a source of linguistic imperialism. The data revealed that among participants, the rise of English in academia is perceived as a linguistic imperialism, where its dominant role is viewed as a form of linguistic hegemony, as reflected in their utterances. Some participants stated that English is becoming increasingly widespread and is fundamentally used in Turkish higher education, expressing concerns that other languages, particularly Turkish, as well as others globally, face the risk of being marginalized. Emerging from these accounts, what surfaces is that the assumed universality of English now creates discomfort, with participants voicing their concerns about its role in narrowing academic discourse and cultural inclusivity, as reflected in the sample narratives of two faculty members from two different HEIs:

> "English certainly serves as a beneficial tool for expansion in many fields. However, the dominance of English in the publishing system also has its drawbacks. This system operates within a commercial cycle that, in a way, turns English into an obstacle to true internationalization. English-language publications do not represent the entirety of global research. For example, in my field, English-speaking countries- primarily the United Kingdom, the United States, and former British colonies like India- dominate. However, in conservation, regions with substantial expertise, such as Mediterranean countries, aren't as prominently represented in English. Italy, for instance, has a rich history in conservation and numerous influential architects and projects, yet they often do not prioritize publishing in English. As a result, their contributions risk being overlooked. Similarly, countries like Spain, France, and Germany, where much of the research and literature is available primarily through translations, may find their influence limited due to the language barrier. In this sense, the predominance of English can restrict the diversity of perspectives and potentially narrow the scope of global academic discourse. [...] English does not necessarily have to be the dominant language. In fact, we are already seeing a shift. For instance, in the tourism industry, English was once the primary language encountered, largely because it was considered easy to learn. However, global tourism is evolving, and multilingualism is becoming more prominent. Tourists are now increasingly offered guides in their languages, reflecting a more multicultural and multilingual approach. This shift is especially evident with the rise of Chinese tourism, as Chinese travelers are now exploring destinations

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worldwide. Similarly, we're seeing a significant influx of tourists from Latin American and Arab countries who prefer to engage in their native languages. For instance, in some Mediterranean regions where English once prevailed, Arabic is now commonly spoken to accommodate the growing number of Arabic-speaking visitors and to enhance cultural visibility. This trend, supported by translation services, aligns with my observation of a broader shift under the United Nations framework. We seem to be moving from a world where English is the common language to one that embraces a more multilingual environment. In the future, English may no longer be the essential language it once was." (P69)

"Sometimes, I feel conflicted about the growing dominance of English in academia. On the one hand, I understand that English proficiency is crucial for engaging with global research, publishing in reputable journals, and participating in international academic networks. On the other hand, I worry about the implications for our local language and culture. For example, I've noticed that younger academics and students tend to write and present in English, even when discussing topics directly related to Türkiye. Some of my colleagues, who are highly competent scholars, struggle to gain recognition simply because their work is not published in English. There is an unspoken assumption that research lacks credibility or global relevance if it is not in English. This perception marginalizes valuable contributions made in Turkish and discourages scholars from giving priority to their native language in academia." (P38)

4.3.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Native English as the standard outweighing non-native varieties. The analysis also revealed that most Turkish higher education participants perceive native English as the standard. When referring to English, most participants in Turkish HEIs point to the English spoken by native speakers. The student excerpts below are striking as they represent how native-speaker norms are not only idealized but also internalized. Accordingly, even the functional aspects of language, such as intelligibility, are often equated with British and American English, leaving little to no room for alternative or localized uses of English:

"Native speakers set the standard for English. If the goal is to sound professional and fluent, that's what we should aim for. [...] Here, all English—British English or American English—but especially most people seem to be fifty-fifty. Fifty percent prefer American English, and fifty percent prefer British English. However, this university has a stronger emphasis on British English, so it is considered more important here at this university." (P12)

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"In my opinion, the English spoken by the native speakers is the most correct and natural. [...] Our professors have different accents, some of whom have been in the United States for 20 years. Someone else has worked at a university in the United Kingdom for 15 years. [...] They speak standard English, like British or American English, which is more transparent and understandable. At least everyone understands the language they speak." (P4)

Conversely, concerning non-native varieties of English, most participants indicated that they had no knowledge or opinions on the subject, and it was noted that no promotion of such varieties had occurred within their institutions. As the following participant accounts indicate, the notion of English remains narrowly defined. For participants holding different roles in HEIs, localized uses of English exist as a gap that is only noticed once it is named:

"Not in any class, no, I have not been exposed to anything like that." (P16)

"No, at this university, I haven't. I've heard about it at my university in the Netherlands, but not here." (P21)

"I have not been given any information about this before. What? Chinglish... No... Now, I heard it for the first time. But I would still prefer to know and use the most commonly used English, to be honest. I don't know if it was not given; it would have been very important. I don't think so, but it's nice to hear it now, know it, and have an idea about it." (P67)

In contrast, participants from the SFLs and FLEDs showed a strong understanding of varieties. Nevertheless, they also indicated that the integration of different varieties of English within their institutions was limited or nonexistent. They explained this by emphasizing that Türkiye, as an EFL country, is not yet prepared for varieties and still needs to focus on teaching and learning standard English. In this regard, the excerpts below highlight a paradox: although faculty demonstrate awareness of English varieties, they leave them pedagogically deferred, rooted in concerns ranging from learners' cognitive readiness to Türkiye's status as an EFL context, subtly reproducing normative language ideologies.

A faculty member serving as the head of FLED highlighted:

"Recently… I think you're talking about ELF, right? I mean… here, we introduce different types of English to our teacher candidates in the program. But I still think when it comes to school kids, like, our students in schools… they're already struggling to reach a certain level of English proficiency. So,

I'm more in favor of teaching standard English at the elementary and middle school levels. They'll hear about other types of English on their own anyway. They pick it up themselves. But personally… my view is that primary and middle school students should start with standard English. As for the concept of World Englishes… I don't think Türkiye is quite ready for that yet." (P72)

At another institution, a faculty member who is also the head of FLED expressed their concerns as follows:

"I mean, it just doesn't work like that. [...] Türkiye is an EFL country. The student doesn't have many people to practice this with, and we discussed in class that this should be done. For example, there is a discussion about what is nativelike, whether there should be a native-like use of language, or whose language English is. Yes, maybe it is there as a single course, but I think it is also emphasized in different classes as needed. But that doesn't mean that there is still a phonetics class here, of course. Standard English is still taught, in essence. But I also care about this. Here, the pre-service teacher should see and hear all types. [...] I care about this and can give these examples in my classes when necessary. But I care about this; they should also hear about learning Standard English. Maybe, of course, now I am repeating it: since we are training prospective teachers, it is essential to listen to it, to know what it is, or there is a discussion to this day, but it is still being discussed in the world, ELF and so on, but there is also Standard English, and this is also being discussed. The pre-service teacher should be aware of both; after a while, they can choose based on their experience." (P10)

The participants' responses revealed that exposure to multiple English varieties is seen as a process that may complicate and slow down language learning. An SFL instructor, providing a parallel perspective to FLED heads, stated:

"The accepted standard here is Standard English, as that's the format used. You're working with students who, despite years of English education, haven't reached a certain level, and now you're tasked with providing them with English instruction in a very short time frame. Essentially, you're expected to compensate for gaps in their previous learning in a condensed period. In my opinion, adding different varieties of English to this process isn't very feasible in Türkiye. I don't think we're ready for that approach here—it feels like we might end up confusing students and causing them to forget what they already know." (P66)

An SFL administrator from another HEI expressed a similar view:

"We already have a set expectation to bring students to a certain proficiency level by the end of the program. Adding a mission, such as incorporating other Englishes, could complicate things to the point where achieving the primary goal becomes unattainable. For instance, there's a risk that students might not achieve the proficiency score required at the final stage, leading to potential confusion or even failure. This isn't something I see as inherently dangerous. Still, considering the background of our students- many of whom start at a zero level- I believe maintaining a clear standard is essential. Even with a standard, we already face challenges, so introducing additional diversity in language varieties may not be feasible in our context." (P75)

4.3.2.2 Theme 3: English shaping cultural identity. The second theme that emerged under *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping Cultural Identity*. The data revealed one sub-theme related to the theme of *English Shaping Cultural Identity: English as a Threat to Cultural Identity.*

4.3.2.2.1 Sub-theme 3.1: English as a threat to cultural identity. The participants' perspectives revealed that English, holding its dominant position in academic settings and globally, is viewed as a cultural threat. In this context, English is considered a significant concern regarding the potential erosion of cultural identity in Turkish higher education. Accordingly, the faculty narratives point to how cultural imbalance is not just linguistic but symbolic. Here, English, far from being neutral, embodies a worldview that shapes cultural consciousness at its core, as reflected in the excerpts given below:

"With the increasing dominance of English, I truly worry about the potential threat it poses to the Turkish language and culture. While English is undoubtedly a powerful tool for internationalization, there's a risk that it may overshadow our native language, diminishing its role and significance, particularly in academic settings. When we prioritize English over time, this could lead to a situation where essential cultural concepts and nuances that can only be fully expressed in Turkish are lost or neglected. Moreover, if the trend continues, future generations may find it harder to connect deeply with Turkish cultural heritage. Academic language is not just a means of communication; it also shapes thought processes, influences values, and embodies the cultural identity of a nation. By emphasizing English in every aspect of education, we risk creating a gap between academic content and the cultural context it belongs to, ultimately eroding the unique perspectives that the Turkish language brings to various fields." (P35)

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"For example, in our own culture or Turkish language classes, there is no practice where our culture is presented and promoted in the same way that foreign cultures, like the English-speaking world, are in English classes. English lessons are always perceived by students as more lively and enjoyable. Our own culture is not conveyed with the same enthusiasm in English lessons. Although the way English culture is taught provides a good example, it actually poses a significant risk. While our culture may seem boring to students, English and American culture appear more attractive to them." (P38)

"As someone who is also interested in Turkish nationalism, I am aware of the richness of our own language and culture. Sometimes, I wonder why this global language isn't Turkish. Why do we live through the impositions of foreign cultures while we ignore or even belittle the richness of Turkish culture? We often either underestimate or completely disregard it. All of our courses are conducted in English, and through this, we become more and more detached from our own cultural roots. Even with elective courses, I believe this danger could be averted. We lack knowledge in areas such as traditional folk dances, handicrafts, or Turkish folk music. Our own cultural wealth is at risk of being lost." (P4)

4.3.2.3 Theme 4. English shaping social identity. The final theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping Social Identity*. Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Social Identity: English as a Symbol of Social Prestige*, *English as a Bridge to International Communities,* and *English as a Facilitator of Social Inclusion.*

4.3.2.3.1 Sub-theme 4.1: English as a symbol of social prestige. The data revealed that participants perceive English as a marker of social prestige in academic and social interactions. In this regard, the participants shared their views that those who speak English fluently are often viewed as more competent, internationally mobile, and intellectually superior in social and professional settings. At this point, the following narratives illustrate a deep entanglement between language and power, where English confers prestige, constructs elitism, and generates inequalities rooted not in knowledge but in linguistic performance:

"When individuals speak fluently at conferences or meetings, they are viewed as more knowledgeable, even if their expertise is similar to others. I've witnessed colleagues hold back from contributing due to a lack of confidence

in their English, while fluent speakers, particularly native ones, effortlessly lead discussions. This results in an unspoken hierarchy, where those who articulate themselves well in English receive more recognition, irrespective of their true input." (P2)

"I know for a fact that this occurs at every university in Türkiye. When a student speaks good English, they are often perceived as a better student. Professors pay more attention to them, they become more popular among their peers, and they simply seem smarter. Then there's another level—the international students. If you're an international student, it means you already speak good English, and their prestige is on a whole different level. They exude a kind of aura that sets them apart. Meanwhile, we're here, struggling with English, barely keeping up, and feeling like our worth is diminished just because we're not as proficient fluent." (P78)

"I don't know if it's as important in Turkey as it is in my home country, but where I come from, speaking English is truly a status symbol. Those who speak English better tend to land higher-paying jobs, build international careers, and are considered more educated and part of an elite group. In Africa, where I'm from, this skill holds significant value. To some extent, I can observe this trend in Turkey as well. Among students and academics, those who are proficient in English are regarded as more successful. That's how I see it- if your English is strong, you can participate in exchange programs, take on leadership roles in groups, or even receive internship offers without actively searching for them; opportunities simply come your way. In this sense, I genuinely believe that English plays a crucial role in shaping our professional and social standing." (P37)

4.3.2.3.2 Sub-theme 4.2: English as a bridge to international communities. The participants' perspectives also revealed that English is seen as an enabler of international interactions, helping them connect with international peers, engage in academic discussions, and integrate into diverse social circles. In this respect, the participant narratives below reveal their perceptions of how English enables them to navigate multicultural environments and expand their social and professional connections as follows:

"[...] I'm someone who has friends all over the world. I have a friend in the Philippines. I have a friend in America. I have a friend in the UK. Obviously, the UK and the Philippines, I think, are English-speaking countries. That's something that English is, as a language, that makes you connect with people. Here at school, it's the same. I connect with various people with various

cultural backgrounds. English makes it easier to talk to people, and I tend to be more vocal in English than I am in Dutch or Turkish because I know more adjectives, and more vocabulary to use to express myself, and I've been talking to friends from outside of the Netherlands and outside of Turkey for years now. And I think the English language is what makes us connect in a better way than if I spoke to them in Dutch or something else." (P25)

"English is like my superpower. It changed the way I communicate with the world. I am really happy with its existence, which extends to my whole life experience. I have friends from different countries, watch TV series and shows in their original language, and when I travel, I know I can communicate with anyone I'd like to. [...] I am also happy about its role in my education. I have many friends on campus, and I can easily communicate with anyone who speaks English. Whether working on assignments together or just hanging out, English gives me the flexibility to connect with people effortlessly. Everyone and everything is more accessible now." (P11)

4.3.2.3.3 Sub-theme 4.3: English as a facilitator of social inclusion. The data also revealed that participants perceive English as a tool for bridging cultural and linguistic boundaries across diverse settings, facilitating international collaborations and professional networking, and fostering a sense of belonging within these contexts. In this context, as the excerpts below suggest, English is viewed as a facilitator of individuals' inclusion in international academic and social settings, where language fluency subtly governs who participates, who leads, and who remains on the margins:

"[...] In academia, initially, you may feel like an outsider when you're not proficient in English. In international conferences, the only power you have is the language you can speak, and if your English isn't strong enough, you truly feel like an outsider. You become aware of how much language affects your participation and how you're perceived and welcomed in those environments. In academia, English is not merely a tool for lecturing or publishing; it serves as a key to visibility and inclusion. It's difficult to articulate, but you need to have it. If you refuse to accept it, you might remain on the sidelines." (P34)

"As I mentioned earlier, there is a clear difference between students who are fluent and those who are not. For instance, when we work in groups, students who speak English proficiently naturally take the lead. This is also true during social and academic events. Take conferences, for example: the students who assist with the event are typically those with strong language

skills. Furthermore, in student clubs, those with better social and language skills are usually involved in management roles. To feel included, it's essential to have strong language skills. Unfortunately, this is not about intelligence or capability. However, I believe those who speak English confidently are more likely to engage, make better connections, expand their networks, and gain more opportunities, while others often remain in the background." (P57)

4.3.3 Category 3: Socio-emotional considerations. Beyond the sociolinguistic considerations explored in the previous category, the data also revealed that the participants engage in socio-emotional interactions with their surroundings when using English as a medium of their academic and social environments. In this regard, the third emergent category pertains to *Socio-Emotional Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Socio-Emotional Well-Being-* has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the socio-emotional considerations regarding the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.3.3.1 Theme 5: English shaping socio-emotional well-being. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* is *English Shaping Socio-Emotional Well-Being.* Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Socio-Emotional Well-Being,* reflecting participants' socio-emotional sense-making, encompassing both positive and negative experiences: *English as a Catalyst for Self-Efficacy, English as a Builder of Grit*, and *English as a Source of Stress and Anxiety*.

4.3.3.1.1 Sub-theme 5.1: English as a catalyst for self-efficacy. The data revealed that the participants view English not merely as a functional skill but as a factor influencing their sense of competence and confidence in academic and social settings. For some, proficiency in English reinforces their self-efficacy, enabling them to engage in discussions, collaborate internationally, and assume leadership roles in academic environments. As reflected in the following excerpts, English proficiency is perceived to convert hesitation into participation and anxiety into confidence, suggesting a profound change in self-perception and academic agency:

"When I was a research assistant at the beginning of my career, I was hesitant to apply for international conferences because I was unsure if my English was proficient enough, especially in terms of speaking skills. However, after my first presentation in Hungary, in an international context, I realized that I could present, but I had a long way to go to master it. In the following years, the more I used English in academic and social settings, the more confident I became in my speaking skills and ability to communicate my ideas orally. Now, I encourage younger academics—many with better language skills than I had—to push themselves beyond their current levels. I know that English has given me access to opportunities such as collaborations, grants, and social networks that I wouldn't have had otherwise." (P35)

"You know... When you're an international student, everyone assumes that your English level is at the top. But that was not the situation. When I first came to this school, I was really nervous about my English level. You know... Of course, I do have a specific level of English, but I was unsure whether I would hold up in such a different country or not. [...] But as I kept using it every day, I became more confident in expressing myself, even socially. [...] In the beginning, I avoided speaking in public as an international student, but after some time, I started participating more actively. [...] When I first presented my homework all alone, in front of the class, I felt a huge boost in my confidence. Then I remember that it was my English that gave me access to opportunities I have been experiencing in a country that I have never been to before, with people that I have never met before." (P12)

"Right after taking the preparatory class, I felt a huge responsibility on my shoulders. The expectations were high because I was anticipated to perform well in a department where all the courses are taught in English. I had no choice but to adapt. At first, everything was a bit challenging, but in time, you got used to it. There's a saying in Turkish: 'Just jump into the sea, and you'll get used to it.' It's like that. [...] Over time, I noticed a change in how I viewed myself. In class, I started asking questions, actively participating in discussions, and practicing well in assignments and exams. I was no longer trying to survive in the class [...] I've even started becoming friends with the international students, not just to improve my English but genuinely. One of my closest friends is African. [...] Over time, my confidence has grown so much that I applied for an Erasmus exchange. If approved, next year, I will be in Poland for a term." (P49)

However, for some participants, limited English proficiency was perceived as undermining their self-efficacy, leading to hesitation, avoidance of participation, and sometimes feelings of exclusion. According to the participants' responses, English is considered to draw a distinction between those who can use it fluently in academic

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and social settings and those who struggle with it. As expressed in the narratives below, proficiency reflects a toll of linguistic insecurity; even seasoned academics question themselves due to language-based self-doubt:

"I had English education in preparatory school, but things are not always as expected. In my department, as you know, most of the courses are in English; only a few are in Turkish, but those are about the Turkish language or Turkish history, etc. There are differences between students' English levels. For example, international students can express themselves better than we can. There are also some Turkish students, particularly those who attended private high schools, who dominate discussions. You might want to say something, but you hesitate because you don't want to say something that seems inferior to what they said. Maybe you have a better idea or know better, but your opinion might come across as silly because you are not as fluent as they are. That's why I believe there is a difference between those who can express themselves fluently and those who struggle. [...] It's not because we lack ideas; we do have ideas. But it's not easy for us to express them quickly and confidently in English like they do. [...] The international students also become friends with such students. Maybe they don't really get along well, but they manage with English somehow. Maybe you'd get along even better, but you don't know because your English proficiency isn't enough. [...] Over my two years of education here, I've noticed that the gap is widening, and those who are less fluent often get lost in the crowd. You can feel like you are always behind, and sometimes, it is perceived as a lack of intelligence, which isn't fair." (P56)

"Despite years of experience in my field, I often hesitate to speak up in academic and social settings. I worry that my English isn't 'perfect' enough, and I fear that any minor mistake might make me seem less competent. Sometimes, I opt to remain silent rather than risk being misunderstood. [...] I know I have valuable insights to contribute, yet the feeling of sounding incompetent holds me back. [...] Throughout my career, during the coffee breaks, I have seen too many academics with less expertise who can speak confidently simply because they are more comfortable and proficient in English. Instead of hesitating, they participate without struggling as we do. [...] Sometimes, this has made me question my own abilities. Of course, this is not due to my knowledge in my profession, but rather because of the language skills that constantly make me feel at a disadvantage. (P58)

4.3.3.1.2 Sub-theme 5.2: English as a builder of grit. The participants' perspectives revealed that English is perceived as a form of practice fostering grit in both academic and professional settings. In this regard, participants indicated that

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learning and using English, especially in academic and social settings, is a process that demands considerable time, effort, and persistence, which is reflected in their other experiences within these contexts. The following excerpts illustrate how participants view their experiences with English, through repeated effort and long-term commitment, as a way to develop grit, as reflected in the perceptions of the participants:

"I remember that my first article submission was rejected with extensive revision comments on language issues. I re-edited that paper five times before resubmitting it. I have never given up and have tried my best to develop my writing skills. I took extra courses with and without a tutor and had speaking classes with native speakers. As you might assume, I spent a decent amount of money but continued to improve. Now, I can't claim that I write like a native speaker- yes, that's true- but I have multiple international publications. Looking back, I realize that the effort I put into enhancing my English skills didn't just make me better at the language; it made me more determined in everything I do. [...] Even in my social life. Even in my personal relations. [...] Some academics might hesitate to verbalize such challenging paths, but I like to share this story as a personal success when asked, to encourage young academics." (P47)

"I had always been a good student and got into a great program. But before starting, I had to go through this preparatory year. I can't even explain how much I study right now. I've been spending my hours, days, and nights improving my English. I write everything down. I make vocabulary lists. I write example sentences. I even keep a notebook for words I pick up from Netflix shows. [...] I participate in the Erasmus Club because, you know, they organize activities to integrate international students into life in the city. Everyone there speaks really good English. I don't walk; I run to these social activities to be part of the interactions because I know they help me grow. [...] Over time, even my professors have noticed that the more I push myself, the better it gets. It is starting to pay off. This preparatory journey has made me realize that I need to be persistent with what I enjoy. I know that if I like something, I can do anything I want to, even if it feels impossible at the time. [...] Next year, I'm even thinking about taking Japanese as an elective. Maybe it'll be harder, maybe even impossible, but now I know it's worth trying. Why not?" (P19)

4.3.3.1.3 Sub-theme 5.3: English as a source of stress and anxiety. The analysis also revealed that while many participants acknowledged the contributions of English to enhance academic and social opportunities, they also pointed out the

significant emotional burden it places on those who struggle with it. For many students and academics, English is perceived as a constant source of pressure-whether it's the fear of making mistakes, the stress of being judged as incompetent due to language proficiency, or the anxiety of being unable to fully express themselves in international academic and social settings. In this context, the data revealed that the participants perceive English-sourced stress as manifesting differently depending on their roles and experiences. The students mostly stated that they hesitate to speak in public and participate in discussions, and sometimes avoid applying to an exchange program, as reflected in the following excerpt:

> "I would love to join the Erasmus program; I would love to study abroad. But for us Turkish students, going abroad isn't that easy—Erasmus is pretty much the only way. And for that, you need good English. I don't know if I can do it. The exam here is just a multiple choice test, but once you're there, you have to speak in class and make friends. [...] If I ever live in a foreign country, I'll need to do some other things like shopping, maybe visit a doctor, or handle other social situations. [...] When I think about all that, I start feeling stressed. I wonder—can I really do it? Will I be able to find my way, keep up with the classes, and actually take part? Everyone says, 'Just go, you'll figure it out somehow,' but I keep asking myself, will I really be able to survive there? This fear holds me back every time I consider applying. But at the same time, how much time do I have left to think about it? Opportunities are limited, and I know I have to overcome this, but I just haven't been able to yet." (P74)

Faculty members, on the other hand, stated that they experience some other concerns, particularly regarding publishing in English, participating in academic discussions, or presenting at international conferences. In this regard, as the excerpt below illustrates, the unpredictable nature of linguistic performance creates pressure points that diminish the speaker's perceived authority:

> "Of course, we survive. No one knows your research better than you do, so delivering a presentation you have carefully prepared feels much more comfortable. However, for those 30-minute presentations, the real stress begins when the question-and-answer session starts. That's when everything becomes unpredictable, and you have to respond on the spot. I remember once I was in Spain for a conference. Everything was fine; my presentation went smoothly. Then, the questions started to come. At first, I was comfortable with the participants, as most were non-native speakers and

relaxed with the language. But then a native professor asked me something in a fast, complex way, and for a few seconds, my mind went blank. I was hesitant and lost the flow of the discussion. [...] Engaging spontaneously in a high-level academic discussion was a real struggle. [...] And then there are coffee breaks—situations where you still need to engage in daily conversation and social interactions. Even the stress of that alone can be overwhelming." (P1)

4.3.4 Category 4: Financial considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Financial Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how participants perceive English as linked to economic opportunities, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping Financial Positions/Gains*- revealing the financial considerations regarding the role of English and its agents with regard to internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.3.4.1 Theme 6. English shaping financial positions/gains. The theme that emerged under the *Financial Considerations* is *English Shaping Financial Positions/Gains*. One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Financial Positions/Gains: English as a Pathway to Financial Growth.*

4.3.4.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1: English as a pathway to financial growth. The participants' utterances emphasized how English is often directly seen as an economic asset- those who speak it fluently have greater access to higher-paying jobs, scholarships, and international career opportunities. Such perceptions are evident in the following participant narratives, which highlight how English functions as a currency of access and future investment:

> "[...] English isn't just an advantage- it's a necessity and sometimes a privilege. If you want to publish in high-impact journals, secure research grants, or be invited to global conferences with travel grants, your English proficiency has to be strong. I realized this early in my career, so I focused on improving my English, and with that came new opportunities. I secured research funding, participated in Erasmus projects, and was eventually offered a paid visiting position at a university abroad- a role I wouldn't have been considered for without my English skills. [...] It had a direct financial impact on my life. I was able to apply for global fellowships that significantly improved my financial standing. My expertise cannot be underestimated in

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my career trajectory, but it is impossible to deny that language's effect." (P83)

"In my home country, English doesn't just put you five or ten steps ahead- it puts you a hundred steps ahead. That's why I left and came to Turkey to study. I knew that improving my English here would give me a significant advantage when I returned home. Most people in my country have degrees, but because they don't speak English, they end up in low-paying jobs with little career progression. Employers don't just look at qualifications anymore; they want people who can communicate effectively in English, especially in global industries. With the education I'm receiving here, I believe I will have access to far better life opportunities and significantly higher salaries. (P13)

"[...] I'm already trying to make the most of my summers by doing internships. Last year, when I started researching internship opportunities- and I'm not talking about small local businesses but major companies- I quickly realized that English proficiency was a baseline requirement. The job postings were in English, and many companies even conducted interviews in English. I've also heard that some of these companies pay salaries in foreign currency, which makes the opportunities even more appealing. Naturally, when you see this, you want to be part of that world. [...] When I was in the preparatory year, I also attended extra English courses. Many people told me it was unnecessary, even a waste of money, but I knew that in the long run, this investment would pay off because, thanks to this, I would earn better. [....] When I attend career talks here, I see local and international speakers who are experts in their fields and speak fluent English. They have built strong careers and enjoy financial stability- exactly what I want for my own future." (P60)

4.4 The Perceived Role of English in GCI in the Macro-Level Policies of the Turkish CoHE (RQ3a)

This section presents the findings regarding RQ3a, which investigates the perceived role of English in shaping GCI within the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE. As reported in Chapter 3, the data were gathered by collecting 24 policy documents, including policy texts, strategy reports, and other subject-specific documents. The data, analyzed through an inductive thematic approach, revealed not predetermined but organically emerging categories from repeated patterns and discursive constructions within the documents. The analysis aimed to reveal how English is positioned within the national policy agenda in relation to GC.

Based on the analysis of the data collected through policy documents, eight overarching categories emerged from the data: *Political Considerations*, *Ideological Considerations*, *Epistemological Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations*, *Socio-Cultural Considerations*, *Socio-emotional Considerations*, *Financial/ Economic Considerations*, and *Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations.* Each category encompassed relevant themes and sub-themes, as shown in *Table 9*. Each was detailed by the statements retrieved from the policy documents that guide the higher education landscape in Türkiye.

Table 9

English in the Macro-Level Policies of the Turkish CoHE on GCI

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Political/ Diplomatic Considerations	1. English Shaping Türkiye's International Policies and Practices	1.1 English as a Catalyst for Strengthening Internationalization and Enhancing Global Positioning
		1.2 English as a Tool for Global Governance and International Cooperation
		1.3 English as a Language of Civic Society and NGO Collaboration
		1.4 English as a Language for Global Development Discourse
Ideological Considerations	2. English Impacting National Ideologies	2.1 English as a Tool for National Representation
		2.2 English as a Bridge Between National and Universal Culture
Epistemological Considerations	3. English Shaping Epistemologies	3.1 English as a Medium for Global Knowledge Integration
Sociolinguistic Considerations	4. English Shaping Global Linguistic Practices	4.1 English as the Lingua Franca of Global Academia
		4.2 English as a Tool for Global Communication
Socio-Cultural Considerations	5. English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange	5.1 English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Exchange and Global Values

Table 9 (cont'd)

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Socio-Emotional Considerations	6. English Impacting Global Solidarity And Humanitarian Engagement	6.1 English as a Language of Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response
Financial/ Economic Considerations	7. English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth	7.1 English as an Essential Skill for a Global Workforce 7.2 English as a Driver of Global Economic Competitiveness
Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations	8. English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices	8.1 English as a Medium of Instruction in Higher Education Institutions 8.2 English as a Benchmark for Global Educational Alignment and Standards

4.4.1 Category 1: Political/diplomatic considerations. The first emergent category relates to *Political/ Diplomatic Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Türkiye's International Policies and Practices*-has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the political/ diplomatic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.1.1 Theme 1: English shaping Türkiye's international policies and practices. The theme that emerged under the *Political Considerations* is *English Shaping Türkiye's International Policies and Practices.* The data revealed that the perceived role of English in shaping Türkiye's international policies is comprehensive, as there appeared four sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping Türkiye's International Policies and Practices: English as a Catalyst for Strengthening Internationalization and Enhancing Global Positioning, English as a Tool for Global Governance and International Cooperation, English as a Language of Global Civic Society and NGO Collaboration,* and *English as a Language for Global Development Discourse.*

4.4.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a catalyst for strengthening internationalization and enhancing global positioning. Although not explicitly stated in the policy documents, English appears to function as an implicit facilitator in Türkiye's visions to strengthen its global presence in academia, diplomacy, and economic competitiveness. In this respect, it points to the fact that English, beyond being a merely medium of communication, plays a subtle yet strategic role in Türkiye's integration into broader transnational interactions, fostering a sense of interconnectedness that aligns with wider global dynamics:

> "Programs offering instruction in foreign languages play a crucial role in attracting international students. It is evident that for the effective implementation of the project aimed at meeting other countries' needs for academic staff, the number of English-taught programs at the master's and doctoral levels must be increased. To achieve this goal, a series of action plans will be developed to provide special support to universities selected as pilots for internationalization. Reaching Türkiye's target of achieving a graduate student ratio of approximately 45%- similar to the ratio of

international graduate students in higher education institutions in developed countries- is also essential to this endeavor." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 61)

"Public, cultural, and educational diplomacy activities will be deepened, and effective studies will be carried out to promote Türkiye in international public opinion in order to increase Türkiye's international visibility and strengthen its image." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 247)

4.4.1.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: English as a tool for global governance and international cooperation. Based on the analysis, the data revealed that while not explicitly stated, English appears to serve as a key instrument in strengthening Türkiye's engagement in global governance. Through active participation in various global collaborations, networks, and diplomatic engagements, Türkiye positions itself within decision-making processes and contributes to global initiatives. Given that these platforms, while multilingual in nature, predominantly operate in English, the language quietly reinforces Türkiye's ability to navigate and engage with the evolving landscape of global interactions:

"The main objective is to provide better quality and stronger contribution to the global development agenda; through effective participation in international organizations, efforts towards improvement of global governance and developed relations at a global scale, particularly with emerging economies and LDCs." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 124)

"To achieve [...] strategic objectives and enhance the recognition and quality of our universities, the New CoHE aims to increase the number of programs offered in foreign languages over the five-year period ending with the 2021-2022 academic year." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 2)

"In recent years, interaction among countries has increased, and bilateral, multilateral, regional, and global relations with other countries have gained more importance for the economic and social development of countries in the process of globalization. In this process, Türkiye has actively participated in multilateral organizations such as the UN, OECD, IMF, WTO, NATO, EU, WB, OIC, BSEC, ECO, and G-20 and thereby increased its bilateral relations in terms of quality and quantity." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 141)

4.4.1.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: English as a language of global civic society and NGO collaboration. The document analysis revealed that English appears to function

as an underlying enabler in Türkiye's engagement with international civil society organizations. While these organizations often promote multilingualism, English remains the primary working language, subtly influencing the nature of interactions and facilitating deeper involvement. In this context, Türkiye positions itself within a global discourse framework where collaboration, advocacy, and knowledge exchange are primarily conducted in English:

> "Programs and support will be developed in order to increase the international organization and collaboration of NGOs." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 238)

4.4.1.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: English as a language for global development discourse. Although not explicitly stated, English subtly operates as a conduit for Türkiye's engagement in global development frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), environmental policies, green transformation, and digitalization. While these discussions mainly occur in multilingual and multicultural settings, English remains the dominant medium, shaping access to policy dialogues and global efforts:

> "The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have served as a comprehensive and holistic reference for Türkiye's human-centered development efforts, aligning with the international community around this inclusive global agenda." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 186)

4.4.2 Category 2: Ideological considerations. The second emergent category pertains to *Ideological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Impacting National Ideologies-* has emerged from the data analysis, focusing on the ideological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.2.1 Theme 2: English impacting national ideologies. The theme that emerged under the *Ideological Considerations* is *English Impacting National Ideologies.* There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Impacting National Ideologies*: *English as a Tool for National Representation* and *English as a Bridge Between National and Universal Culture.*

4.4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1: English as a tool for national representation. As mentioned earlier, the document analysis reveals that English subtly serves as a vehicle for Türkiye's national representation in international spheres, particularly in academic collaborations, cultural diplomacy, and economic partnerships:

> "The long-term development goal is to improve the global position of Türkiye and enhance the welfare of citizens with structural transformations based on the principal social values and expectations of the nation in a reshaping world." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 27)

4.4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2: English as a bridge between national and universal culture. The document analysis revealed that Türkiye participates in global engagements and interactions that predominantly occur in English while strongly emphasizing preserving its national identity. This approach reflects a dual strategy concerning Türkiye, actively engaging in global culture while simultaneously safeguarding national distinctiveness. This positions English as a bridge to transnational participation without overshadowing the primacy of national identity:

> "Turkish culture will be made open to improvement and it will contribute to the accumulation of universal culture, without losing its richness and original structure, and the progress of participation in cultural and artistic activities as a lifetime habit will be supported." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 45)

4.4.3 Category 3: Epistemological considerations. Following the ideological considerations, the third emergent category relates to *Epistemological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Epistemologies*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the epistemological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.3.1 Theme 3: English shaping epistemologies. The theme that emerged under the *Epistemological Considerations* is *English Shaping Epistemologies.* One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Epistemologies: English as a Medium for Global Knowledge Integration.*

4.4.3.1.1 Sub-theme 3.1: English as a medium for global knowledge integration. The document analysis revealed that English plays a subtle yet influential role in shaping Türkiye's engagement with global knowledge production and epistemic frameworks. Accordingly, as the dominant language of scholarly discourse, with internationalization efforts prioritizing English-language publications, programs, and projects, English is positioned as an essential component of epistemic authority in global knowledge production:

> "With a quality and result-oriented management approach, it is aimed to create an innovative and competitive higher education system that will make our universities a center of attraction for international students and academicians who are successful in their fields, aiming to train academic staff and qualified manpower with the competence to contribute to universal knowledge production in line with the needs of Türkiye." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 159)

> "Curriculum will be updated in accordance with global developments and needs, based on national, spiritual, moral, and universal values, and the quality and quantity of digital content will be improved." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 161)

4.4.4 Category 4: Sociolinguistic considerations. The fourth emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping Global Linguistic Practices*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.4.1 Theme 4: English shaping global linguistic practices. The theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping Global Linguistic Practices*. Two sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Global Linguistic Practices: English as the Lingua Franca in Global Academia* and *English as a Tool for Global Communication.*

4.4.4.1.1 Sub-theme 4.1: English as a lingua Franca in global academia. As previously mentioned, the data analysis reveals that English is strategically incorporated and utilized as the primary medium for Türkiye's international academic communication in higher education diplomacy, curriculum design,

international exchange programs, and projects, as well as the language used in high-impact research, highlighting its role as an academic lingua franca:

> "To achieve these strategic objectives and enhance the recognition and quality of our universities, the New CoHE aims to increase the number of programs offered in foreign languages over the five-year period ending with the 2021-2022 academic year." (CoHE, 2017a, [D12], p. 2)

> "Curriculum will be updated in accordance with global developments and needs, based on national, spiritual, moral, and universal values, and the quality and quantity of digital content will be improved." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 161)

4.4.4.1.2 Sub-theme 4.2: English as a tool for global communication. The document analysis revealed that English is deeply embedded in Türkiye's internationalization policies as a critical tool to enhance diplomatic negotiations, multinational business operations, and cross-cultural interactions. Consequently, the use of English as a common language in agreements, global collaborations, and higher education serves as a tool for global communication, underscoring Türkiye's efforts to remain integrated into global frameworks:

> "The main objective is to provide better quality and stronger contribution to the global development agenda; through effective participation in international organizations, efforts towards improvement of global governance and developed relations at a global scale, particularly with emerging economies and LDCs." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 124)

> "[...] Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests." (VQA, 2015, [D21], p. 23)

4.4.5 Category 5: Socio-cultural considerations. Beyond the sociolinguistic considerations explored in the previous category, the data also revealed that the documents refer to socio-cultural interactions when English is used as a medium of their academic, professional, and social environments. One major theme- *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange-* has emerged from the analysis of the

qualitative data focusing on the socio-cultural considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.5.1 Theme 5: English impacting soft power and cultural exchange. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Cultural Considerations* is *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange*. There appeared one sub-theme under the main theme, *English Impacting Soft Power and Cultural Exchange: English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Exchange and Global Values.*

4.4.5.1.1 Sub-theme 5.1: English as a medium for promoting intercultural exchange and global values. The analysis of the documents revealed that English functions as a subtle yet significant medium for intercultural exchange and the transmission of global values in higher education. Through mobility and exchange programs, alongside international collaborations and partnerships, CoHE policies ensure that individuals can navigate diverse multicultural settings while maintaining their national and cultural identity, fostering a sense of global belonging among Turkish youth:

> "Internationalization is defined as the approach in recent years where higher education, both nationally and internationally, embraces and internalizes principles such as solidarity, cooperation, and collaboration. It involves conducting internationalization efforts with an emphasis on social justice and global citizenship, producing new knowledge with these values at the forefront. […] Internationalization is one of the most effective tools used by higher education institutions to enhance intercultural dialogue, negotiation, and interaction, thereby fostering an outward orientation through the sharing of research and knowledge. International students and exchange programs also hold ideal value for the two-way approach of public diplomacy. Upon assuming office, the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) immediately prioritized internationalization as one of its key objectives." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 5)

> "Key competences are the defined eight competences that each individual is supposed to achieve within the scope of life-long learning. […] 2) Communication in foreign languages: Shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue; and is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education

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and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests." (VQA, 2015, [D21], p. 23)

"The main objective is to ensure that all individuals have equal access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities on the basis of the principle of inclusiveness, to develop their academic, social and professional skills in accordance with international standards, to ensure that they have competence in analytical thinking, financial literacy, collaborative work and leadership, to internalize national, moral, ethical, humanitarian and social values, and to grow up as responsible members of their families and society." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 158)

4.4.6 Category 6: Socio-emotional considerations. Following the sociolinguistic and socio-cultural considerations, the sixth emergent category relates to the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to issues such as global solidarity and humanitarian engagement, with the emergent theme- *English Impacting Global Solidarity and Humanitarian Engagement*- revealing the socio-emotional considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.6.1 Theme 6: English impacting global solidarity and humanitarian engagement. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* is *English Impacting Global Solidarity and Humanitarian Engagement.* One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Impacting Global Solidarity and Humanitarian Engagement: English as a Language of Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response.*

4.4.6.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1: English as a language of humanitarian action and crisis response. The data analysis revealed that, although not explicitly stated in policies, English plays a subtle yet essential role in humanitarian action and crisis response within Turkish higher education. As HEIs develop expertise in areas such

as disaster management, migration studies, and international relations, English facilitates research, global partnerships, and engagement with international organizations. By integrating English, Turkish higher education supports Türkiye's commitment to tackling global issues, contributing to transnational humanitarian efforts while strengthening Türkiye's role in global crisis response:

> "Meeting emergency and humanitarian assistance demands in an active, effective, and timely manner; creating human resource capacity that could respond to countries in need and strengthening operational structure are important considering Türkiye's sense of responsibility and approach to regional and global issues." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 124)

> "Programs and support will be developed in order to increase the international organization and collaboration of NGOs." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 238)

> "[...] Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests." (VQA, 2015, [D21], p. 23)

4.4.7 Category 7: Financial/economic considerations. The seventh emergent category relates to the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to financial and economic opportunities, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth*- revealing the financial/ economic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.7.1 Theme 7: English shaping financial strategies and economic growth. The theme that emerged under the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* is *English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth*. Two sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Financial Strategies and Economic Growth: English as an Essential Skill for a Global Workforce* and *English as a Driver of Global Economic Competitiveness.*

4.4.7.1.1 Sub-theme 7.1: English as an essential skill for a global workforce.
The data reveals that, beyond its academic dimension, English is also regarded as a fundamental skill in vocational and professional education, enhancing workforce mobility and employability in the global economy. In line with government policies, higher education policies emphasize equipping students and staff with foreign language skills- primarily English- to ensure they can adapt to evolving global market demands, engage in cross-border collaborations and partnerships, and access global knowledge networks:

> "Ongoing rapid change in the business world requires individuals to attain not only vocational qualifications but also basic skills. These skills allow individuals to remain longer at work, to increase their productivity in work life, and adapt to changing business and living conditions more quickly." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 186)

> "ARTICLE 5 – (1) [...] the purpose of instruction in a foreign language is to ensure that associate, bachelor, and postgraduate diploma program graduates acquire foreign language competencies related to their fields." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

4.4.7.1.2 Sub-theme 7.2: English as a driver of global economic competitiveness. The analysis of the documents also shows that Türkiye integrates vocational and technical English training into its foreign language instruction to enhance the competitiveness of graduates in the global market. In accordance with government policies that ensure Turkish graduates are prepared for international career opportunities, higher education policies focus on equipping students and staff with foreign language skills to strengthen Türkiye's ability to integrate with the global economy and maintain its competitive edge:

> "The Tenth Development Plan is designed to include not only high, stable and inclusive economic growth, but also issues such as the rule of law, information society, international competitiveness, human development, environmental protection and sustainable use of resources. In the Plan, economic and social development processes of Türkiye are discussed with a holistic and multi-dimensional view, and a participatory approach has been adopted within the human-oriented development framework." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 1)

"The long-term development goal is to improve the global position of Türkiye and enhance the welfare of citizens with structural transformations based on the principal social values and expectations of the nation in a reshaping world." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2013, [D24], p. 27)

4.4.8 Category 8: Instructional/pedagogical considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Instructional/ Pedagogical Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to instructional/pedagogical policies and practices, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices*- revealing the instructional/pedagogical considerations regarding the perceived role of English in GCI in the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.4.8.1 Theme 8: English shaping national instructional policies and practices. The theme that emerged under *Instructional/Pedagogical Considerations* is *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices*. There appeared two sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping National Instructional Policies and Practices: English as a Medium of Instruction in Higher Education Institutions,* and *English as a Benchmark for Global Educational Alignment and Standards.*

4.4.8.1.1 Sub-theme 8.1: English as a medium of instruction in higher education institutions. The analysis of the documents reveals that English, strategically and systematically integrated into Turkish higher education, is not only viewed as a foreign language but also as a critical skill necessary for academic success, employment, and international mobility. Higher education policies prioritize English over other foreign languages, highlighting it as a requirement for internationalization and global competitiveness, with the strategy to expand EMI programs to align with global education trends:

"ARTICLE 8 – (4) In programs partially or entirely conducted in a foreign language: a) Attendance in the preparatory class is mandatory. b) Students who pass the foreign language proficiency and/or placement tests or are exempt from the test and have registered in pre-approved undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate programs are obliged to continue in the foreign language preparatory class. However, with the decision of the governing

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board of the higher education institution, continuation in the program can be made mandatory based on the successful completion of the exams set by the institution. c) Students who fail to successfully complete the preparatory class within one year will be disassociated from the program." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"Article 2 – (1) This Regulation covers all types of foreign language teaching and instruction conducted in higher education institutions established under the Higher Education Law No. 2547, dated 4/11/1981." (CoHE, 2014a, [D6])

"Article 3 – The regulation concerning the objectives, programs, methods, and practices of foreign language education and instruction, and the principles to which institutions providing education in a foreign language will be subject; relating to primary, secondary, and non-formal education institutions shall be issued by the Ministry of National Education; and the regulation concerning higher education institutions shall be issued by the Council of Higher Education, within six months from the date this Law comes into effect, and published in the Official Gazette." (Republic of Türkiye, 1983a, [D5])

4.4.8.1.2 Sub-theme 8.2: English as a benchmark for global educational alignment and standards. The document analysis indicated that, given Türkiye's commitment to maintaining integration within global education frameworks, English is systematically incorporated across all facets of higher education, spanning faculty hiring, curriculum, research output, and student admissions, serving as a benchmark for academic quality, international mobility, and international recognition. In this context, English is perceived as one of the key indicators for standardization and international integration:

> "Since joining the Bologna Process in 2001, our higher education system has integrated into the European Higher Education Area, demonstrating full participation in the European Commission's educational programs, benefiting from exchange programs at various levels, promoting joint research projects and joint degree programs, and significantly increasing the number of international students and faculty members each year. This has allowed Turkish higher education to accumulate a positive track record in internationalization." (CoHE, 2021, [D13], p. 47)

> "In the process of globalization in higher education, the number of international students has increased with efforts to ensure the international integration of the higher education system. With the registration of the Higher

Education Quality Council as a European Higher Education Quality Assurance Registry, the Turkish higher education system has been harmonized with the quality definitions of the European Higher Education Area, and quality qualifications in the higher education system have been improved by closely following global trends and technological developments. [...]" (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 40; 2021, [D23], p. 210)

"By providing education in foreign languages at international standards, students will acquire advanced reading, comprehension, speaking and writing skills." (Presidency of Strategy & Budget, 2023, [D22], p. 164)

4.5 The Perceived Role of English in GCI in the Meso and Micro-Level Practices of Turkish HEIs in Relation to the Macro-Level Policies of Turkish CoHE (RQ3b)

This section reports the findings regarding RQ3b, which examines the perceived role of English in shaping GCI within the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE. For RQ3b, as reported in Chapter 3, data were collected through the analysis of approximately 120 institutional documents (e.g., regulations, syllabi, materials, and exam papers) and open-ended questionnaires administered to 39 administrative and academic staff, of whom 22 provided usable responses. Although RQ3b is structurally connected to RQ3a, focusing on the practical reflections of macro-level policy discourses, it must be noted that the data were analyzed independently. Accordingly, the categories, themes, and sub-themes were not shaped by the findings of RQ3a but rather emerged inductively from the meso and micro-level data themselves. Due to the nature of the sources, some thematic similarities may be observed; however, those arose organically through the data-driven thematic analysis process rather than through any pre-structured framework.

Based on data analysis collected through relevant documents and open-ended questionnaires, six overarching categories emerged: *Political Considerations, Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations, Epistemological Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations*, *Socio-Cultural Considerations*, and *Financial/ Economic Considerations.* Each category encompassed relevant themes and sub-themes, as shown in *Table 10*. Each was further elaborated upon through statements

extracted from the relevant documents and open-ended questionnaires, which illustrate the perceived role of English in the GCI concerning the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

Table 10

English in the Meso and Micro-Level Practices of Turkish HEIs on GCI in Relation to CoHE's Macro-Level Policies

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Political Considerations	1. English Shaping the Higher Education Policies	1.1 English as a Policy-driven Medium for GCI Development
Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations	2. English Shaping the Institutional Academic Practices	2.1 English as a Medium for Developing GC Through Global Academic Engagement
		2.2 English as a Tool for Developing GCI Through 21-st Century Skills
		2.3 English as a Driver of GCI Through Internationalized Curriculum
		2.4 English as an Underutilized Medium for GCI Development
Epistemological Considerations	3. English Shaping the Epistemologies	3.1 English as a Medium for Epistemological Access in GCI Development
	4. English Shaping the Linguistic Norms and Communications	4.1 English as a Lingua Franca in Shaping GCI
		4.2 Native-speakerism as a Barrier to Inclusive GCI
Sociolinguistic Considerations	5. English Impacting National Identity	5.1 English as a Contested Space Between National Identity and GCI Development
Socio-cultural Considerations	6. English Shaping Global Awareness, Interaction and Engagement	6.1 English as a Medium for Cultivating Global Awareness within GCI
		6.2 English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Communications in GCI
		6.3 English as a Medium for Advancing Global Civic Engagement within GCI
Financial/ Economic Considerations	7. English Shaping Financial/ Economic Opportunities	7.1 English as a Gateway to Global Employability in the Context of GCI

4.5.1 Category 1: Political considerations. The first emergent category relates to *Political Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the political considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the GCI in the meso and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs in relation to the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE.

4.5.1.1 Theme 1: English shaping the higher education policies. The theme that emerged under the *Political Considerations* is *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies.* There appeared one sub-theme under the main theme, *English Shaping the Higher Education Policies: English as a Policy-driven Medium for Global Citizenship Identity Development.*

4.5.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a policy-driven medium for global citizenship identity development. The data analysis reveals that many Turkish HEIs adopting EMI align their educational strategies explicitly with national policies emphasizing global competencies for global competitiveness. In this regard, English is perceived not merely as a language of education but as a central tool for developing GCI. Accordingly, institutional practices are reflections of a deliberate effort to integrate English language use with broader national objectives, underscoring the role of English in constructing and reinforcing GCI while simultaneously achieving CoHE's internationalization goals. In this regard, the following institutional account exemplifies how English becomes a strategic signifier of internationalization:

> "[University I], with 100% English as the medium of instruction, employs advanced educational models in engineering, science, and architecture. [...] Through student-centered, project-based educational methods, our students are cultivated as contemporary individuals who are inquisitive, creative, entrepreneurial, successful in teamwork, and capable of developing our own technology. [...] The fact that 100% of the education is carried out in English in all its programs is an indication of the importance that "[University I] attaches to internationalization." (University I, Website)

4.5.2 Category 2: Policy and pedagogy-based considerations. The second emergent category relates to *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* associated

with English. The category reveals how English is viewed as associated with GCI practices. The emerging theme- *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Practices*- highlights policy and pedagogy considerations concerning the perceived role of English in the GCI, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.5.2.1 Theme 2: English shaping the institutional academic practices. The theme that emerged under the *Policy and Pedagogy-Based Considerations* is *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Practices*. There appeared four sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping the Institutional Academic Practices*: *English as a Medium for Developing GC Through Global Academic Engagement*, *English as a Tool for Developing GCI Through 21st-Century Skills*, *English as a Driver of GCI Through Internationalized Curriculum*, and *English as an Underutilized Medium for GCI Development*.

4.5.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1: English as a medium for developing global citizenship through academic engagement. The data analysis revealed that within the Turkish higher education landscape, HEIs explicitly link English proficiency with faculty and students' ability to participate effectively in global academic dialogues, thereby mostly implicitly shaping their identities as global citizens. Through comprehensive English preparatory programs and English-medium curricula, students are considered to internalize international academic norms and acquire essential competencies that will position them as active participants in global scholarly communities. Thus, English is viewed not only as an instructional medium but also as a deliberate mechanism that links institutional academic practices at the meso and micro levels directly to national strategies on global engagement and citizenship, as indicated by the following institutional and participant accounts:

> "Our mission is to help scientists of future by providing the necessary knowledge and ability of foreign language education that is required to meet their language needs during and after their education, to meet the needs of the times and in this way, they will be able to express themselves and represent our institution in international platforms where foreign languages are used as medium of communication." (University I, SFL Student Handbook)

"Here, English as the medium of instruction enables us and students to engage with global scholarship and stay updated with the latest advancements. It also enhances our institution's ability to connect with the global academic community by fostering global citizens." (P1, OEQ)

4.5.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2: English as a tool for developing GCI through 21st-century skills. The data analysis reveals that in Turkish HEIs, English is strategically positioned to equip students with essential 21st-century competencies, directly cultivating their GC identities. In this regard, HEIs explicitly refer to skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and effective communication as foundational outcomes of English-medium programs and English preparatory curricula. Accordingly, the data sourced from both institutional documents and open-ended questionnaires reveal that through targeted curricular activities and learning environments, English instruction is practiced as a tool to enhance linguistic proficiency and enable students to embody GC values:

"The School of Foreign Languages aims to equip its students with 21st-century skills and language proficiency in a stimulating and autonomous learning environment, enabling them to act actively and effectively as global citizens." (University F, SFL Internal Evaluation Report)

"SD0632 English for Academic Purposes in the Context of Global Goals – EAP 100 is an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course designed to help students develop their English language skills through critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, which are fundamental 21st-century skills, as well as through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals." (University J, Website)

"Our department focuses on enhancing students' literacy, enabling them to comprehend significant literary and cultural works while equipping them with critical tools for analysis. [...] We aim to empower individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in an interconnected world, fostering effective communication, cultural appreciation, and global citizenship." (University C, SFL Website)

"Students here develop the ability to learn and adapt core 21st-century skills; these are important for individuals to build a global citizenship identity." (P65, OEQ)

4.5.2.1.3 Sub-theme 2.3: English as a driver of GCI through internationalized curriculum. The data analysis also revealed how English-medium curricula in HEIs explicitly integrate intercultural competencies, critical thinking, and international perspectives, thereby fostering a GCI in higher education. Accordingly, Turkish HEIs strategically position English language instruction to equip students with essential skills and cultural awareness, comprehensively preparing them for global academic and professional environments through internationalized curricula. English is seen and used not just as an instructional medium but as an essential tool for cultivating culturally competent and analytically minded global citizens, as reported on the various HEIs' websites and in internal documents:

> "Through our programs, we [...] prepare you optimally for the future by equipping you not only with language skills but also communication abilities, cultural understanding, and international perspectives." (University A, SFL Website)

> "Advanced English Unit [...] improves academic reading, writing and speaking skills of undergraduate students, along with their critical thinking skills. [...] Improving students' analytical and critical thinking skills in order to prepare them to meet the complex challenges of the modern world as global citizens." (University C, SFL Website)

> "Our Model is designed in a way that attaches importance to action-oriented understanding in our educational philosophy, and in accordance with targeted 21-st century skills defined by CEFR's four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and the basic components of the language (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling rules) and presents them in an integrated way in lessons." (University K, SFL Quality Handbook)

4.5.2.1.4 Sub-theme 2.4: English as an underutilized medium for GCI development. The data analysis also revealed the shortcomings and challenges Turkish HEIs face in fully leveraging English language education for GC despite the widespread recognition and appreciation of English proficiency and instruction. Accordingly, in Turkish HEIs, systemic issues such as insufficient English-medium programs, low student proficiency, and limited faculty language skills are considered to hinder the ability to effectively cultivate global citizens. In this respect, as illustrated below, it is possible to mention the gap between the macro-level internationalization policies of Turkish CoHE and the meso and micro-level realities

within institutions where English is perceived as an underutilized resource rather than a fully realized asset in raising global citizens:

> "Limited number of programs offering education in a foreign language." (University J, Strategic Plan)

> "Students' inadequate proficiency in effectively using a foreign language." (University I, Strategic Plan)

> "Insufficient foreign language proficiency levels of academic staff in certain programs." (University G, Strategic Plan)

4.5.3 Category 3: Epistemological considerations. The third emergent category relates to *Epistemological Considerations* associated with English. One major theme- *English Shaping the Epistemologies*- has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the epistemological considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the GCI, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.5.3.1 Theme 3: English shaping the epistemologies. The theme that emerged under the *Epistemological Considerations* is *English Shaping the Epistemologies.* One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping the Epistemologies: English as a Medium for Epistemological Access in GCI Development.*

4.5.3.1.1 Sub-theme 3.1: English as a medium for epistemological access in GCI development. The data analysis revealed the perceived role of English in providing Turkish higher education faculty and students with direct access to global knowledge, scholarship, and intellectual discourse. In this respect, English proficiency is perceived to fundamentally facilitate engagement with internationally recognized academic resources, textbooks, and scholarly outputs. Accordingly, by integrating English into their curricula and research practices, Turkish HEIs strategically use English to enrich students' epistemological foundations, fostering their development as informed global citizens capable of actively participating in international scholarly and cultural communities. Such perspectives are evident in the following excerpts, illustrating data obtained from two different resources, which

reveal how English is positioned as a medium granting access to global academic discourse:

> "While students develop both linguistic and cultural awareness throughout their language education, they also gain a genuine international perspective on cultural, political, social and global issues with their acquired English language skills. [...] To this end, all courses provide extensive practice in analysis at differing levels. Hence AE courses should be seen as part of an intellectual adventure through which students can further develop their literacy skills and learn to think critically about universally generated knowledge and culture while at the same time enjoying a concentrated opportunity to improve their academic skills in English." (University C, SFL Website)

> "The articles and the textbooks we assign are recognized and widely used in our field, featuring topics and discussions with a global outlook." (P34, OEQ)

> "Our coursebooks are British in origin, with sections dedicated to presenting different cultures. The topics are mostly chosen with a global perspective, enabling students to deal with content based on global issues." (P5, OEQ)

4.5.4 Category 4: Sociolinguistic considerations. The fourth emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. Two major themes- *English Shaping the Linguistic Norms and Communications* and *English Impacting National Identity-* have emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the GCI, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.5.4.1 Theme 4: English shaping the linguistic norms and communications. The first theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Shaping the Linguistic Norms and Communications*. Two sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping the Linguistic Norms and Communications: English as a Lingua Franca in Shaping GCI* and *Native-speakerism as a Barrier to Inclusive GCI*.

4.5.4.1.1 Sub-theme 4.1: English as a lingua franca in shaping GCI. The data analysis also reveals the critical role of English as a common global language,

directly influencing students' GCI within Turkish HEIs. Accordingly, English, adopted institutionally as the primary medium of intercultural interaction, is considered a foundational platform upon which students develop their capacity for global communication, cultural awareness, and international engagement. In this regard, by positioning English as a natural sociolinguistic medium rather than simply an educational tool, universities strategically align their meso and micro-level linguistic practices with macro-level internationalization policies, shaping students' identities as effective and confident participants in global communities, as illustrated by the following excerpts:

> "Considering that foreign language proficiency provides a significant advantage in academic, social, and professional environments today, the institution continues its efforts to cultivate students as individuals who are self-aware, internationally proactive, self-confident, and capable of effective communication throughout their university education and beyond." (University E, SFL Internal Evaluation Report)

> "Our department provides 100% English and provides students with the necessary skills for global interaction. While primary course readings further enhance their global awareness, using English as the language of instruction naturally fosters their communication abilities and prepares them to engage internationally." (P83, OEQ)

> "Our university provides high-quality educational experiences, enabling all Turkish and international students to acquire the necessary foreign language knowledge and skills to effectively manage their academic studies and to express themselves and exchange information in diverse environments where the respective language is used as a medium of communication. (University J, SFL Unit Activity Report)

4.5.4.1.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Native-speakerism as a barrier to inclusive GCI. The data analysis also revealed the reliance on native speaker standards in Turkish HEIs, which undermines the role of English as an inclusive global franca. As a result, although English is often promoted as a medium for global communications, usually in an implicit manner, the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs primarily favor British or American varieties. This approach explicitly excludes other recognized World Englishes and limits the potential of English as an inclusive global communication tool, thereby limiting students' intercultural awareness and

appreciation of linguistic diversity, as evident in the statements from the institution and faculty below:

> "British English is primarily preferred, especially for reading materials, but generally, both British and American English variations are presented to students. Other varieties are not accepted." (P30, OEQ)

> "While there is not a specific variety of English required, non-standard forms of English are not generally accepted." (P40, OEQ)

> "The English Speaking Club is an activity club created specifically for preparatory students. The objective of this extracurricular activity is to provide students with the opportunity to practice English through conversation with a native English-speaking instructor." (University H, SFL Student Handbook)

4.5.4.2 Theme 5: English impacting national identity. The second theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Impacting National Identity.* One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Impacting National Identity: English as a Contested Space Between National Identity and GCI Development.*

4.5.4.2.1 Sub-theme 5.1: English as a contested space between national identity and GCI. The data also revealed the dual and often conflicting role of English in Turkish HEIs, where HEIs simultaneously seek to cultivate global citizens and reinforce national cultural identities. The strategic deployment of English as an instructional medium reveals underlying tensions in identity formation, highlighting how HEIs manage the balance between local values and global engagement. As illustrated by the statements below, these meso and micro-level practices explicitly reflect broader macro-level language and identity policies by the Turkish CoHE, thereby illuminating the complex and contested relationship between native belonging and GC aspirations:

> "Our expectation is that our graduates embody both personal identity and national values in global environments. [...] We hope for the preservation and strong representation of national identity and culture, along with increased tolerance and knowledge about different cultures. Fostering a global identity is important, but it is essential not to forget the local one. The balance

between fostering local growth and developing a global outlook is critical here." (P39, OEQ)

"Promoting national values is at the forefront of our institutional goals. Here in this department, our primary focus is still on national values. Still, we also offer a program in a foreign language, giving students a tool to engage with the global community." (P79, OEQ)

"Our expectation is that our graduates embody both personal identity and national values in global environments." (P40, OEQ)

"Our university, where education is effectively conducted in Turkish alongside foreign languages, stands out as pioneering and distinctive due to this characteristic." (University B, Administrative Activity Report)

4.5.5 Category 5: Socio-cultural considerations. Beyond the sociolinguistic considerations, the data also revealed that the documents refer to socio-cultural interactions when English is used as a medium of their academic, professional, and social environments. One major theme, *English Shaping Global Awareness, Interaction, and Engagement*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the socio-cultural considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the GCI, particularly in the meso- and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.5.5.1 Theme 6: English shaping global awareness and engagement. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Cultural Considerations* is *English Shaping Global Awareness, Interaction, and Engagement*. There appeared three sub-themes under the main theme, *English Shaping Global Awareness, Interaction and Engagement: English as a Medium for Cultivating Global Awareness within GCI, English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Communications in GCI,* and *English as a Medium for Advancing Global Civic Engagement within GCI.*

4.5.5.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1: English as a medium for cultivating global awareness within GCI. The research data also revealed how English education actively shapes students' GCI, particularly through the development of one of its core dimensions, global awareness. In this respect, Turkish HEIs integrate intercultural experiences, global perspectives, and diverse cultural content into EMI, whereby English is

strategically used to foster deeper understanding and sensitivity to international contexts. Accordingly, as illustrated below, these intentional meso and micro-level practices are considered to enhance students' global awareness, serving as a foundational component of their broader GCIs and aligning closely with macro-level internationalization goals outlined by macro-level policies:

> "Having the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus+ programme, students will have a chance to test both their academic performance and their social skills in competitive international environments. This not only enhances its students' exchange experiences but also facilitates their becoming truly global citizens by providing them opportunities for being multilinguals and having cultural awareness and expression." (University C, Erasmus Handbook)

> "While students develop both linguistic and cultural awareness throughout their language education, they also gain a genuine international perspective on cultural, political, social and global issues with their acquired English language skills." (University C, SFL Website)

> "Our department provides 100% English-medium education and provides students with the necessary skills for global interaction. While primary course readings further enhance their global awareness, using English as the language of instruction naturally fosters their communication abilities and prepares them to engage internationally." (P83, OEQ)

4.5.5.1.2 Sub-theme 6.2: English as a medium for promoting intercultural communications in GCI. The data analysis also revealed that through structured international mobility programs, intercultural clubs, and culturally responsive meso and micro-level in-class practices in Turkish HEIs, it becomes evident that English is strategically used to enhance students' intercultural competencies and cultural sensitivities, directly fostering GCI grounded in effective intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, as illustrated by the following statements of institutions and faculty:

> "SD0692 English Speaking and Interaction Module 1: Communication in the Digital World Online Communication Tools: [...] Module 2: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Communication Cultural Differences: Understanding communication styles, values, and beliefs of people from diverse cultures. Intercultural Interaction: Engaging effectively with individuals from different cultures by respecting cultural differences and

employing appropriate communication strategies. Global Issues: Gaining awareness of global issues and collaborating to find solutions. Language and Identity: Understanding the role of language in identity formation and its significance in intercultural communication." (University J, Website)

"The goal of the intercultural club is to provide a broad perspective to students and promote respect and instill cultural sensitivity in educational practices, creating inclusive learning environments through the different themes and projects of intercultural collaboration, cultural sensitivity in education, and the creation of intercultural friendships. [...] Promote Cultural Exchange: Create a platform for participants from different backgrounds to share their cultures and perspectives, thereby enriching the learning experience for all." (University J, SFL Website)

"In foreign language classes, we mostly benefit from role-play exercises to stimulate cross-cultural scenarios. This can be applied to provide a form of intercultural interaction, supporting both language development and the greater cultural awareness." (P7, OEQ)

4.5.5.1.3 Sub-theme 6.3: English as a medium for advancing global civic engagement within GCI. The data also revealed that Turkish HEIs explicitly integrate global civic values, sustainability goals, cultural sensitivity, and ethical reflection into English-medium activities and curricula in their meso- and micro-level practices. By promoting global civic responsibility and intercultural dialogue through structural initiatives such as mobility programs, intercultural clubs, and ethical discussions, English is strategically used to empower students' meaningful engagement with global communities, shaping their identities as active and responsible global citizens, as evident in the statements below:

"Aligned with [University C's] mission, we strive to educate individuals who possess strong ethical values, appreciate diversity, and engage with local and global issues. By nurturing these values, the SFL equips students to become responsible citizens and successful professionals, prepared to contribute meaningfully to the world around them. [...] "Special emphasis is given to encouraging students to become intellectually engaged with diverse aspects of cultural and social issues through the medium of a wide variety of texts in English. [...] We aspire to foster a community of lifelong learners who not only excel in multiple foreign languages but also possess profound insights into diverse cultures, empowering them to navigate and contribute meaningfully to our increasingly complex global society [...] We aim to provide an enriching educational experience that transcends linguistic and

cultural boundaries, enabling students to become proficient communicators and engaged global citizens. [...] We value active engagement with local and global communities, acknowledging that language and culture are bridges to meaningful connections and collaborations." (University C, SFL Website)

"Would you like to practice English by participating in different individual and group projects? In this club, you can improve your English skills and learn about important global issues. [...] This club's purpose is to provide an engaging environment for students to practice English while developing global awareness, ethical thinking, and interpersonal skills through meaningful activities. [...] "Promote Cultural Exchange: We create a platform for participants from different backgrounds to share their cultures and perspectives, thereby enriching the learning experience for all. [...] We encourage students to reflect on values proposed in books or movies, connecting and comparing them to real-life situations and ethical dilemmas, address ethical issues, and inspire students to make thoughtful decisions in their lives." (University J, SFL Website)

"Here in our classes in the preparatory year program, we include discussions on global issues, allowing students to engage with the current international topics." (P40, OEQ)

4.5.6 Category 6: Financial/economic considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how English is perceived as linked to financial and economic opportunities, with the emergent theme, *English Shaping Financial/ Economic Opportunities*, revealing the financial and economic considerations regarding the perceived role of English in the GCI, particularly in the meso and micro-level practices of HEIs relative to the macro-level policies of the Turkish CoHE.

4.5.6.1 Theme 7: English shaping financial/economic opportunities. The theme that emerged under the *Financial/ Economic Considerations* is *English Shaping Financial/ Economic Opportunities*. One sub-theme appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Financial/ Economic Opportunities: English as a Gateway to Global Employability in the Context of GCI.*

4.5.6.1.1 Sub-theme 7.1: English as a gateway to global employability in the context of GCI. The data analysis also revealed that HEIs meso and micro-level

practices, such as structured English programs, global career-oriented events, and targeted educational strategies, are directly linked to the role of English in providing global employment opportunities. Accordingly, Turkish HEIs align their English-medium GCI practices with tangible economic preparedness, facilitating their successful integration into the global workforce, as illustrated below with the statements of institutional documents and faculty:

> "A seminar titled "Overseas Job Opportunities and the Importance of English" was held in collaboration with the Economics Community and the English Culture Club. Such seminars focusing on international employment opportunities and the significance of foreign language skills encourage integration into the global business environment." (University E, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Internal Evaluation Report)

> "With the high-quality foreign-language education they receive, our graduates are equipped with the competencies to pursue careers not only nationally but also internationally." (University B, Administrative Activity Report)

> "We provide English-medium instruction programs here. These programs are significant because they equip students to match the language skills of their international counterparts. This might strengthen their competitiveness in globalized job environments." (P35, OEQ)

4.6 The Role of English and Its Agents in Shaping GCI Within the Context of Internationalization as Perceived by Administrators, Academic Staff, and Students (RQ4)

This section presents the findings related to RQ4, which explores how administrators, academic staff, and students in Turkish HEIs perceive the role of English in shaping GCI in the context of internationalization. As detailed in Chapter 3, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 85 participants from 11 different institutional contexts. An inductive thematic approach was employed for the analysis, allowing the researcher to address the themes that directly emerge from the participants' narratives without imposing any pre-defined coding structure. The themes in this section represent recurring conceptual patterns and discursive emphasis across interviews, and they aim to capture the complexity of how English

functions in the construction of GCI in the Turkish higher education landscape as perceived by stakeholders such as administrators, academic staff, and students.

Based on the analysis of data collected through semi-structured interviews, eight overarching categories emerged from the data: *Strategic and Functional Considerations*, *Political Considerations*, *Ideological Considerations*, *Epistemological Considerations*, *Sociolinguistic Considerations*, *Socio-Emotional Considerations, Ethical Considerations,* and *Financial Considerations*. Each category encompassed relevant themes and sub-themes, as shown in *Table 11*. Each was detailed by the voices of those directly involved in the Turkish higher education context.

Table 11

English and Its Agents in Shaping GCI Within Internationalization: Perceptions of Administrators, Academic Staff, and Students

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Strategic and Functional Considerations	1. English as the Mediating Component of Global Interaction and Citizenship	1.1 English as a Global Lingua Franca
		1.2 English as a Policy Tool for Structuring GC
		1.3 English as a Facilitator of GC
		1.4 English as a Prerequisite for Advancing GC Strategies
		1.5 English as a Strategic Lever for Global Visibility
		1.6 English as an Enabler of Global Civic Engagement
Political Considerations	2. English Manipulating the Global Political Context	2.1 English as a Tool for Mobilizing Global Participation
		2.2 English as a Medium of Political Resistance
		2.3 English as a Barrier to Political Representation
		2.4 English as a Tool for Academic Political Discourse on Global Issues
Ideological Considerations	3. English Shaping the Global Ideological Landscapes	3.1 English as a Gateway in the Global Flow of Knowledge
		3.2 English as a Hegemonic Force in Global Literacy Practices
		3.3 English as a Reinforcer of Western Norms in Knowledge and Culture
Epistemological Considerations	4. English Enabling the Production of Global Knowledge	4.1 English as an Epistemic Structure in Scientific Discourse
		4.2 English as a Key Driver in Global Intellectual Progress
		4.3 English as a Gatekeeper in the Validation of Global Knowledge
		4.4 English as a Constraint for Multilingual Knowledge Diversity

Table 11 (cont'd)

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Sociolinguistic Considerations	5. English Impacting Identity	5.1 English Forming a Global Identity
		5.1.1 English as a Means of Developing Global Self-Identity
		5.1.2 English as a Tool for Global Self-Expression
		5.1.3 English as a Catalyst for Fostering Individual Civic Engagement
		5.1.4 English as a Mirror for Recognizing One's Privilege in the Globalized World
		5.2 English Influencing the National Identity
		5.2.1 English as a Catalyst for Reshaping National Identity
		5.2.2 English as a Negotiation Space for National and Global Identities
		5.3 English Shaping the Linguistic Identity
		5.3.1 English as a Driver of Linguistic Hierarchies and Marginalization of Non-English Speakers
		5.3.2 English as an Instrument of Linguistic Assimilation
		5.4 English shaping the Cultural Identity
		5.4.1 English as a Medium for Exploring One's Cultural Positioning
		5.4.2 English as a Barrier to Cultural Understanding
		5.4.3 English as a Medium for Cultural Dominance
		5.5 English Shaping the Social Identity
		5.5.1 English as a Means to Global Solidarity
		5.5.2 English as a Tool for Cross-Cultural Communication
		5.5.3 English as a Catalyst for Global Inclusion

Table 11 (cont'd)

Category	Theme (The role of English perceived as shaping ...)	Sub-theme (English viewed as...)
Socio-Emotional Considerations	6. English Shaping **Global Socio-Emotional Interactions**	6.1 English as a Catalyst for Global Trust
		6.2 English as a Tool for Cross-Cultural Empathy
		6.3 English as a Means to Global Belonging
Ethical Considerations	7. English Shaping **Global Ethical Accountability**	7.1 English as an Ethical Dilemma in Global Communication
		7.2 English as a Catalyst for Ethical Responsibility
		7.3 English as Catalyst for Constructing the Narrative of Global Events
Financial Considerations	8. English Shaping **Global Financial Landscapes**	8.1 English as a Marketable Skill
		8.2 English as a Factor in Economic Disparities of Global Workforce Participation
		8.3 English as a Financial Investment for Social and Professional Advancement

4.6.1 Category 1: Strategic and functional considerations. The first emergent category pertains to *Strategic and Functional Considerations* associated with English. One major theme, *English as the Mediating Component of Global Interaction and Citizenship,* has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, which focused on the strategic and functional considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.1.1 Theme 1: English as the mediating component of global interaction and citizenship. The theme that emerged under the *Strategic and Functional Considerations* is *English as the Mediating Component of Global Interaction and Citizenship.* The data revealed that the perceived role of English and its agents in shaping the GCI is multifaceted, as there appeared six sub-themes under the main theme, *English as the Mediating Component of Global Interaction and Citizenship: English as a Global Lingua Franca, English as a Policy Tool for Structuring GC, English as a Facilitator of GC, English as a Prerequisite for Advancing GC Strategies, English as a Strategic Lever for Global Visibility* and *English as an Enabler of Global Civic Engagement.*

4.6.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: English as a global lingua franca. The obtained data revealed that the participants perceive English as the most widely spoken common language in international communication, and it functions as a global lingua franca, fostering interaction and communication across different linguistic and cultural contexts. In this respect, as the excerpts below suggest, English is no longer limited to Anglo-American contexts; it exists as the default tool for global interaction, irrespective of national or regional origin:

> "English is currently the most spoken language in the world. There might be other languages, but I think it is the most important now because so many different people speak English. When you want to communicate with different cultures, you need to pick up the common one. For example, as a Turkish person, if you like to communicate with the Japanese, you need English, or with German, you need English as well. That's why I think English is essential for communicating in the global environment." (P1)

"Wherever you go, you need a common language to communicate in the most civilized way. Throughout history, many foreign languages have been spoken as the most widely or as a lingua franca. But today, that language is English. That's why I believe English is truly important for global communication." (P65)

4.6.1.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2 English as a policy tool for structuring GC. The participants' responses revealed that English is seen as a strategy that policymakers leverage to foster GC as part of their institutional strategies. In this respect, HEIs offering EMI programs are considered to provide a common linguistic framework by facilitating access to global knowledge networks, enabling individuals to engage in diverse perspectives and global issues. The following excerpts illustrate how participants perceive English as strategically positioned within policy frameworks to foster GC:

"Countries, governments, and other organizations highlight the role of English as a tool for global participation. When considering educational policies, one notices the integration of English into education systems, which reflects a broader strategy to align with global standards. This preparation enables individuals to feel connected to the world. As countries, universities, and other entities adopt English, they use it as a means to catch up with global standards and engage in the global community." (P52)

"Although not specifically targeting the concept of global citizenship, nearly all significant policy documents related to the European higher education area, as well as others from abroad, are written in English. This means that to engage with these policies and understand global issues, English proficiency is essential. Therefore, it can be viewed as a way of promoting or structuring global citizenship." (P76)

4.6.1.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3 English as a facilitator of GC. In this context, the participants' perceptions regarding English referred to its role in facilitating GC by enabling individuals to engage in international communities, access global knowledge, and participate in intercultural exchanges. Accordingly, as the primary medium for international discourse, English is viewed as connecting individuals beyond their boundaries, fostering a sense of global responsibility and engagement. Such perspectives are evident in the following participant narratives, which illustrate how English enables individuals to engage in global civic life and cultural exchange:

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"With English, you find yourself in the middle of opportunities to travel and experience different cultures meaningfully. You participate in diverse communities, contributing to understanding the global community. Even though it's not necessarily based on English, I believe that GC can be promoted through English because it allows access to other parts of the world." (P11)

"English is important for increasing cultural interaction because it enables people worldwide to communicate effectively and share things. For instance, when I travel to different countries, English allows me to contact locals and learn about their way of life. It also enables me to promote my own culture. Therefore, English creates a space that allows different cultures to come together and interact meaningfully." (P61)

4.6.1.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4 English as a prerequisite for advancing GC strategies. The analysis revealed that in addition to fostering GC, English is also perceived as a way to advance GC strategies. Its status as the dominant language of international organizations, global academia, and diplomacy is considered to make English proficiency necessary, especially to raise individuals who can access global dialogues, policy-making, and global cooperation and thereby actively contribute to shaping GC efforts. As the following excerpts indicate, English is no longer positioned as an optional asset; instead, it is an indispensable condition for granting access to global academic, diplomatic, and policy-related dialogues:

"When you say you are raising global citizens, and you create an environment where international connections are established, academic work is conducted at an international level, and global networks are formed through participation in international platforms, English continues to be a prerequisite in this context. Achieving this without English is hardly possible. However, simply offering English courses in the initial phase and then claiming to be developing global citizens is not entirely realistic. What truly matters is integrating English into the broader framework of global citizenship development—creating environments where students can interact with different cultures and organizing events where academics can engage in diverse global settings. At this point, it becomes clear that using English in education is just one aspect of the process but spreading it across other policies and practices is what makes the initiative truly global." (P76)

"By establishing English as the medium of instruction, universities aim not only to structure education but also to cultivate individuals who are equipped for global collaboration and competition. The use of English is crucial in this

context because it enables individuals to engage in global dialogues, take a step into the European dimension of higher education, and observe global standards. Based on these insights, institutions can shape their policies and practices accordingly. Therefore, English serves as a prerequisite in this regard." (P52)

4.6.1.1.5 Sub-theme 1.5 English as a strategic lever for global visibility. The participants' responses revealed that English is perceived as a powerful tool for enhancing global visibility in an increasingly interconnected world. In this context, the following excerpts exemplify how English functions as a visibility multiplier, which provides individuals and institutions with the opportunity to gain international recognition and amplify the impact of their work:

> "By using English, you are striving to meet global standards, and in doing so, you also enhance the international visibility of everything you produce. When you publish academic work or conduct a project with international partners, your academic visibility increases. Your connections and partnerships at this level facilitate this process. To be global and visible, people from different regions—not just specific fields or specific areas—must come together and share ideas, using English as a common medium despite their diverse linguistic backgrounds. In this regard, English plays a crucial role in increasing global visibility. Just look at international ranking reports or institutions that successfully attract international students—English is used in all of these contexts to ensure participation in global education and action." (P18)

> "Last year, we conducted a project in the field of engineering here and presented it at an international competition. Although we did not receive an award, we realized that this process significantly contributed to the global visibility of our work. When you create something in Türkiye, it may remain on a smaller scale, but once it is brought to an international platform, its visibility increases. At this point, English comes to the forefront. It is hard to deny that this language plays a crucial role in expressing yourself, promoting, and explaining your work in such settings." (P60)

4.6.1.1.6 Sub-theme 1.6 English as an enabler of global civic engagement. Based on the participants' responses, the data revealed that English not only allows individuals from different backgrounds to connect and collaborate but also plays a role in addressing global challenges in the interconnected world, regardless of their native language. What emerges in the following excerpts is the idea that English

facilitates visibility, legitimacy, and inclusivity in civic initiatives, positioning English as the de facto language of transnational engagement:

> "When you want to organize an international event, naturally, no other language comes to mind—neither your native language nor, for instance, Japanese or Chinese. In an event that aims for global mobility, reaching a broader audience and increasing visibility, English is inevitably the chosen medium. It would not be accurate to deny this reality. If the event were conducted in our native language, it is evident that its visibility, audience reach, and engagement would be significantly lower compared to an event held in English. There is always a need for this global reach. I am certain that even for a well-organized event, participants sometimes feel the necessity to attract more attention—especially when addressing global issues. Take the ongoing war, for example; its impacts are widely discussed, and creating an event that includes foreign participants and perspectives can make it more visible and engaging. In this regard, I strongly believe that English significantly enhances global active participation. It also makes people more aware of global issues and increases their interest in them. Institutions with an international outlook actively encourage global participation and, in most cases, organize their events in a foreign language." (P35)

> "If there are initiatives that your institution's administration deems appropriate or that are supported as part of national policies- especially those requiring civic engagement- English allows you to participate in these at an institutional level. At the most basic level, students can prepare banners with English text, create hashtags, or publish announcements in foreign languages on websites. In this sense, English serves as an indicator of active participation. It also functions as a tool to express sensitivity to global issues, reinforcing engagement with broader international discussions." (P6)

4.6.2 Category 2: Political considerations. The second emergent category pertains to *Political Considerations*. One major theme, English *Manipulating the Global Political Context*, has emerged from the qualitative data analysis focusing on the political considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.2.1 Theme 2: English manipulating the global political context. The theme that emerged under the *Political Considerations* is *English Manipulating the Global Political Context*. There appeared four sub-themes under the main theme,

English Manipulating the Global Political Context: English as a Tool for Mobilizing Global Participation, *English as a Medium of Political Resistance, English as a Barrier to Political Representation,* and *English as a Tool for Academic Political Discourse on Global Issues.*

4.6.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2.1 English as a tool for mobilizing global participation. The data revealed that among participants, using English in global interactions is perceived as a key enabler for fostering large-scale participation, especially in political and social initiatives. In this regard, English is seen as a common medium for collective action, enabling individuals to organize and engage in global causes, as reflected in the following excerpt:

> "For years, it has been emphasized that action should be taken on issues like global warming. When such topics are addressed on a global scale, they tend to attract a larger audience. Unless an event is extremely unique or groundbreaking, discussions held in a local language may not receive much attention. However, to gain coverage in international news, there almost always needs to be a global dimension to the issue. At this point, English facilitates this activation—it enables global engagement while also attracting the attention of more local participants, ultimately generating interest on an international scale." (P26)

4.6.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2.2 English as a medium of political resistance. According to the participants' utterances, English, as the lingua franca, plays a significant role in amplifying the voices of political resistance by enabling individuals to reach a global audience. Accordingly, especially through social media and global networks, English is seen as a tool for advocacy. Such perceptions are evident in the following excerpts, revealing how English becomes a tactic to mobilize global attention and indirectly influence domestic power structures:

> "I remember that in my home country, we once protested against government censorship. The petitions were written in English to gain international support because we knew that when you engage with foreign media, it would be more effective on local authorities." (P37)

> "In today's world, digital activism is at the top, and if you pay attention to the recent protests, social media posts are in English, gaining far more attention than those in our native language. [...] When you write in English, you gain

an international audience, and more people start paying attention to your struggle and concern, even if it is not global but local." (P19)

4.6.2.1.3 Sub-theme 2.3 English as a barrier to political representation. Even though the aforementioned data indicated that the participants perceive English as a tool for political resistance, the responses also revealed another perspective of English acting as a barrier to representation. In this respect, the fact that many global discussions operate primarily in English is considered a limitation to accessing global visibility for those who lack fluency in English. In this regard, the following reflections highlight a critical tension: English does not always facilitate representation; it also governs what is "considered meaningful," suggesting that voices lacking fluency may be ignored altogether:

"I mean, just take a look- critical discussions on important topics are almost always in English. Perhaps even the things we are made aware of are in English. At the very least, for example, what a war correspondent says is translated into English. The words of a war victim are also translated into English. Subtitles are almost always in English. And if you want to follow these, unless they are in Turkish, you simply won't understand them. In this sense, the things you contribute may not even be considered meaningful- perhaps they won't be understood, heard, or might even be ignored altogether. At this point, I see English as a barrier." (P66)

"If you want to express your opinion about war but do not have sufficient foreign language proficiency, your expression becomes limited. At this point, you cannot fully articulate your thoughts, leading you to remain quieter or express yourself on a smaller scale. In this sense, I believe that English has a rather restrictive aspect." (P4)

4.6.2.1.4 Sub-theme 2.4 English as a tool for academic political discourse on global issues. In the context of HEIs, English is also considered to function as the primary medium for engaging political discourse on global issues by allowing academics to contribute to critical debates through research, international conferences, and academic discussions. The following excerpt illustrates how local experiences are translated into global political discourse through English, which serves as a linguistic arena in which global political matters are validated, contested, and circulated globally:

"Especially in the global sphere, when working on topics like international relations, as in my field, you quickly realize that English remains the dominant foreign language in which all global political discussions, debates, and exchanges take place. In conferences, for instance, when discussing refugee policies or global issues, all academic debates are conducted entirely in English. Even the local issues you experience must be communicated in English. In this sense, I firmly believe that English functions as a tool. It serves as a means to bring local matters to the international stage and to gain a voice in global political positioning and discussions." (P83)

4.6.3 Category 3: Ideological considerations. The third emergent category relates to *Ideological Considerations* associated with English. One theme, *English Shaping the Global Ideological Landscapes*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the ideological considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization, as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.3.1 Theme 3: English shaping the global ideological landscapes. The theme that emerged under the *Ideological Considerations* is *English Shaping the Global Ideological Landscapes.* Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping the Global Ideological Landscapes: English as a Gateway in the Global Flow of Knowledge, English as a Hegemonic Force in Global Literacy Practices,* and *English as a Reinforcer of Western Norms in Knowledge and Culture.*

4.6.3.1.1 Sub-theme 3.1 English as a gateway in the global flow of knowledge. The data revealed that, given its dominance in academic publishing, scientific discourse, and higher education, English is seen as the primary conduit for the global exchange of knowledge, enabling participants to access, contribute to, and disseminate ideas across borders. The narratives of various participants from different HEIs reveal the hierarchical nature of global knowledge systems, positioning English as a prerequisite through which knowledge is circulated, accessed, and legitimized in global scholarly conversations, as exemplified below:

"Most of the research I rely on is published in English. Pay attention to the fact that even studies conducted in non-English speaking countries, such as Türkiye, are often written in English. Otherwise, it would be very difficult for them to gain international recognition." (P66)

"English allows us to cooperate internationally and share knowledge effectively. It is well recognized that participating in global networks makes you feel like you're sharing information, exchanging ideas, and staying up to date about what's happening around you with reliable sources. [...] The researchers obtain a global reach when knowledge sharing initiatives are conducted in English." (P75)

4.6.3.1.2 Sub-theme 3.2 English as a hegemonic force in global literacy practices. Additionally, the participants stated that, especially in academic and professional settings, the global dominance of English has resulted in the marginalization of other languages and literacy traditions. Accordingly, being the primary language of academic publishing, media, and global communication, English is seen as reinforcing a hierarchical structure that leads to linguistic homogenization. In this respect, epistemic injustice is evident in the following excerpts, exposing how language dominance validates or invalidates entire bodies of knowledge:

"There isn't much to say. English is the standard. If you're not publishing in English, your research might behave as if it doesn't exist." (P35)

"Look, even here, in such a small setting, we are practicing everything in our field, uh, in English rather than Turkish, our native language. Teaching and learning in English-medium instruction programs are considered more prestigious. Departments with English medium instruction often seem superior, while those using Turkish medium often feel inferior programs." (P47)

4.6.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3.3 English as a reinforcer of Western norms in knowledge and culture. As shared by the participants, the global dominance of English in various domains has led to the reinforcement of a Western-centric perspective in global knowledge and culture. In this context, the participants verbalized that English is perceived as a carrier of Western ideologies, often shaping how global issues are understood and practiced. The excerpt below reveals how a faculty member challenges the presumed neutrality of global knowledge systems, further pointing to a growing awareness of the Anglo-centric nature of academic discourse:

"Today, when we look at most concepts related to global action or let's say global citizenship, we can see that they are practiced much more comfortably

in the West. We can see that they are far ahead of us, especially on issues such as equality, justice, or environmentalism. Even if this idea initially came from the East, it is better practiced today in the West. I think the ideals brought by the Renaissance and the Reformation have also shaped the present, and I believe they have also influenced the concept of global citizenship. [...] At this point, I don't think it would be entirely wrong to say that knowledge is predominantly disseminated through Western ideologies via English. Today, Western knowledge is already transmitted through academic publications, and on the cultural side, I believe it is ideologically spread through social media." (P54)

4.6.4 Category 4: Epistemological considerations. The fourth emergent category relates to the *Epistemological Considerations* associated with English. One theme, *English Enabling the Production of Global Knowledge*, has emerged from the qualitative data analysis, focusing on the epistemological considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization, as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.4.1 Theme 4: English enabling the production of global knowledge. The theme that emerged under the *Epistemological Considerations* is *English Enabling the Production of Global Knowledge.* Four sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Enabling the Production of Global Knowledge: English as an Epistemic Structure in Scientific Discourse, English as a Key Driver in Global Intellectual Progress, English as a Gatekeeper in the Validation of Global Knowledge,* and *English as a Constraint for Multilingual Knowledge Diversity.*

4.6.4.1.1 Sub-theme 4.1 English as an epistemic structure in scientific discourse. In parallel to the perspectives that previously mentioned the dominance of English in scientific discourse, the participant perceptions also revealed that English is considered to limit the diversity of scientific perspectives. In line with these perspectives, the following remark of a faculty member points to the epistemological constraints imposed by English-dominated academic discourse:

"If we specifically talk about my department, as I mentioned, academia has generally adopted English as the main language. I mean, even in Türkiye, this is quite prevalent. Even though your research focuses on something local, let's say some local challenges, you sometimes feel the need to position your

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research within Western theoretical frameworks just to make it more relevant to international audiences. [...] It also affects the way you structure your arguments and whom you cite. [...] and you essentially try to fit your research into their style so that it will be accepted." (P2)

4.6.4.1.2 Sub-theme 4.2 English as a key driver in global intellectual progress. As reported by the participants, English is positioned as a key driver of global intellectual progress through its role in international communication, collaboration, and dissemination of global knowledge. Thus, the following excerpt illustrates how English is perceived as the primary infrastructure of global knowledge production:

"English is a global language. It is the language of knowledge. It is now a language that belongs to all of us. In a way, it connects us all globally and continues to be the dominant foreign language in which knowledge is produced, expanded, and shared. If we look at global developments, the power dynamics of countries play a significant role, and we are all aware that English derives its global status from sources of power. At some point, English spread and took on its current form. Today, I would say with 99.9% certainty that all contributions, even if made at the local level, are transmitted to the global sphere through English. We can also argue that much of intellectual progress is practiced, reported, and published by native English speakers. In this sense, I believe that English plays a crucial role, and this role has now become irreversible. Throughout history, lingua francas have changed, but English has reached a point where it is the second language for most of us and a foreign language that people strive to teach their children from birth. That is why I believe English holds a central place in the development of human history, and its position has become so solidified that I have no expectation that it will change. In fact, I don't believe it will. This has now become an accepted reality." (P79)

4.6.4.1.3 Sub-theme 4.3 English as a gatekeeper in the validation of global knowledge. Even though it is perceived as the facilitator of global knowledge flow, as previously mentioned, the participants' perceptions also revealed that English is also conceptualized as a gatekeeper in determining whose contribution to global knowledge is recognized and validated on a global scale. In this respect, the participants point to the challenges regarding the recognition of their work. In line with these perspectives, the following excerpt makes it evident that English has become a criterion of epistemic legitimacy, which actively defines what counts as valid knowledge in academic hierarchies:

"As I previously mentioned, no matter how good your work is, if it lacks visibility, it can easily be disregarded. There is a prevailing perception that locally published research is not as important or valid. However, when you publish in an international journal in English, you have a higher chance of being accepted by reputable institutions, reaching more studies, and increasing your citation count. At this point, a significant disadvantage emerges. Native English speakers can produce content freely and in any way they choose, and I believe they also influence the direction of research topics. However, in non-English-speaking countries, investments are being made in this area—resources are allocated so that academics can publish internationally, teach in English, and develop projects. It is now evident that one of the key factors determining the legitimacy of knowledge is English." (P35)

4.6.4.1.4 Sub-theme 4.4 English as a constraint for multilingual knowledge diversity. In this context, the dominance of English in academic and scientific discourse is considered to marginalize knowledge produced in other languages. With the sample excerpt below, it becomes evident how linguistic hegemony undermines epistemic autonomy in national contexts where scholars are compelled to abandon their native language in the pursuit of recognition:

"Here in Türkiye, numerous valuable research studies have been conducted in Turkish, but they rarely gain international or global attention or audience as English dominates the field of academic publication. Now, Turkish journals are asking authors to write in both English and Turkish to publish their papers because they are already aware that if research isn't published in English, it won't be cited, and that can negatively impact their journal metrics. So even in their own country, even in our country, our researchers are forced to produce work in another language. How can it be possible to write in different languages at this point? Where are the papers written in German, French, or Turkish?" (P2)

4.6.5 Category 5: Sociolinguistic considerations. The fifth emergent category relates to *Sociolinguistic Considerations* associated with English. One theme, *English Impacting Identity*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data focusing on the sociolinguistic considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.5.1 Theme 5: English impacting identity. The theme that emerged under the *Sociolinguistic Considerations* is *English Impacting Identity.* Five sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Impacting Identity: English Forming a Global Identity, English Influencing the National Identity, English Shaping the Linguistic Identity, English Shaping the Cultural Identity,* and *English Shaping the Social Identity.*

4.6.5.1.1 Sub-theme 5.1 English forming a global identity. The first sub-theme that emerged under the main theme of *English Impacting Identity* is *English Forming a Global Identity.* Four sub-themes appeared under the first main sub-theme, *English Forming a Global Identity: English as a Means of Developing Global Self-Identity, English as a Tool for Global Self-Expression, English as a Catalyst for Fostering Individual Civic Engagement,* and *English as a Mirror for Recognizing One's Privilege in the Globalized World.*

5.1.1 English as a means of developing global self-identity. The data revealed that among participants, English is perceived to play a significant role in shaping their self-perception within the interconnected world. The participants referred to their engagements with diverse people and cultures through English, which is perceived to develop a broader sense of self extending beyond national and local affiliations. The excerpts below illustrate how English fosters a sense of being "part of the world," producing a feeling of belonging to a broader transnational community:

> "I participate in very different contexts when communicating with foreigners. I play a lot of online games, and I have too many foreign friends. But when I speak with them, I always need a translation tool; it is always open in another tab while I play the games. Of course, learning a language is not always necessary for people in our time because you can quickly translate everything you want to say in a second by copying and pasting. However, I believe that being able to speak English makes you feel different in the world. It makes you feel like you truly become one of them and are part of the world. I first felt like that when I played WOW (World of Warcraft)." (P70)

> "I'm currently trying to learn English through the preparatory year program. The goal is, of course, to both follow my undergraduate courses and

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communicate with the world. [...] I would also feel good about my position in the global world by speaking English." (P9)

5.1.2 English as a tool for global self-expression. The data frequently reported that among participants, English is perceived as a powerful medium to facilitate self-expression, enabling them to articulate their thoughts, emotions, and identities in the global context. English as a means of global self-expression is evident in the following excerpts, where the participants report how English enables the self to be expressed, shared, and understood in global contexts:

"As an African, my native language is different, but in addition to English, I also speak French and Arabic. These languages allow me to communicate more effectively with people in various fields, but English provides a better reach. And here, for example, right now, we speak English. I would better express myself through my mother tongue or the two languages I acquired as second languages. But still, we communicate here. My option of English enables me to position myself in the global world and help me become more globally connected." (P37)

"This is something that cannot be denied. English allows you to express yourself globally, communicate with people from different countries, pursue education abroad, and experience and articulate your thoughts and emotions in another language. In this sense, I firmly believe that English is a tool for global self-expression. I am not saying it is inherently better or worse than other languages, but I do see it as a widely accepted medium of communication." (P71)

5.1.3 English as a catalyst for fostering individual civic engagement. The participants' responses revealed that English is viewed as a tool that provides them access to information, resources, and networks, enabling them to engage in civic initiatives on an international scale. In this regard, English is seen as a tool that aids them in acting globally, from small-scale volunteerism to more extensive forms of activism, as expressed in the following excerpts:

"English provides a platform where people from different cultures, languages, and backgrounds can come together to address global issues. It allows you to stay informed about ongoing developments and initiatives. In many cases, when you struggle to find support locally, especially on topics that might be considered marginal by certain communities, English enables access to a broader global network where you can find solidarity and backing for the issues you encounter. It is not difficult to see that all of this is made possible

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through English. Of course, translation tools and other resources help us express ourselves to some extent, but when it comes to truly feeling like a part of something, using English plays a crucial role." (P60)

"Thanks to English, you can gain insight into the world without leaving your home or country. You can follow global events, interact with different people, and engage with various topics through platforms like Instagram and Twitter. At this point, there are countless things you can do: participate in online platforms, join virtual protests, and sign petitions on various issues. You can stay informed about global movements like Civic Moments and similar initiatives. For this reason, I also tend to share content in English when I want to raise awareness or reach a global audience. This allows us to unite in a common language and participate in collective activist efforts." (P55)

Conversely, some participants view English as an exclusionary tool that establishes barriers for those who cannot speak it, potentially limiting their civic participation and visibility in global actions, as narrated in the following excerpt:

"For example, right now, I am a student in an English preparatory program. My English proficiency is not yet strong enough for me to express myself on a global scale. At this point, I often feel a sense of exclusion or an inability to speak up about certain issues—I feel held back because of English. When you look around, those who can speak English fluently can easily take part in discussions and events. But at the same time, to understand what is happening, we need to share a common language. In this sense, while English does connect people on a global scale, I don't think it truly connects everyone." (P85)

5.1.4 English as a mirror for recognizing one's privilege in the globalized world. The participants' perspectives revealed that proficiency in English is shaping their self-recognition of a privileged position in the global world. Particularly, those who are fluent or native speakers are seen as advantaged in comparison to non-English speakers, often being granted access to better global opportunities. What emerges in the following excerpts is a consciousness of linguistic privilege, especially when combined with certain national identities, such as Britishness, which becomes a dual source of privilege, granting unspoken access to global ease and status:

"To be fair, to be British… When I travel, because I have a British passport, you need a visa, I don't, for example. So, it does affect. Yes, there is a

default. Yes, it does. And I'm very lucky to have that and that language, too. [...] You see it every other day when the emphasis grows on the language. [...] It develops communications here. [...] People like me and ask how to get a British passport." (P44)

"I've always viewed my language skills as a privilege, especially when I travel abroad and realize how much easier life is for those of us who can speak English fluently. In a foreign country, you can do many things, from navigating airports to finding jobs. Everything is more accessible, and you have every possible option in that country. Even in my studies here, I don't have to put in extra effort, uh, just to be understood." (P22)

4.6.5.1.2 Sub-theme 5.2 English influencing the national identity. The second sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Impacting Identity* is *English Influencing the National Identity.* Two sub-themes appeared under the second main sub-theme, *English Influencing the National Identity: English as a Catalyst for Reshaping National Identity* and *English as a Negotiation Space for National and Global Identities.*

5.2.1 English as a catalyst for reshaping national identity. The participants' views revealed a dual perspective of English regarding how it affects their perception and negotiation with their native identity. While for some, English is perceived as an enabler of a more hybrid national identity enriched with global perspectives, for others, the dominance of English is perceived as a threat to traditional notions of native identity. The following excerpts showcase how participants perceive English as a catalyst for reshaping their native identity, either enriching it with global perspectives or challenging deep-seated cultural values:

"[...] But yeah, I think in a certain context, you know, whether I'm out in public, whether it's I've been invited to a conference, I put on the extra sheen, you know, I have to put on the actual professionalism as a representative of the United States. Still, also as a representative of my own culture and somebody, you know, this whole thing of minority thing makes it extra sensitive as if I don't represent my people and my country and my thing. [...] But that struggle made me realize that national identity is not fixed but evolves as we interact with the world." (P62)

"I don't believe we are the same, nor do we think we can be in many aspects. For example, as Turkish people, we respect our elders, but in other countries, I don't believe there are strong family bonds or respect for elders like we

have. I don't think it can be as deep as it is for us. Maybe these are better in some Asian countries, but even there, most probably, it's not quite at the level we experience here in Türkiye. [...] Some cultural values I grew up with seem rigid compared to what I experienced through English and global interactions. Therefore, I would say I'd have difficulty in reconciling my national identity with my global outlook." (P81)

5.2.2 English as a negotiation space for national and global identities. The data revealed that English is perceived as a linguistic and cultural intersection where individuals navigate the complexities of their native identity and their global belonging, reflecting the evolving and fluid nature of identity in the globally connected world, as expressed in the following excerpts:

"My thoughts do not change there. I think it's just that your life tastes match the place you go to. When I go abroad, I like to observe the cities I visit. I like it very much. I observe what they do abroad. I like these things, but they don't change me. As Atatürk suggested, I try to understand, observe, and internalize the good points of the West and East. When doing so, I don't see a conflict between my national and global identities. [...] English here only helps me communicate across different cultural spaces, enabling me to make meaning out of the world we live in." (P54)

"[...] I'm already, like, struggling with it because I'm not only Dutch, I'm also Moroccan. Also, as for my global identity, I don't think they see me as a Dutch or Moroccan person. They just see me as a global citizen because I engage in global interactions through English, letting me be myself without these labels." (P21)

4.6.5.1.3 Sub-theme 5.3 English shaping linguistic identity. The third sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Impacting Identity* is *English Shaping Linguistic Identity.* Two sub-themes appeared under the third main sub-theme, *English Shaping Linguistic Identity: English as a Driver of Linguistic Hierarchies and Marginalization of Non-English Speakers* and *English as an Instrument of Linguistic Assimilation.*

5.3.1 English as a driver of linguistic hierarchies and marginalization of non-English speakers. Some participants reflected on the dominance of English as a means of establishing linguistic hierarchies, where proficiency is favored while those with limited skills are marginalized. In this context, the widespread emphasis on

English is viewed as an effort to devalue other languages and contribute to the decline of linguistic diversity. Such participant accounts point to the fact that the supremacy of English is experienced as a form of linguistic imperialism, privileging English at the expense of other languages:

> "When we overlook other languages and promote English as the global language, we risk erasing other languages and cultures. We just reinforced the idea that English-speaking cultures are superior, which is a form of linguistic imperialism." (P7)

> "Having English as the only language or medium of instruction can limit diversity in terms of languages. I mean, when everything is done in English, this might discourage students who are strong in other languages. It creates this barrier where only those who are already fluent or comfortable in English can fully participate in this English medium environment. At this point, you're not embracing linguistic diversity, which is a big part of the global citizenship concept, so it can exclude people rather than bring them in." (P50)

5.3.2 English as an instrument of linguistic assimilation. Some participants' perspectives revealed that the global dominance of English is considered to extend beyond communicative purposes to some forms of linguistic assimilation, leading to the abandonment of native language and adaptation of English as a primary means of expression in academic, social, and professional settings, as reflected in the following excerpts:

> "I'm definitely not excluding myself from this, but as young people, we tend to use more English words because certain things have entered our lives exclusively in that language- mainly through social media and other platforms. For example, in casual social language, even if we're not entirely expressing ourselves in English, there are many cases where a single English word captures multiple meanings at once. We often prefer using it, even when there is a perfectly fine local equivalent. Sometimes, using the English version feels more modern. People always say, "Don't assimilate, don't let go of your language," but maybe, in a very subtle way, this could be seen as a form of assimilation. If today we replace words we used to say in our native language with English ones, then, in a way, parts of our language and culture are slowly fading away." (P4)

> "As I continued publishing in English, I gradually realized something, especially in an academic context. I no longer feel inclined to use my native language, nor do I tend to engage in complex discussions in my mother

tongue as much. Instead, I find myself participating in such discussions using the English I use in my professional life. I've noticed that I struggle to find the right words in my native language for these kinds of debates. More often than not, English terms and expressions come to mind first in such contexts." (P34)

4.6.5.1.4 Sub-theme 5.4 English shaping the cultural identity. The next sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Impacting Identity* is *English Shaping Cultural Identity.* Three sub-themes appeared under the fourth main sub-theme, *English Shaping Cultural Identity: English as a Medium for Exploring One's Cultural Positioning, English as a Barrier to Cultural Understanding,* and *English as a Medium for Cultural Dominance.*

5.4.1 English as a medium for exploring one's cultural positioning. The participants' responses indicated that English is also seen as a means to critically reflect on their cultural backgrounds, examine their positions within broader contexts, and redefine their sense of self in relation to others due to exposure to diverse perspectives. The following excerpt is striking, especially for its positioning of English as a tool for cultural reflexivity, when native linguistic and cultural contexts are perceived as restrictive:

"[...] Most of my life has been spent learning foreign languages, and this has given me the opportunity to work with people from different cultures, interact with them, and even live in different countries. Through this, I became more aware of my own culture while also gaining the chance to engage with foreign cultures. I have a background in literature, and when I read works of English literature, I became aware of the cultural values embedded in the language itself. Over time, I realized that these cultural elements often shaped my own cultural perspective and worldview. Upon reflection, I see that this interaction has sometimes led me to question my own cultural norms, while at other times, it has made me critically examine the foreign culture I am engaging with. Perhaps one thing I can say is that I feel I can express myself more openly in English when discussing certain cultural norms. When it comes to global issues, I might feel this way because these topics are inherently more international. Or perhaps it is because my own culture is more closed off to certain discussions. Regardless, I believe that English, by its very nature, exposes you to a different culture and serves as a medium for engaging with other cultures. In this sense, it holds a unique role in shaping cultural interactions among people." (P7)

5.4.2 English as a barrier to cultural understanding. The analysis also revealed that, although English serves as a common medium for global interactions, its default use is perceived to oversimplify and distort cultural nuances. In this context, some ideas and traditions are considered difficult to transfer or fully express in English, leading to a superficial engagement with other cultures rather than a deep and meaningful understanding, as reflected in the participants' perceptions below:

"When facilitating communication between two different cultures, we introduce a language that originates from yet another culture. Here, I'm specifically referring to the use of English. Every language carries its own cultural identity, and by using a language from a different cultural background as a medium, we inevitably introduce an external cultural framework into the interaction. Of course, there are pros and cons to this. Some might argue, "Then how are we supposed to communicate? Should everyone learn every language?"- a perspective I sometimes find quite absurd. However, that doesn't mean English should be beyond critique. The issue is that you cannot fully convey your own culture as it is, nor can you fully grasp the other culture in its entirety. If we are dealing with more than just observable behaviors—if there are deeper motivations, psychological structures, or cultural roots involved—understanding them through a foreign language becomes much more challenging. Moreover, local sources on these topics are often limited, which means that even when trying to understand another culture, you often end up relying on English-language sources. As a result, I believe cultural interactions tend to remain surface-level. When something is communicated to you, or when you try to express something, you don't always feel the same emotional weight. Many things might seem odd to you simply because they are being explained through a language that doesn't carry the same cultural depth. Yet, these things may hold profound meaning in their original context. For this reason, I don't think English is an entirely effective tool in such cases. In fact, I see it as a potential barrier—it can hinder deeper cultural understanding rather than facilitate it." (P69)

"Especially when we express ourselves in another language, I believe that cultural elements often get lost in translation. Some words or traditional concepts simply do not have a direct equivalent. At this point, we find ourselves unable to fully convey certain ideas. Now, is it entirely fair to place the blame on English? I'm not sure. But since the expectation is to share everything in English—given that it is considered a common language—I do think this creates difficulties in accurately expressing what we intend to communicate. For example, let's say there is an issue in another country or a globally discussed matter. If that issue is conveyed in a second language with missing nuances, meaningful interaction becomes difficult. The exchange

between two cultures remains superficial. Deep, meaningful connections may not be formed, and profound interpretations may not emerge simply because there is a linguistic barrier in place." (P73)

5.4.3 English as a medium for cultural dominance. The participants' utterances emphasized how the global spread of English affected the expansion of global culture. In this regard, English is viewed as a tool that contributes to English-speaking cultures by imposing norms, values, and ideologies that may overshadow local traditions and customs, as indicated in the below excerpts:

"[...] Putting too much emphasis on the English language and culture can make other cultures seem less important. If English is the main focus in teaching and communication around campuses, it sets it up for the superior language. This position of English as a barrier can make other languages and cultures undervalued. This might result in a narrower perspective in students because they are not exposed to the wide range of cultures and languages here at higher education institutions. In the end, it risks creating an environment where English-speaking cultures dominate." (P54)

"Such an approach can close up the chance to embrace other perspectives. Here, students might think it's the only way to understand the world, which limits them. It might lead to other languages and viewpoints being pushed aside. It is not just about language, things like literature, history, or even how we think about problems can get stuck in one particular mindset if we promote one language or a specific way of thinking. This is not what we aim for in education, right?" (P2)

4.6.5.1.5 Sub-theme 5.5 English shaping social identity. The final sub-theme that emerged under the theme of *English Impacting Identity* is *English Shaping Social Identity.* There appeared three sub-themes under the last main sub-theme, *English Shaping Social Identity: English as a Means to Global Solidarity, English as a Catalyst for Cross-Cultural Communication,* and *English as a Catalyst for Global Inclusion.*

5.5.1 English as a means to global solidarity. The data revealed that, besides other perceived functions of English, it is also viewed as the language of humanitarian efforts and global movements, promoting solidarity by providing a shared platform for cross-cultural dialogue. The following perspectives exemplify how the participants position English as the language of global solidarity:

"Just as we constantly emphasize how we connect with different cultures, at the same time, their issues also become our issues. And to show support, look at how everyone shares content in a foreign language. Think about social media accounts-you post something or create an Instagram Reels video, and the language used is English. You express yourself; you show support, you take a stance. In that sense, English provides a common platform for global solidarity. People come together around a certain cause, emotion, or interest, but the medium through which this happens is English." (P37)

5.5.2 English as a tool for cross-cultural communication. The participants' perceptions often indicated that English serves as a global bridge, facilitating the communication of ideas, perspectives, and experiences among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. The following excerpts illustrate how English is perceived as a common linguistic space, where language use turns into a site of cultural encounter:

"When you come together with people from different cultures, you and the other person may carry elements of your own culture into the conversation, as neither of you is entirely detached from your cultural background. Everything you express through language creates a cultural exchange and enriches the interaction between you and the other person. I believe using English plays a significant role in sharing this richness." (P43)

"English is important for increasing cultural interaction because it enables people worldwide to communicate effectively and share things. For instance, when I travel to different countries, English allows me to contact locals and learn about their way of life. It also enables me to promote my own culture. Therefore, English creates a space that allows different cultures to come together and interact meaningfully." (P12)

5.5.3 English as a catalyst for global inclusion. The participants' responses revealed a dual perception of English regarding inclusion on a global scale. Accordingly, even though English fosters global inclusion through international education, global markets, and intercultural communication, a lack of proficiency is seen as a barrier that leads to exclusion in global interactions, as evident in the following narratives:

"Actually, today, it is not possible to deny the current state of English. [...] It is, of course, impossible to deny the role of English in globally integrating individuals into various social, political, and academic environments. At the same time, from a social perspective, it also plays a significant role in

fostering inclusion, bringing one continent closer to another and breaking down borders between countries. Still, limiting global citizenship to English language proficiency will set a barrier for people who cannot access language education. So, it means we are just leaving them out of the global interaction." (P61)

"You don't have to speak English to contribute to the world. When we associate English with global citizenship, we risk excluding non-English speakers. So, it will contradict the idea of being inclusive on a global scale. So, if we just associate it with that particular language, then everything will be wrong with diversity and inclusion." (P2)

4.6.6 Category 6: Socio-emotional considerations. In addition to the sociolinguistic considerations explored in the previous category, the data revealed that the participants also have socio-emotional considerations regarding English. In this regard, the sixth emergent category pertains to *Socio-Emotional Considerations* associated with English. One major theme, *English Shaping Global Socio-Emotional Interactions*, has emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on the socio-emotional considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization, as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.6.1 Theme 6: English shaping global socio-emotional interactions. The theme that emerged under the *Socio-Emotional Considerations* is *English Shaping Global Socio-Emotional Interactions.* Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Global Socio-Emotional Interactions,* reflecting participants' socio-emotional sense-making regarding global interactions: *English as a Catalyst for Global Trust, English as a Tool for Cross-Cultural Empathy,* and *English as a Means to Global Belonging.*

4.6.6.1.1 Sub-theme 6.1 English as a catalyst for global trust. The data revealed that English is perceived to enhance credibility in global settings as a shared medium of communication. In different domains such as diplomacy, business, or academia, English is considered to provide a common ground. The excerpt below exemplifies how English functions as a marker of epistemic authority, governing not only access to knowledge but also how knowledge is evaluated:

"Not just from a single source, but publications in foreign languages-especially in English- across global media seem more reliable to me. At this point, since we are speaking the same language, I perceive information published in English as more credible and valid in terms of building trust and developing common goals. I see English as the language of communication that brings different cultures together, particularly in areas like negotiation, partnership-building, and mutual understanding." (P21)

On the other hand, the participants pointed to the fact that the dominance of English also leads to skepticism about the hidden meanings and misinterpretations, which can lead to distrust, particularly in high-stakes intercultural or political contexts, as expressed in the excerpt below:

"English is the dominant language in global interaction—at the very least, as a lingua franca, it serves as a bridge that connects different cultures and institutions worldwide. However, at times, it also raises the question: is it actually a barrier? Because sometimes, whether on an individual or national level, you may struggle to express yourself fully, and this can lead to exclusion rather than inclusion. Particularly in English-mediated written and spoken communication, I sometimes wonder whether hidden meanings or different interpretations exist. In this sense, I see English as a language that grants privilege to native speakers and creates an advantage for countries where English education is strong. This, in turn, can lead to discrimination or even undermine trust. There is a clear disparity—some people are in a more advantageous position, and certain expressions may not be interpreted in the same way across different languages. Since we are discussing international relations, this has global-scale consequences. That is why I do not fully trust English as a completely neutral medium." (P35)

4.6.6.1.2 Sub-theme 6.2 English as a tool for cross-cultural empathy. The data revealed that English is considered to foster cross-cultural empathy because it enables individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to communicate, share experiences, and understand varied perspectives. In this sense, English is perceived as a facilitator of reducing biases and promoting greater appreciation and understanding of diverse social experiences through a sense of empathy, as demonstrated by the excerpt below:

"When you learn a language, there is a culture that comes with it, a culture associated with it. For example, if you learn French, you become immersed in French culture; if you learn Spanish, you engage with Spanish culture; or if

you watch Korean dramas, you get involved with Korean culture. What I mean is that different languages often bring a deep connection to a particular nation's culture. However, English operates on a different level because it does not just connect you to one specific nationality like a Korean, a French person, or a German. Instead, it facilitates intercultural interaction. This interaction creates a dynamic where, by gaining knowledge from different cultures, you may also develop different emotions toward them. In other words, you start approaching them differently, often with more empathy. This is especially true because you have direct access to news about them or can read articles concerning different cultures—not just the ones selectively included in Turkish newspapers, for example. The ability to independently read and learn about various nations and cultures, in my opinion, also has an emotional dimension. It allows you to interpret and evaluate interactions in a deeper and more meaningful way." (P17)

4.6.6.1.3 Sub-theme 6.3 English as a means to global belonging. As shared by the participants, English, the global lingua franca, is seen as a facilitator of a sense of belonging in the globalized world. As a unifying medium, it is regarded as a tool to foster emotions of global belonging, as reported in the following excerpts, enabling individuals to feel seen, heard, and included within the global communities:

"Thanks to English, I honestly feel like I am part of a larger space, a broader boundary. Of course, I still feel connected to my country- I live within its borders, and I can't leave whenever I want- but in terms of vision, I feel like a part of the world, and the use of this language makes me feel that way. I can say this openly. At this point, English allows you to follow international research, news, innovations, and even something as simple as fashion. New information reaches you before it arrives in your country or spreads to a smaller community, surrounding you with a broader perspective." (P11)

"I mean, I can do everything. I have a lot of friends- foreign friends, Turkish, English, Russian. We can communicate in all sorts of ways in games. How do we do it? We do it in English. At first, we created a chatbot. Then, I took preparatory education here. But to be honest, this also created a desire in me to learn English. Because when I learned English, I felt like I had a voice in that game. I felt my presence in the game. I felt that my presence in the game had meaning. I was one of them. I felt like I was part of that community. At this point, you truly feel included when English is spoken, used, or when you are able to use it. I'm not talking about speaking fluently. What I want to explain is that being able to express yourself in a given environment makes you feel like you belong." (P74)

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4.6.7 Category 7: Ethical considerations. Another emergent category relates to the *Ethical Considerations* associated with English. The category reveals how participants perceive English as linked to ethical accountability, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping Ethical Accountability*- revealing the ethical considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.7.1 Theme 7. English shaping global ethical accountability. One theme that emerged under the *Ethical Considerations* is *English Shaping Global Ethical Accountability*. Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Global Ethical Accountability: English as an Ethical Dilemma in Global Communication, English as a Catalyst for Ethical Responsibility,* and *English as a Catalyst for Constructing the Narrative of Global Events.*

4.6.7.1.1 Sub-theme 7.1 English as an ethical dilemma in global communication. The data analysis revealed that, despite being viewed as a unifying medium, English is also seen as reinforcing linguistic hierarchies and limiting participation in global communications, as shared by the participants. In this regard, the dilemma arises from the tension between using English for global inclusion and marginalizing others, thus eroding linguistic diversity, as illustrated by the following excerpts:

> "There is something I truly don't understand: how is it that English is seen as a tool that enables communication for everyone while at the same time excluding those who do not speak it? And this is widely accepted around the world. I think whether this is ethical or not is open to debate." (P71)

> "During the conferences, I observed native speakers naturally use cultural references, slang, or humor that we struggle to understand. At those times, I fell out of the cultural context of the language. It reminds me that English is their language and culture, which is out of reach for me. [...] In times like these, the imbalance is quite evident, and I don't know if it's right that fluency in English determines whose voice gets heard." (P1)

4.6.7.1.2 Sub-theme 7.2 English as a catalyst for ethical responsibility. As shared by the participants, being the dominant language in global media, academia, and diplomacy, English is perceived as a facilitator of ethical principles regarding

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human rights and global justice. In this regard, it is considered to enable ethical and international discussions and hold global leaders and actors accountable. Accordingly, the following remark illustrates that English is what allows one's ethical concerns to be recognized and responded to globally:

> "When people learn English, they don't just learn a language; they are also exposed to ethical issues discussed globally. For example, you have the opportunity to become aware of social justice actions taking place in various regions of the world. Additionally, you gain the power to support ethical causes internationally. [...] You have first-hand experience with what has been said with the vocabulary chosen. You feel that global leaders are responsible for their actions and need to be held accountable for what they do, especially when dealing with principles like human rights or advocating for global justice on an international scale. [...] You could sign petitions, raise awareness, or engage in activism. At this point, speaking English helps you participate in these efforts more effectively. [...] If you want to be part of these discussions, you need to speak English; otherwise, you will remain unheard." (P5)

4.6.7.1.3 Sub-theme 7.3 English as a catalyst for constructing the narrative of global events. The participants also shared that the dominance of English defines how global events are framed, interpreted, and disseminated. In that sense, the participants' responses revealed ethical concerns regarding the potential of English in reinforcing Western-centric narratives, silencing marginalized perspectives, and shaping global perception in ways that may not fully represent the realities of global events, as illustrated by the participant excerpts below:

> "When a crisis occurs, we all first check English sources, provided we are proficient in the language. However, this creates a notable problem: English sources tend to dominate. Whether the news is global or not, we rely on English media, and sometimes the content is filtered, misinterpreted, or even ignored in non-English-speaking regions. You may not realize this. There will be comments reflecting criticisms about those issues, but we won't follow that content, which means we won't be aware of what's happening behind the scenes. The spread of awareness about global issues through English is unavoidable, but I believe it wields immense power in shaping the world's understanding of the events." (P2)

4.6.8 Category 8: Financial considerations. Upon examining the obtained data, the final emergent category relates to the *Financial Considerations* associated

with English. The category reveals how participants perceive English as linked to global economic opportunities, with the emergent theme- *English Shaping Global Financial Landscapes*- indicating the financial considerations regarding the role of English and its agents in shaping GCI within the context of internationalization as perceived by administrators, academic staff, and students.

4.6.8.1 Theme 8. English shaping global financial landscapes. The theme that emerged under the *Financial Considerations* is *English Shaping Global Financial Landscapes*. Three sub-themes appeared under the main theme, *English Shaping Global Financial Landscapes: English as a Marketable Skill, English as a Factor in Economic Disparities of Global Workforce Participation,* and *English as a Financial Investment for Social and Professional Advancement.*

4.6.8.1.1 Sub-theme 8.1 English as a marketable skill. The participants' responses revealed that in today's globalized economy, English proficiency is seen as a valuable asset, enabling career advancement and economic mobility. In this respect, as exemplified by the excerpts below, the participants reported that employers prioritize employees with English proficiency, as many industries operate in English:

> "In my case, I believe that English is the gateway to better professional opportunities. In most companies, people work remotely from home, and the language enables them to communicate. [...]You just talk to English as a working language. Without it, someone could be limited to local opportunities and probably miss the chance to work and live in better conditions and places." (P46)

> "In the global job market, there are many opportunities. Does English function as a skill? English helps you too. It provides access to many more opportunities than those who are not proficient. [...] Without it, your options are limited. It serves as a promotable skill for individuals, making you a part of the global market." (P4)

4.6.8.1.2 Sub-theme 8.2 English as a factor in economic disparities of global workforce participation. The participants' responses also revealed that the dominance of English in the global workforce has reinforced a division between those who can communicate in English and those who cannot. In this regard, it

becomes evident in the following excerpts that English is viewed as a means for individuals to secure higher-paying jobs and engage in the global market, thus becoming a crucial factor in global workforce participation and economic disparities:

> "In Türkiye, where the native language is Turkish, most high-paying jobs require fluency in English. If one is not proficient, that person is limited to local positions with lower salaries. [...] Global companies, even the local ones with global networks, automatically filter out non-English speakers." (P73)

> "Here in academia, you frequently come across the fact that excellent skills are overlooked due to insufficient proficiency in English. As for the ones who are fluent but with weaker skills, the doors are open here and there, enabling them to move ahead faster in global positions." (P34)

4.6.8.1.3 Sub-theme 8.3 English as a financial investment for social and professional advancement. As reported by most participants, English proficiency is seen as an essential investment rather than just a skill. Accordingly, this investment is considered a strategic move to yield long-term professional and social benefits such as better jobs, higher salaries, and global networks, as reflected in the following participant excerpts:

> "For instance, if I hadn't been accepted into this undergraduate program, I considered pursuing my education abroad. In addition to the preparatory program, I take English courses to enhance my language skills. [...] Learning English is an investment for my future goals. With this, I believe I will have a better future. It is an investment, just like higher education. [...] It makes you part of the global networks, maybe not wholly, but a part of you becomes globally connected because you communicate with the rest of the world." (P16)

> "My family spent a lot of money on private English lessons for me because they believed that it was the only way for me to have a better future and avoid low-paying jobs. It might be an expensive journey, and still open to debate whether it's worth it or not, but my family and I saw it as a necessity, not a luxury." (P1)

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Following Chapter 4, which presents the findings of the research, Chapter 5 aims to critically discuss how English is perceived both as a structuring force and a contested symbol within the process of the internationalization of Turkish higher education by bringing together the conceptual, empirical, and ideological dimensions of the study in light of the research findings. In this regard, it needs to be marked that the present study adopts a perspective that goes beyond traditional frameworks, which define English as a neutral lingua franca or a technical tool of communication. Instead, it positions English as a historically embedded structure of power- a discursive regime that mediates access, recognition, and participation in institutional, pedagogical, and emotional domains. Grounded on a multi-scalar research design that integrates different policy scales—from macro-level policy discourse to meso-level institutional structures and micro-level lived experiences, the following discussion aims to reveal how English shapes not only the circulation of knowledge but also legitimacy in the global academy, global belonging, and identity formation—often through contradictory and complex pathways.

This chapter, guided by the study's intersecting theoretical map linking *critical language policy* (Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004), *language ideology* (Woolard, 2005), and *critical GCE* (Andreotti, 2006), initially interrogates the role of English in the internationalization and GCI within Turkish higher education landscape through nine interrelated thematic axes. It begins with an analysis of how English functions as a form of symbolic capital and an instrument of ideological positioning within macro-level policy discourse. It then addresses how these policies are negotiated, embedded, and at times contradicted in meso- and micro-level institutional practices. The subsequent sections explore how English is experienced on a personal and emotional level as both a source of aspiration and anxiety, and how it intersects with imaginaries of GC and epistemic gatekeeping. The findings of the research also engage with the evolving discourse of academic calls for transformative

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internationalization grounded in plurilingualism, reflexivity, and justice orientation (Canagarajah, 2013; Guilherme, 2022a, 2022c; Guilherme & Menezes de Souza, 2019a, 2019b; Jenkins, 2014). Following a synthesis of the study's implications at the policy, pedagogical, and institutional levels, this discussion chapter concludes with an evaluation of the study's multilayered contributions across four core dimensions-theoretical, empirical, contextual, and ethical-and a roadmap for future research directions in the field.

This chapter does not simply describe the findings in line with the prior research but also constructs a critical inquiry into the conditions under which English operates in the Turkish higher education landscape in an effort to generate a full-fledged discussion where the findings of the present research are contextualized in a broader frame. It draws attention to the dual roles of English- both as a means of access and a structure of exclusion, as a source of legitimacy and a site of stratification. In this context, it seeks to move away from the soft and celebratory narratives of internationalization and instead foregrounds the emotional burdens, epistemic hierarchies, and structural inequalities embedded in English-dominant academic systems. Ultimately, this chapter argues for the restructuring of internationalization on the basis of epistemic plurality, linguistic inclusivity, and context-sensitive global engagement and positions Türkiye as a critical and underexplored site where limitations and possibilities intersect within the global education order.

5.2 English as Symbolic Capital and Ideological Apparatus in Policy Discourse

The role of English in the macro-level policies of Turkish CoHE reveals a pronounced ideological orientation that goes beyond instrumental rationales. In this regard, the positioning of English as a strategic driver of global recognition, international visibility, academic diplomacy, and harmonization with European standards, as found in themes- for instance, *English as a Policy Instrument for Higher Education Diplomacy and Global Engagement*," "*English as a Means of Aligning Turkish Higher Education with European Quality Assurance Standards and International Norms*," and "*English as a Medium Positioning Türkiye as a Global Higher Education Hub*," confirms earlier critiques that language policy is

increasingly subjected to neoliberal globalization (Jenkins, 2014; Mauranen & Ranta, 2008; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004).

So, what might distinguish the policy discourse in Türkiye from the broader Anglophone-centered literature? The answer could be considered as the entanglement of geopolitical ambition and linguistic performativity. In the Turkish context, English is framed not only as a tool for participation in the global academy but also as a symbol of national aspiration and a semi-peripheral alignment with Western epistemic norms. In this regard, attempting to secure an advantageous place within academic hierarchies predominantly shaped by the Global North and Anglophone contexts, Türkiye deliberately integrates English into its higher education dynamics with an increase in English-taught programs as a vital component of the nation's soft power strategy. This finds resonance with what Jenkins (2011) criticizes: universities often proclaim internationalization through linguistic markers while, in essence, perpetuating ideologies specific to native English speakers. The existence of such a contradiction is clearly observable in the policies of the Turkish CoHE, while regulating EMI, there has been no critical perspective found within the scope of this study that addresses the epistemological asymmetries or sociolinguistic impacts of such imposition. This absence is striking, particularly in a context like Türkiye, where language and culture are allowed to evolve, yet ideologically elevated as singular and foundational (please check the themes "*English as a Challenge to Türkiye's Monolingual Ideology*" and "*English as an Accompanying Academic Language Alongside Turkish*").

This is precisely why the ideological positioning of English at this point aligns with what Castro-Gómez (2005) calls the zero-point hubris- *la hybris del punto cero*- and also Woolard's concept of the ideology of "*anonymity*"-whereby English is presented as a neutral and universal tool abstracted from its colonial and geopolitical contexts, as reflected in the theme "*English as a Lingua Franca in Turkish Higher Education*." However, as Guilherme (2019) critiques, "there is no such thing as a *lingua franca* at all, since every language is loaded with heavy luggage [...]" (p. 45). The supposed neutrality and apolitical positioning of English, therefore, obscures the fact that English is deeply rooted in Anglo-Western epistemologies, holding the keys to epistemic legitimacy and inclusion (Guilherme, 2019; Phillipson, 2009; Shohamy, 2006). In Turkish higher education, policy discourse on internationalization or

language education does not assess- or even problematize- the dominance of norms specific to native English speakers or the consequences of excluding local knowledge systems and plurilingual perspectives from the internationalization agenda. Instead, as revealed by macro-level policies, English functions in Turkish higher education as an aestheticized and abstracted symbolic catalyst within technocratic policy machinery.

When macro-level policy discourse is examined in the context of Turkish higher education, Spolsky's (2004) tripartite language policy model (*practice, ideology*, and *management*) and Shohamy's (2006) *covert language policy* prove particularly explanatory. At the ideological level, English is adopted as the default measure of modernization and academic credibility, as noted in the sub-theme "*English as a Standard for Academic Excellence and Research Innovation.*" At the management level, English is strategically institutionalized by statutory provisions that govern research, teaching, admissions, and other relevant institutional standards, manifested in the sub-theme "*English as a Legally Regulated Medium of Instruction within the Framework of National Language Policies.*" However, at the practice level, despite the proliferation of EMI programs in Turkish HEIs, there appears to be minimal alignment between "*de jure*" (stated) and "*de facto*" (practiced) language policies (Johnson, 2013), which becomes apparent in the sub-theme "*English Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization.*" Institutional documents (e.g., strategic plans, internal evaluation reports, quality handbooks) indicate varying degrees of pedagogical infrastructure to support EMI or ensure equitable access to it. For such a gap, it can be stated that language choices, though presented as apolitical decisions, actually function as instruments of symbolic regulation (Shohamy, 2006), wherein the appearance of compliance serves ideological optics without necessarily ensuring pedagogical depth (Spolsky, 2004).

This research further reveals a structural dependency on English for epistemic legitimacy within the policy discourse in Türkiye. Accordingly, with sub-themes such as "*English as a Benchmark for Higher Education Standards*" and "*English as a Certified Teaching Qualification with Native Norms*", it appears that policies do not merely reinforce the supremacy of Anglo-centric models; they also produce an exclusionary hierarchy in which only those who demonstrate fluency in privileged forms of English can fully participate in knowledge production. Here, it becomes

clear that this explicit alignment of English proficiency with academic quality standards, cutting-edge research, and global knowledge dissemination positions English at the epistemological core of the Turkish higher education system. At this point, such centralization may potentially risk alternative epistemic traditions and non-English linguistic frameworks, risking exclusionary practices towards academics and researchers who operate outside English linguistic parameters. This epistemological privileging of English is in line with Canagarajah's (2002) assertion that English-dominant academic systems naturalize exclusion through normative gatekeeping, transforming language into a sorting mechanism, thereby privileging certain subjectivities while marginalizing others.

These findings point to the fact that the elevated status of English is accepted with little critique: It is internalized not only through overt policies but also by the very actors who are subjected to it as a neutral and default tool for access, normalizing its dominance and veiling the unequal terms on which that access is granted. The participants' expressions, revealing sub-themes such as "*English as a Driver of Academic Prestige*" and "*English as an Indicator for Global Positioning*," despite their practical orientations, acknowledge the tacit acceptance of the English linguistic status quo. At this stage, Bourdieu's (1991) theory of *symbolic violence* comes to the fore, where dominant linguistic forms are portrayed as neutral, thereby reinforcing English's legitimacy and maintaining its dominance. Such processes of internalization occur through individuals' habitus; individuals within the field of higher education, here, the Turkish higher education context, are positioned as reproducers of linguistic capital demands without questioning them. As a result, English is no longer merely positioned as a means of communication but transforms into a form of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 1991) associated with status, value, and recognition. Those without access to this capital are structurally placed in disadvantaged roles.

Considering these findings, it can be noted that, at the macro level, Turkish education policy constructs English as a tool of symbolic alignment with global academic hegemony. It becomes evident that the inequalities enacted under the guise of neutrality and standardization are also perpetuated within Turkish higher education. Rather than promoting linguistic diversity or epistemic plurality, such policies position English within a market-driven logic of internationalization,

effectively marginalizing local languages and forms of knowledge, which are prioritized by critical perspectives (Andreotti, 2006; Guilherme, 2019). These reveal that internationalization policies in higher education systems are not merely technical but also ideological choices and that English is positioned less as a pedagogical tool and more as a symbolic investment in the production of international prestige and institutional positioning. Therefore, when it comes to the internationalization of higher education, these findings suggest that the issue is not whether English is used but how and in what ways it is used, calling for a pedagogical, ethical, and political engagement with its role.

5.3 The Politics and Practices of English in Institutional Contexts: Meso and Micro-Level Tensions

Although the macro-level policies of Turkish higher education position English as the strategic axis of internationalization and academic competitiveness, the landscape revealed by the findings from meso- and micro-level institutional documents and stakeholder narratives is much more fragmented and, at times, contradictory. Turkish HEIs often produce internal policies and evaluations to implement the Turkish CoHE's directives smoothly, as seen in the themes "*English as a Requirement of National Policies*" and "*English as a Strategic Tool for Alignment with CoHE's Internationalization Goals*." However, in this regard, it is observed that the use of English within institutions consists of a patchwork of localized interpretations, pragmatic improvisations, and adaptations based on resource constraints. This tension between policy alignment and institutional autonomy becomes especially evident in how English is integrated into curricula, classroom practices, assessment systems, and faculty recruitment criteria, particularly considering the frequent lack of infrastructure and pedagogical support necessary to ensure equity or effectiveness.

What emerges from the analysis of various institutional documents and open-ended questionnaires conducted with administrators and academic staff within the scope of this study is the existence of a deeply stratified and inconsistent approach to English language policy implementation. While universities frequently echo macro-level policy discourses by incorporating English into mission statements, program

titles, and quality assurance frameworks (please check themes of "*English as a Benchmark of Academic Success*," "*English as a Component of International Quality Assurance and Accreditation*"), the actual pedagogical design remains largely fragmented, and, in many cases, superficial. This confirms Shohamy's (2006) critique of "*de facto*" language policies, as the symbolic inclusion of English is not supported by coherent implementation strategies, resulting in a dissonance between institutional branding and academic reality.

One of the most striking themes that emerged from the study is "*English Language Planning as an Autonomous Practice of HEIs*," reflecting a paradoxical dynamic in Turkish higher education. It appears that while English is imposed as a national standard, the responsibility for implementation is left to institutions without sufficient policy support or a structural framework. Accordingly, as long as they meet or exceed the standards set by the Turkish CoHE, HEIs establish their own EMI standards, preparatory programs, assessment criteria, and faculty hiring policies, demonstrating a tailored approach to integrating English into the academic frameworks of higher education. Although these approaches seem to align with the principles of autonomous forms of education, it is worth noting that such a situation aligns with Canagarajah's (2005) observations on *peripheral academic systems*. In these systems, institutions are often involved in processes of linguistic compliance at the global level without possessing epistemic agency. The result is manifested as coerced monolingualism- a situation that emerges where English becomes dominant as a monolingual classroom language policy. Thus, as in this context, an approach is adopted that largely ignores the multilingual realities of students and faculty members.

Especially when faculty reflections are considered, it becomes evident that the pressures created by this uneven policy are expressed openly. Faculty members are often expected to deliver content in English, even though they have not received formal training in either EMI pedagogy or disciplinary language integration (Dearden & Macaro, 2016; İnal et al., 2021). The existence of such a situation aligns with Airey's (2012) finding that EMI environments reduce rhetorical flexibility and increase linguistic burden for both students and faculty. In this study, this condition is also reinforced through sub-themes such as "*English as a Certified Teaching Qualification Based on Native-Speaker Norms*" and "*Native English Varieties as*

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Normative Standards in Language Practices," which are indicators that gatekeeping mechanisms based on native-speaker norms are being institutionalized within higher education systems. This is in exact correspondence with Jenkins (2014), who criticizes how the continual valorization of native-speaker standards in EMI contexts not only weakens inclusive pedagogy but also creates a system that reinforces global inequalities by privileging certain accents, linguistic forms, and academic literacies.

The pedagogical consequences of such an ideology are also quite profound. Contrary to the sub-theme "*English as a Monolingual Classroom Language Policy,*" revealing the fact that many HEIs adopt an "English-only" policy in the classroom as a deliberate effort to create a consistent linguistic environment where English is the exclusive medium of instruction and communication, many faculty members resort to practices such as code-switching or translanguaging while interacting with students in order to maintain classroom clarity and emotional connection (Ege et al., 2022; Sung, 2022). Although these practices are pedagogically effective, they are not included in institutional discourses and are generally perceived as informal or insufficient. This finding also resonates with the studies of Köylü (2018) and İnal et al. (2021), as these studies report that Turkish EMI instructors regularly switch between English and Turkish in classroom discourse to manage the cognitive load. However, such practices are rarely acknowledged in formal evaluations or curricular frameworks, revealing a persistent gap between pedagogical efficacy and institutional recognition.

With the systematic adoption of Anglophone-centric norms in teaching and assessment, as revealed in sub-themes such as "*English as Practiced and Assessed with Standardized Native-Speaker Norms,*" a mismatch between language ideology and learner diversity becomes apparent in the Turkish context. This situation creates a structural disadvantage for students who are epistemically competent in disciplinary knowledge but have low proficiency in academic English. As Phillipson (2009) warns, such subtractive EMI models tend to erode local languages and forms of knowledge in the name of global legitimacy by layering English onto the existing structures at the expense of conceptual depth. In the Turkish context, this subtractive logic becomes particularly concerning, especially when considering the socio-economic and regional inequalities in exposure to English during pre-university education (British Council & TEPAV, 2013), as criticized by one of the participants,

"those who attended private high schools dominate discussions." At this point, it is worth noting that the uneven presence of EMI tends to cluster in resource-rich, centrally located institutions, functioning as a structure restricting access for students from public schools or peripheral regions (Ekoç, 2020). Such institutional geographies reflecting deep class-based and regional inequalities point to the fact that, in the Turkish context, English proficiency is less the result of sufficient individual effort and more the outcome of early access to *linguistic capital* (Bourdieu, 1991).

The findings of this study also reveal that language proficiency has become an indicator of institutional belonging. As stakeholders are situated within institutional spaces where English proficiency is implicitly associated with academic competence, professional potential, and global legitimacy, the meanings attached to English reveal a dualistic impact: On the one hand, English is tied to students' and faculty members' sense of self-efficacy, perseverance, and confidence as evidenced by the sub-themes "*English as a Catalyst for Self-Efficacy*" and *"English as a Builder of Grit."* On the other hand, as seen in the theme "*English as a Source of Faculty and Student Stress*," the emotional cost of this dynamic resembles the phenomenon in which linguistic performance in internationalized classrooms is defined as "*emotional labor*," which requires investment in emotional energy. At this point, English functions not as a bridge but as a disciplinary boundary, rewarding those who conform and marginalizing those who do not. Therefore, such institutional practices do not support the pedagogical maturation of EMI but rather its bureaucratization and commodification. Therefore, it becomes evident that English is no longer a tool for intercultural pedagogy or academic access; it transforms into a form of symbolic capital exchanged for visibility, ranking, and funding within the neoliberal university model. This finding aligns with the view of Piller and Cho (2013), who criticize EMI in global higher education as a performance spectacle that suffices to meet international benchmarks regardless of learning outcomes or inclusivity.

With the current research, triangulating macro-level policy documents, meso- and micro-level institutional texts, and participant narratives, it becomes apparent that English in Turkish HEIs does not merely function as a pedagogical tool but also as a regulatory apparatus (Canagarajah, 1999; Shohamy, 2006) that distributes

access, recognition, and legitimacy in unequal and often unsuccessful ways. This is in exact correspondence with Altbach's (2012) concept of "*franchising*," which explains how EMI programs are licensed globally as uncritical exports, circulated as a one-size-fits-all commodity, stripped of contextual nuance. The study's findings also challenge the assumption that internationalization through EMI in the context of Turkish higher education is a linear or benevolent process. On the contrary, in line with the previous research (Arık & Arık, 2014; Haliç et al., 2009; Ekoç, 2020; Karakaş, 2016; Keleş et al., 2019; Kırkgöz, 2009b), the findings point to the existence of a contested terrain in which institutions negotiate between national impositions, market expectations, and pedagogical practices, which are often shaped at the expense of educational justice and epistemic inequality (Guilherme, 2019; Jenkins, 2013).

5.4 Between Policy and Personhood: Stakeholder Perceptions and the Emotional Economy of English

Through the stakeholder narratives presented in this study, it becomes evident that, in the Turkish context, English is portrayed not merely as a tool of internationalization but as a deeply embodied, affectively charged, and ideologically complex experience. From administrators to faculty members and students, all higher education actors consistently describe English as a source of both empowerment and vulnerability, operating at the intersection of self-worth, legitimacy, and aspiration. The existence of such a duality reflects the phenomenon that Bourdieu (1991) defines as *symbolic violence*: Under the illusion of neutrality, dominant norms are internalized, which in turn becomes a determining factor in how individuals perceive their value within institutional and global hierarchies.

The presence of sub-themes in the findings, particularly "*English Proficiency Seen as the Benchmark of Academic Success*," "*English as a Driver of Academic Prestige*," and "*English as a Catalyst for Self-Efficacy*," reveals that linguistic performance is not solely a matter of communication; it is also deeply intertwined with processes of recognition and visibility, functioning as a form of identity labor that is continuously subject to metric or social evaluation. In the context of Türkiye, where standardized English is institutionally taught, the institutional messaging of

Anglophone modes of speaking, writing, and knowledge production as the most visible and legitimate forms implicitly leads the stakeholders to frame them as benchmarks for value and academic contribution. Accordingly, as reflected in participants' expressions, without English, "the impact and visibility are limited," leading many stakeholders to internalize the idea that "if these are not in English, the world will never know about you"- a perception that not only shapes academic choices but also sustains "an unspoken hierarchy," where fluent, often native, speakers receive disproportionate recognition. While it may not directly align with Haliç et al.'s (2009) findings in which Turkish graduate students abroad described their non-conforming English proficiency as "contaminated," such data resonate with evidence that reveals the emotional cost of linguistic hegemony of English not only among those with low proficiency but also among highly competent users such as academics.

The existence of such situations cannot be adequately explained merely as byproducts of language use. As Park and Wee (2012) propose in their theories of *communicative labor*, these emotional conditions are structurally embedded in the global knowledge economy. At this point, the findings of this study expand upon this concept by demonstrating that English in Turkish HEIs demands not only academic performance but also emotional self-discipline. Accordingly, the emotional toll of navigating academic spaces in a non-native language becomes apparent in the participants' narratives, with most reporting feeling like "outsiders," "on the sidelines," or "lost in the crowd," when English becomes the only source of power and legitimacy. Therefore, English proficiency serves as a proxy for competence, leading individuals to invest in self-discipline, as students avoid participation for fear of sounding inadequate, and faculty experience stress over "surviving" spontaneous interactions, such as conference Q&A sessions or informal conversations during coffee breaks. Here, it becomes evident that such an emotional economy is not individual but systemic, reflecting the existence of an affective structure that assigns differential value based on linguistic embodiment.

In such a context, what matters is that the role English plays as both a source of anxiety and aspiration is not equally distributed. Students with urban, private, or elite educational backgrounds tend to frame English as a pathway to opportunity-a skill that can be utilized for upward social mobility, as evident in the sub-themes such as

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"*English as a Financial Investment for Social and Professional Advancement,*" and "*English as a Pathway to Financial Growth.*" As for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, English still holds its value as a currency, yet it is also perceived as a threshold they must cross, one at which they cannot afford to fail. Participants, through efforts like "jumping into the sea and getting used to it," highlight the immersive and often pressure nature of their EMI experience. This is in exact correspondence with Choi's (2024) findings in the South Korean context, where English is portrayed as "*a gatekeeper that favors the rich*" and "*a lifelong burden*" disproportionately carried by socioeconomically marginalized groups. Here, it is worth noting that English not only reflects class-based stratification but also reproduces it under the guise of meritocratic discourse.

At the faculty level, English has been described as both a form of professional capital and a professional risk. Many participants stated that promotion, publishing, and participation in international projects depend on English proficiency, yet emphasized that institutional support for language development remains extremely limited. A similar limitation was also observed in meso-level documents, citing "the insufficient foreign language proficiency of staff and limited quality and number of foreign language programs" and "the foreign language barrier in pursuing academic endeavors" as persistent obstacles in the sub-theme "*English Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization.*" Among these reports, while some mentioned that institutions planned support mechanisms for the foreign language competence of faculty members who teach in English (please check the theme "*English as an Element of Professional Development*"), the findings reveal that such support was either extremely limited or nearly non-existent. This disconnection between linguistic expectations and pedagogical provision appears to re-produce and enhance what Jenkins (2014) refers to as the "*native speaker fallacy*"—the myth that global academic legitimacy depends on linguistic mimicry of Anglophone norms, even though such standards are often unattainable or pedagogically ineffective.

With this insight, it becomes evident that English is not merely a communicative instrument or a formal policy mandate; it is also a structure of "*feeling*" (Williams, 1977)- a lived and affective condition shaped by institutional power and global normativity. The existence of such a condition reproduces what Kachru (1983) describes as "*linguistic schizophrenia*": the tension between authentic

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voice and the pressure to conform. Even among participants in higher education who see themselves as globally oriented, there is a constant struggle with the idea that their English must "*sound*" a certain way to "*count.*" Reflecting the internalized linguistic hierarchy, one participant notes, "Native speakers set the standards [...] if the goal is to sound professional and fluent, that's what we should aim for." Taking this a step further, faculty members with deep disciplinary knowledge often find themselves doubting their legitimacy because they have not attained the imagined level of linguistic fluency. This becomes evident in the words of one of the faculty members, stating that "having expertise is not sufficient" if scholars cannot "convey that expertise in English." This is exactly when English reveals itself as an emotional terrain—one where scholars are compelled to compromise authenticity in the pursuit of legitimacy within a system defined by exclusionary linguistic norms.

However, these emotional investments in English are not passively accepted by the participants. Notably, some participants, due to their experience in multilingual pedagogical environments, describe personal moments of resistance, creativity, and redefinition and report that they consciously used codeswitching strategies in EMI classrooms to center student voices, even when such practices were not institutionally encouraged (please check the theme "*English as a Monolingual Classroom Language Policy*"). These subtle forms of linguistic negotiation-described by participants as "brief" and "very limited" uses of Turkish- signal not passive compliance, but small acts of agency, even in contexts where such practices are "not officially acknowledged" or "not encouraged" by their institutions. Such pedagogical acts are in exact correspondence with previous research (Carroll, 2024; Xu & Knijnik, 2024) that show English can be reimagined not as a norm to be mastered but as a dialogic tool and that emotionally inclusive EMI classrooms can foster critical thinking, empathy, and global solidarity among students by allowing them to speak from places of cultural and emotional authenticity rather than linguistic conformity.

It is worth noting that examples with transformative pedagogies remain exceptions within a broader system dominated by audit culture, standardized rankings and metrics, and the pressures of global branding. Therefore, it is not sufficient to speak of English in Turkish higher education merely as a linguistic expectation. English is also a technology of the self—a regime that shapes how

individuals relate to themselves, their institutions, and the imagined global community. With the findings of this research, it also becomes evident that emotional well-being, epistemic belonging, and civic identification are deeply intertwined with individuals' ability to perform English in institutionally sanctioned ways. Therefore, it can be stated that unless global higher education systems address the emotional cost of such performances, the phenomenon of internationalization is likely to appear as an unfulfilled promise- an aestheticization of globality that extracts affective labor from those least equipped to meet its demands.

Considering the emotional economy of English, this section makes visible a domain largely overlooked in the EMI literature: the affective politics of global education. At this point, the current research reveals that English does not merely facilitate participation; rather, it creates conditional belonging, a state in which access is not guaranteed by enrollment but is earned through the performance of linguistic and emotional labor. In this context, it is apparent that the international university is not a neutral space of knowledge exchange, yet a stage where English scripts success, failure, and legitimacy in unequal and affectively charged terms.

5.5 English and Global Citizenship Identity: From Epistemic Access to Cultural Negotiation

In light of the findings obtained within the scope of this study, the role of English in shaping GCI in Turkish higher education cannot be fully understood through functionalist interpretations that treat English merely as a tool for access or participation. On the contrary, the findings of this study reveal that English functions as a cultural-epistemic filter that mediates the conditions under which GCI is imagined, enacted, and internalized. At both the policy and institutional levels, English is at times implicitly, at others discursively positioned as a necessary precondition for participating in "global dialogue," "academic exchange," and "international engagement" in Turkish higher education, as revealed by the sub-themes such as *English as a Tool for Global Dialogue*," "*English as a Lingua Franca of Global Academia*," and "*English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Exchange and Global Values*." However, such framings mostly reflect the soft models of GC (Andreotti, 2006)- those that prioritize mobility, market readiness, and

symbolic participation tend to overlook the deeper colonial, ideological, and structural asymmetries embedded in the global education project within such a rationale.

From this position, in CoHE's macro-level policies, English is implicitly associated with international development, humanitarian cooperation, NGO activity, and GC responsibility as seen under themes such as "*English as a Tool for Global Governance and International Cooperation,*" "*English as a Language of Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response*" and "*English as a Language of Global Civic Society and NGO Collaboration.*" While such associations and constructed frameworks appear to reflect a broadened and ethical understanding of GCI, the language used is more deeply intertwined with neoliberal development discourse. English is presented not as a contested ideological apparatus but as a transparent tool of good citizenship. In doing so, the power dynamics carried by English, as a historically embedded and colonial language, are rendered invisible (Guilherme, 2019). In this way, such policy discourse reproduces what Bortolotti (2009, 2015) defines as "*epistemic innocence*": the illusion that GC can be promoted through English while ignoring the fact that such citizenship is simultaneously shaped by and reinforces the Anglophone epistemic order (Guilherme, 2022a, 2022c).

This critical tension becomes even more evident in the meso- and micro-level practices of Turkish HEIs. Participants frequently describe English as the language of global knowledge, the gateway to being seen and heard, and the only way to matter at an international level. With respect to this, several participants reported that learning and using English allowed them to "feel [their] presence in the global world," to "have a voice," and to "be part of that community." However, what remains unaddressed is the fact that such access is conditional, not only on linguistic proficiency but also on epistemic assimilation. As seen in themes such as "*English as a Prerequisite for Advancing Global Citizenship Strategies*" and "*Native-speakerism as a Barrier to Inclusive GCI,*" for many participants, GC is imagined not through reciprocity or co-construction but through conformity to Anglophone norms. This corresponds closely to Canagarajah's (2002) critique, which reveals that participation in global academia through English often requires epistemic submission rather than collaboration. Here, it becomes clear that global legitimacy is achieved by abandoning alternative discourses, accents, or epistemologies.

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Additionally, participants expressed that they experienced English as a regulatory ideology of global identity, which resonates with the previous research (Cavanagh, 2017, 2020). According to participant narratives, it is revealed that students and academic staff negotiate their "*global selves*" through their performances of Englishness; that is, through describing how their ability to speak English fluently enables them to feel "*seen as global.*" This is clearly exemplified by a Dutch-Moroccan participant narrating English as a medium for enacting a non-essentialist, deterritorialized identity "[to] engage in global interactions... without these labels," fostering a sense of "being a global citizen." Such positioning, however, also brings issues regarding estranging individuals from national or local identity positions. Themes such as "*English as a Catalyst for Reshaping National Identity*" and "*English as a Negotiation Space for National and Global Identities*" point to an unresolved internal tension between cultural loyalty and global aspiration. As expressed by participants, they feel the weight "to represent [their] people and [their] country," even as "some cultural values [...] seem rigid compared to what [they] experience through English and global interactions," yet they still attempt to bridge the gap by claiming, "I don't see a conflict between my both [national and global] identities." Such tensions confirm Jenkins's (2011) observation that EMI policies often lead to identity conflict, particularly in contexts where GC is equated with linguistic displacement.

Moreover, with the findings, it becomes evident that, in the Turkish context, participants describe English as both an enabler of solidarity and a vehicle of cultural erasure. In this regard, for some, English is a tool that provides the opportunity to engage with global crises, advocate for justice, and connect with international peers (please check sub-themes "*English as a Means to Global Solidarity,*" "*English is a Tool for Mobilizing Global Participation,*" and "*English is a Catalyst for Fostering Individual Civic Engagement*"). However, others define English as a space of cultural violence that marginalizes non-Western ways of knowing and being, as reflected in the sub-theme "*English as a Reinforcer of Western Norms in Knowledge and Culture.*" This is observed in the reflections of participants, who noted that "knowledge is predominantly disseminated through Western ideologies via English," adding that "through publications and social media." Such participant statements align with Pavlenko's (2003) view that language learning is not merely a matter of

skill acquisition but also a process of negotiating voice, value, and visibility under unequal conditions. At this point, the aspirational desire to embody English fluency also becomes apparent in the narratives of participants from the Turkish context, which is in line with prior research (Cavanagh, 2017, 2020; Nonaka, 2018), reporting that individuals directly associate their GCI with their perceived mastery of English, even when such mastery conflicts with their internal sense of authenticity.

From a curricular perspective, institutional practices in the Turkish context revealed a soft internationalization logic in which GC is superficially integrated into English language instruction. In many HEIs, English is treated as a platform for teaching 21st-century skills, critical thinking, or civic-oriented engagement (please check sub-themes *"English as a Medium for Promoting Intercultural Communications in GCI"* and *"English as a Tool for Developing GCI Through 21st-Century Skills"*). However, with the findings of the current research, it also became evident that the pedagogical strategies aimed at promoting GC often remain disconnected from context and critical engagement with global inequality, colonialism, or historical power relations. In line with the previous research (Akbana & Yavuz, 2022), participants' reflections revealed that the materials used (e.g., coursebooks) promote a "global perspective" by including topics "based on global issues," revealing a sanitized approach to topic selections for global content integration. At this point in internationalized higher education, a paradox becomes clear: English is used to teach GC, yet the structural form of English education excludes the epistemic diversity that a truly critical GCI requires. Here, it can be commented that unless language policies move beyond the appearance of inclusion and confront the ideological and epistemic weight that English carries, universities risk teaching a version of GC that is colonial in form and neoliberal in function.

Instead of offering a perception of English merely as a space for linguistic performance, this research aims to reframe it as a discursive space wherein global subjectivities are constructed, disciplined, and negotiated. As demonstrated in earlier discussions, actors in higher education do not exhibit passive compliance with dominant norms; rather, they function as agents of change through transformative pedagogies such as translanguaging, critical content integration, and direct challenges to native-speakerism. However, the findings also reveal that such efforts remain random and peripheral rather than systemic. This points to an urgent need to

reimagine EMI as a dialogic and decolonial pedagogical space. Given the fact that English is positioned as a central strategy in the internationalization of higher education, it is apparent that English should no longer be treated as an unmarked norm, but as an active participant in an ethically grounded, multilingual dialogue concerning knowledge, identity, and global belonging. Such reimaginings have materialized in classroom practices, as evidenced by previous research (Carroll, 2024; Salih & Omar, 2021; Xu & Knijnik, 2024), positioning English not as a barrier but as a gateway through which students engage critically with the world and rethink their positions. Adapting these models to the Turkish higher education context would mean a shift from performative internationalization to epistemic inclusion, from linguistic conformity to plurilingual negotiation, and from a managerial understanding of GC to a critical, transformative, reflexive, and justice-oriented approach.

5.6 Structural Inequity and Linguistic Stratification: English as Gatekeeper

Although English is often celebrated in internationalization narratives as a bridge to global opportunities, the findings of this study reveal that, in the context of Turkish higher education, English frequently functions as a mechanism of stratification. In this regard, English structures access to academic capital, institutional prestige, and epistemic legitimacy along pre-existing lines of socioeconomic and geopolitical inequality. As evidenced by the sub-themes "*English Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization*," "*English as a Certified Teaching Qualification Based on Native-Speaker Norms*," and "*English as a Factor in Economic Disparities of Global Workforce Participation*," the findings, obtained from policy discourse and participants' narratives, reveal that in the Turkish higher education context, English does not serve as an equalizing force; on the contrary, it is a differentiator, as it often reinforces and deepens existing structural asymmetries.

This is not a new critique regarding the presence of English as a stratifier in higher education systems. As previous scholars have argued (Canagarajah, 2002; Phillipson, 2009; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004), especially under neoliberal educational regimes, the global spread of English has long been understood to carry imperialist

residues and ideological biases that privilege certain geographies, subjectivities, and forms of knowledge over others. At this point, what sets this study apart from others is its empirically rich and contextually grounded demonstration of how these dynamics manifest in a non-core semi-peripheral context, Türkiye, where national aspirations to "*go global*" are undercut by local constraints and uneven access to linguistic capital.

Following prior discussions, in the Turkish context, access to English, particularly the type of academic English required for successful participation in EMI programs (please check the themes "*English as an Academic and Professional Competency*," "*English as an Academic Language Competency*"), is primarily concentrated along social, financial, and geographic lines. As expressed by participants holding different institutional roles, there is a systematic imbalance between urban, privately educated students and those coming from more disadvantaged regions or with limited English instruction during their secondary education. Many of these students begin university with weak English proficiency, yet they are subjected to the same EMI requirements. As an SFL instructor noted, "you're working with students who, despite years of English education, haven't reached a certain level." Another added, "many of [their] students start at a zero level," which requires catching up fast: "to compensate for gaps in their previous learning in a condensed period." With the findings of the current research, it becomes evident that the current state of the structural imbalances is still in line with the findings from previous research (British Council & TEPAV, 2013; Curle et al., 2020; Doğançay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005), which documents how Turkish EMI institutions mainly cater to students who already possess higher levels of *linguistic capital* in English, consequently exacerbating educational inequality under the pretext of merit-based selection.

In relation to this, the requirement for faculty members to teach, publish, and participate in academic life in English privileges those with international education, cosmopolitan cultural capital, or prior experience in English-dominant environments. As reported in one of the institutional reports, HEIs are ready to "grant additional points in faculty appointment and promotion criteria and provide financial incentives for faculty members teaching in a foreign language." On the other hand, faculty working at universities in peripheral regions or those trained within the Turkish

higher education system through Turkish-medium instruction often face invisible demands to academic mobility, not due to a lack of expertise, but because academic performance outside the Anglophone norm is symbolically devalued. As one participant noted, "English is the standard," and without it, "research might behave as if it doesn't exist.", while another reflected on the symbolic hierarchy embedded in practice: "Departments with EMI often seem superior," leaving others to "feel inferior." This can be considered a clear example of what Bourdieu (1991) describes as "*symbolic violence.*" In this regard, alternative expressions of knowledge are rendered illegitimate through the imposition of dominant linguistic norms, and such exclusion is disguised as objective or merit-based.

The findings, reported under themes such as "*English as Practiced and Assessed with Native-Speaker Norms*" and "*English as a Benchmark of Academic Success,*" also make evident that linguistic gatekeeping is often institutionalized through standardized assessment tools, hiring policies, and accreditation procedures that glorify native-speaker fluency. As noted by one of the participants, for instance, some "opt to remain silent rather than being misunderstood," while another emphasized how fluency often "creates the impression of greater knowledge," even in contexts where content or pedagogical knowledge should take precedence. English, in this sense, is not merely a communicative tool but a symbolic resource-what one participant termed "a necessity and sometimes a privilege" that conditions access to publication, collaboration, and international recognition. At this point, Jenkins' (2014) critique of native-speakerism in EMI comes to the fore, constituting a form of linguistic elitism that naturalizes the exclusion of non-native voices from the domains of teaching and publishing.

Beyond academic experience, the impact of English as a stratifier also extends into the emotional and socio-economic domains of participants' lives (please check sub-themes "*English as a Catalyst for Self-Efficacy*" and "*English as a Source of Faculty and Student Stress*"). Students, particularly in terms of assessment, reported experiencing anxiety, stress, or identity-related uncertainties linked to the performative demands of English. As one student expressed, "You might want to say something, but you hesitate [...] Maybe you have a better idea, but your opinion might come across as silly because you are not as fluent as they are." For faculty members, the expectation to publish in high-impact English-language journals was

often reportedly associated with emotional exhaustion and professional stagnation, giving rise to perceptions marked by resignation or a sense of helpless acceptance: "I have seen too many academics with less expertise who can speak confidently simply because they are more comfortable in English," one participant admitted, adding "sometimes this has made me question my own abilities." At this point, it becomes evident that English functions not only as an academic filter but also as a technology of affective discipline in Turkish higher education, regulating which emotions, desires, and identities can exist within the university's global imaginary of academic legitimacy and success (Park & Wee, 2012; Haliç et al., 2009).

An even more troubling finding is the epistemological stratification enabled through English. As revealed in the sub-themes such as "*English as an Epistemic Structure in Scientific Discourse*," "*English as a Constraint for Multilingual Knowledge Diversity*," and "*English as a Hegemonic Force in Global Literacy Practices*," in Turkish higher education, participants experience deep frustration with the linguistic uniformity demanded by academic publishing and knowledge validation. In this respect, Turkish and other local languages are often excluded from scholarly platforms not due to intellectual inadequacy but because the gatekeeping mechanisms of English-based publication systems seemingly deem these languages illegitimate or irrelevant to global knowledge or criticize them as being "*too local*." As expressed by some participants, "academic output is only valuable when shared globally," which positions English as "a powerful tool for showcasing [their] work to the world." Such perceptions are also reinforced by Turkish HEIs seeking "inclusion in prominent indexes," where publishing in Turkish is seen as having "limited reach or impact." The gatekeeping in academic publishing in the Turkish context aligns with the previous research (Siqueira, 2022), reporting how regional researchers targeting English-language journals were rejected for being "too local to be of interest", regardless of the scientific worth of their work.

Such an exclusion from the global knowledge circuit constitutes "*epistemicide*," which refers to the silencing of entire knowledge traditions through linguistic hegemony (Mirhosseini et al., 2024; Santos, 2014). The current research offers additional evidence of this exclusionary logic by revealing the fact that faculty members seeking to conduct locally grounded academic work often feel compelled to conform to Anglo-Western discursive conventions both linguistically and

intellectually. This condition indicates what Canagarajah (1999) describes as the "*unequal playing field of academic knowledge production*", referring to a structural configuration in which only those with the means to perform the normative discourse of English-mediated globality are able to participate. The rest remain in marginal positions not due to cognitive or conceptual insufficiency, but more often, almost always, because of the invisible yet powerful linguistic cost of entry. In this context, it can be commented that English functions not only as a gatekeeper but also as a border rule, regulating access to symbolic legitimacy, material opportunities, and epistemic visibility. Far from serving as a neutral tool for connection at the global level, English operates as a mechanism of selection, assimilation, and stratification in the context of Turkish higher education, with deep implications for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

In light of all these findings, EMI policies in the Turkish higher education system are likely to continue to serve the minority and marginalize the majority, sustaining English as an elitist language wrapped in the rhetoric of global democracy, unless they are supported by systematic investments in plurilingual pedagogies, translanguaging-friendly learning environments, and inclusive teacher education. To this end, the current research suggests that HEIs aiming for decolonial internationalization confront the unexamined and covert ideology of English as the standard language and build the conditions where language is not seen as a wall to scale but as a landscape to traverse together.

5.7 Reimagining Internationalization through Plurilingualism and Critical Global Citizenship Education

Grounded on the findings revealing the structural inequities, symbolic stratifications, and epistemic exclusions reported in earlier sections of this study, it appears that, in the Turkish higher education landscape, prevailing models of internationalization are entrenched in the hegemony of English; therefore, reconsideration becomes essential, not through incremental reforms but through fundamental reimagining. At this point, rather than the naturalization of English as the global academic standard, in line with the critical perspectives (Guilherme, 2022a; Phillipson, 2009; Rose et al., 2022; Xu & Knijnik, 2024), this study is

compelled to make a call for a shift toward plurilingual, ethically reflexive, and epistemically inclusive paradigms that prioritize not access but justice, not participation but transformation.

When dominant core models of higher education are considered, English is central to procedural initiatives, notably in contexts of global collaborations and curriculum internationalization (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Knight, 2004), which elevate English as a self-evident access tool, thereby legitimizing structures of linguistic and epistemic domination. In contrast, at the heart of the reimagined higher education, there appears the theoretical and pedagogical promise of plurilingualism, calling for a system that embraces the fluid, dynamic, and contextually embedded linguistic repertoires that learners and educators bring into the classroom (Guilherme, 2022b). By rejecting the deficit mindset pathologizing mother tongue use as pedagogical failure, actual transformation emerges when translanguaging, code-switching, and cross-linguistic mediation are seen as legitimate and necessary dimensions of learning and identity construction (Sabaté-Dalmau et al., 2024). The need for such transformative approaches also stands out in the context of Turkish higher education, as reflected in the findings, particularly in instances where instructors and students reported relying on Turkish to scaffold meaning, manage classroom dynamics, and negotiate cultural complexities even in contexts where such practices are "not officially acknowledged" or "not encouraged" by their institutions.

As clearly seen in themes such as "*English as a Monolingual Classroom Language Policy*" and "*English Language Deficiency as a Barrier to Institutional Internationalization,*" it becomes evident in the Turkish context that such pedagogical realities reflect that the dominance of English is not only unrealistic but also pedagogically ineffective. Rather than viewing translanguaging as an act of "falling short," if Turkish HEIs begin to institutionalize it as a method of epistemic bridging, it can be positioned as a tool that connects global content with local context and English discourse with indigenous knowledge systems. As previous research has also shown (İnal et al., 2021; Köylü, 2018), it is evident that EMI instructors in Türkiye already employ hybrid strategies out of necessity. What is missing and urgently needed is ideological legitimacy and the structural support at the policy level that participants are seeking but are unable to find for such practices.

Given this structural renewal, it is important to remember that a plurilingual transformation also requires a reimagining of the curriculum. When Turkish HEIs' practices are examined, current internationalization frameworks- particularly those promoted by CoHE- tend to emphasize English as a tool for "*21st-century skills,*" "*global employability,*" and "*mobility*." Yet, as the data from this research also reveal, such framings often reduce English to a technical fix for symbolic globality, ignoring the historical and political conditions shaping global engagement. At this point, Critical GCE (Andreotti, 2006) stands out as an alternative framework, reframing the emphasis from soft, depoliticized globalism to a model grounded in historical accountability, epistemic humility, and power-sensitive solidarity. This framework does not reject English but repositions it as one voice among many, no longer a hegemonic tool, but a participant in multilingual dialogues. With this shift, the aim in internationalized higher education, then, moves from producing "*globally fluent*" graduates to cultivating individuals with critical and reflective literacy, those who discern how language constructs knowledge, identity, and power. As discussed previously, this is particularly urgent in the Turkish context, as students' affective responses to English- shame, desire, effort, alienation, and pride- are not trivial emotions but indicators of how internationalization is embodied and negotiated in the Turkish higher education landscape.

The findings derived from macro, meso, and micro-level data sets support a rethinking of the role of English in the development of GCI. Within the scope of the study, while some participants expressed enthusiasm for English as a tool for intercultural engagement, global civic participation, and intellectual expansion, others stated that native-English norms constrain identity formation, silence local voices, and reproduce Western-centric epistemologies. These three perspectives voiced by participants align with the concept of "*glob(c)al literacy*" pronounced by Ferraz (2019), a Freirean-inspired scholar, from whose perspective English is not seen as an imperial norm to be absorbed but as a contested site of negotiation where learners explore how to "read the world" and "read themselves" through plural lenses (Freire, 1985). Reinforcing this stance, Guilherme (2022a, 2022b) offers "*glocademia*," which situates epistemological multiplicity and linguistic plurality not at the margins, but at the very core of the global academic practice. Here, the emphasis appears on "plurilingual, intercultural, interepistemic, and transnational"

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collaboration, which takes place through "knowledge collection, exchange, and recreation across languages, cultures, and epistemologies" (Guilherme, 2022a, p. 13). Considering its potential adaptation within the Turkish higher education context, *glocademia* manifests itself in multilingual and multicultural collaborative educational and research initiatives, EMI redesign with fluid and dynamic linguistic approaches such as translanguaging, and programs that prioritize indigenous and inter-epistemic knowing and being, including those in Turkish and other regional languages.

Such transformations are not limited to the curriculum; they are also structural in nature. They require institutional courage: to abandon the symbolic comfort of English-based branding, to question the market logic that links English proficiency to academic legitimacy, and to challenge the idea that internationalization must be measured by standardized scores such as TOEFL, foreign faculty recruitment, or global metrics such as QS and THE rankings. Instead, HEIs should be evaluated by how effectively they support multilingual dialogue, ethical engagement, and epistemic openness. The existence of seeds of this type of transformation is evident in the Turkish context. The findings reveal that despite being in the form of isolated efforts, some Turkish academics adopt strategies such as translanguaging to support students socially and emotionally, integrate local issues into course content, and engage in critical discussions on linguistic inequality, particularly in academic publishing. At this point, it can be commented that unless there is a policy architecture that legitimizes such alternatives through funding, professional development, and curriculum reform, these efforts risk being absorbed or lost within the institutional inertia of Anglophone normativity.

Within the scope of this study, it is suggested that reimagining internationalization in Turkish higher education requires a shift toward genuine inclusivity, moving from linguistic compliance to epistemic co-presence and from symbolic globality to substantive inclusion. This reorientation centers on turning English from a gatekeeper of legitimacy into a tool for ethical and pluralistic world-making, where language does not confine expression but opens up spaces for articulating ideas through multi-vocal and co-creative practices. Grounded in critical thought and informed hope, the existence of this vision is not utopian; it is both possible and necessary if higher education is to address the legacies of the past while

actively contributing to more plural and just futures. If it shares the stage and no longer insists on being in the spotlight, English has a role to play in this transformation.

5.8 Policy, Pedagogy, and Practice: Implications for Turkish and Global Higher Education

By unpacking the underexplored intersections among English, internationalization, and GCI, this inquiry offers critical insights for higher education stakeholders, both within Türkiye and across global contexts, particularly concerning the nuanced dynamics of English-medium internationalization. At this point, the study points to a pragmatic shift in the conceptualization and implementation of these issues across multiple policy scales within institutions and in broader policy environments.

5.8.1 Policy-level implications: From symbolic internationalization to epistemic plurality. To begin with, the findings reveal that in the Turkish higher education landscape, English is currently instrumentalized as a symbol of modernization, international alignment, and global competitiveness (CoHE, 2017a). Considering CoHE's emphasis on English as a strategic tool at the macro policy level, (please check the themes "*English as a Policy Instrument for Higher Education Diplomacy and Global Engagement,*" and "*English as a key to Global Market Competitiveness*") internationalization agenda applied in Türkiye reflects the global trend toward performative internationalization (Altbach, 2012; Piller & Cho, 2013). Despite Türkiye's stated geopolitical aspirations, this research indicates that such framings are likely to carry the risk of reducing internationalization to an aesthetic and managerial project (Guilherme, 2019). It is evident that this ideology fails to adequately address the epistemic, emotional, and socio-economic costs it imposes on students and faculty. In this regard, one alternative approach would be for CoHE to establish a more responsible language policy in the Turkish higher education landscape by recognizing English not as the destination but as one pathway among many, contextual, limited, and ethically charged. At the policy level, it is also recommended that multilingual models be explicitly supported, resources be

allocated to translanguaging pedagogies, and multilingual publishing norms be integrated into academic promotion and evaluation systems. Moreover, it is worth noting that national policies should consider regional inequalities in access to English and prevent EMI from becoming a class-based sorting mechanism by implementing equity-oriented language planning that empowers, supports, and includes students across the linguistic and socio-economic spectrum (Guilherme & Menezes de Souza, 2019a, 2019b; Jenkins, 2014; Mauranen & Ranta, 2008; Phillipson, 2009).

5.8.2 Pedagogical implications: From linguistic conformity to critical literacy. At the pedagogical level, first of all, the findings point to the fact that there is an urgent need to redefine EMI in an effort to transform it from being a monolingual conduit for Anglo-Western knowledge into a dialogic, reflective, and inclusive space of meaning-making in alignment with the visions proposed by recent literature (Carroll, 2024; Guilherme, 2022a; Rose et al., 2022; Xu & Knijnik, 2024). With the evolving trends, it becomes evident that English should no longer be presented as the ideal and default medium of instruction; instead, it should be reconsidered as a pedagogical resource that can be used flexibly and critically to serve inter-epistemic pluralism. Secondly, it needs to be noted that faculty development programs, especially for those working in EMI programs, should foster training in critical language awareness, fluid and dynamic linguistic strategies (e.g., translanguaging), and plurilingual curriculum design. From this perspective, in the third instance, rather than prioritizing certain types of English or fluency norms associated with particular Englishes (e.g., American and British English), a need for institutions to prioritize linguistic pragmatism, cultural relevance, and epistemic justice becomes evident. Here, an additional implication relevant to critical GCE (Andreotti, 2006) is that the EMI course objectives should reflect competencies such as historical awareness, power-sensitive dialogue, and plurilingual agency. Moreover, it is essential to note that assessment practices should shift away from standard native English norms and the penalization of deviations from them; instead, they should recognize conceptual mastery expressed through diverse linguistic repertoires along with cross-cultural meaning-making.

5.8.3 Institutional practice implications: From branding to belonging. At the level of institutional practice, with the findings, it is obvious that, in Turkish higher education, there is a prevailing logic that equates internationalization with English visibility in marketing materials, signage, and symbolic representations as reflected in the theme "*English as a Tool for Global Visibility and Recognition*." Moreover, it is evident that many HEIs present themselves as globally oriented, despite lacking the necessary infrastructure for significant linguistic inclusion. In this context, based on the evidence, it is advisable that HEIs initially reconsider the mindset that normalizes symbolic internationalization in the absence of pedagogical transformation (Keleş et al., 2020; Özer, 2022). One alternative approach would be for HEIs to reframe their internationalization agendas to emphasize ethical commitment, multilingual justice, and student-centered inclusivity. However, it is worth considering that this is only achievable when academic spaces are established where faculty and students feel emotionally secure, epistemically visible, and linguistically legitimate. Furthermore, within the context of institutional quality assurance, mechanisms should reward not only linguistic conformity but also pedagogical innovation, while promoting collaborative global learning models that prioritize equity over elite branding. Moreover, in HEIs, greater attention should be paid to supporting student- and faculty-led initiatives that critique linguistic hierarchies, decolonize curricula, and challenge epistemic inequality, while engaging with alternative communicative ecologies; for example, plurilingual reading groups, multilingual test options, or transnational co-teaching networks. It is noteworthy that only when such practices are structurally embedded in institutional processes can internationalization be redefined, not as symbolic alignment with Western norms but as a shared, dialogic, and pluralistic project of knowledge production.

In this regard, the implications of this study suggest the need for a radical departure from the prevailing "*English-as-default*" paradigm. At this point, if HEIs in Türkiye and beyond are truly committed to equity, critical citizenship, and epistemic transformation, it is advisable that they move beyond the symbolic value of English and reconceptualize and transform internationalization as a multilingual, multi-positional, and ethically accountable endeavor.

5.9 Contributions and Theoretical Implications of the Study

Conducted within Türkiye's non-core, semi-peripheral higher education context, this inquiry offers a multilayered contribution across four core dimensions-theoretical, empirical, contextual, and ethical- to the growing body of research on EMI, internationalization, and GCI in higher education. Taking a critical stance, this research conceptualizes English not as a neutral academic resource but as a symbolic and ideological force that embodies assumptions about modernity, legitimacy, and global participation. To this end, this research provides a multi-scalar, ideologically aware, and affectively layered analysis of how English operates across macro-level policies, institutional structures, and individual subjectivities. It is noteworthy that with its conceptual scope, empirical depth, and normative orientation, this study represents a theoretical departure from Anglocentric EMI literature and contributes to a more globally reflexive, linguistically inclusive, and ethically responsive vision of internationalization.

5.9.1 A multilayered reconceptualization of language policy in internationalization. This study's most distinctive intervention is its layered analytical framework, fusing language policy, ideology, and citizenship. Overall, the synthesis of four frameworks, delineating how language policies (Spolsky, 2004) are implemented (Shohamy, 2006), legitimized (Woolard, 2005), and reflexively examined (Andreotti, 2006), advances a novel framework exposing the epistemic, affective, and ideological operations of English in nominally internationalized HEIs. This analytic lens repositions English beyond managerial and pedagogical domains and reframes it as an epistemic regime that governs belonging, legitimacy, and symbolic capital across multiple levels. The empirical articulation of the intersecting framework introduces a transformative lens for theorizing the nexus of language, identity, and citizenship, since no existing scholarship, to the researcher's best knowledge, has brought these frameworks into dialogue, particularly in relation to the Turkish context. What emerges is a rich theoretical landscape that allows future researchers to map language ideologies not only at the level of curriculum or classroom or solely at the level of policy but also across different domains such as the political, ideological, institutional, affective, and cultural.

5.9.2 Empirical enrichment of semi-peripheral perspective. When it comes to English as a medium of instruction, the majority of the existing scholarship has been shaped either by Anglophone core contexts, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States, or by high-profile East Asian systems, such as South Korea, Japan, and China. In contrast, the current research study positions Türkiye as a geopolitically hybrid, ideologically complex, and structurally stratified space where internationalization takes on a particularly performative and aspirational form. In this regard, the study adds contextual and empirical depth to global EMI discourse by showing how the top-down internationalization vision intersects with institutional inconsistencies and individual ambivalences. To this end, through a multi-scalar research design, combining EMI discourse across policy, practice, and perceptions, the research allows for a layered and contextually grounded analysis of how macro-level language ideologies framed by national authorities (e.g., Turkish CoHE) are translated, resisted, or reinterpreted by HEIs, and navigated by individuals. Unlike studies that focus solely on language policy or classroom discourse, this research brings policy and personhood into dialogue, making visible the contradictions, misalignments, and creative negotiations that define the lived reality of EMI in Türkiye.

5.9.3 Centering affect, emotion, and identity in EMI discourse. By emphasizing emotional labor, identity conflict, and socio-linguistic self-perception as central to the dynamics of internationalized education, this study challenges conventional framings that overlook such emotional economies as peripheral issues. At this point, much of the existing EMI literature reduces anxiety and language stress in EMI settings to secondary concerns or "*side effects*" (e.g., Curle et al., 2020; Macaro, 2020), in contrast, this study does not approach affect as incidental but as constitutive of how English structures not only what can be said but also what can be felt- who feels "*global*," who feels "*foreign*," and who feels "*deficient*." Adopting this lens, the study extends Bourdieu's (1991) notion of *symbolic violence* by exposing the affective and epistemological costs entailed by Anglo-Western norms and monolingual ideologies.

5.9.4 Epistemological disruption and plurilingual reimagining. Ultimately, the study contributes to envisioning alternative forms of internationalization not as alignment with Anglo-Western norms but as a project of epistemic pluralism, linguistic justice, and ethical engagement. Among the recent critical directions, "*glocademia*" (Guilherme, 2022a, 2022c) and "*glob(c)al literacy*" (Ferraz, 2019) stand out as particularly illustrative examples advocating for a critical plurilingual pedagogy. In this direction, the current research advocates for a more responsible language policy and practice, positioning English not as the destination but as just one pathway among many, which are contextual, limited, and ethically charged. In doing so, the study offers both a critique of dominant models and outlines a framework for advancing more equitable futures for language, citizenship, and knowledge in the global university.

5.10 Directions for Future Research

Alongside the multifaceted exploration of the intersections among English, internationalization, and GCI within the higher education context of Türkiye, the study also paves the way for several avenues of further inquiry within the evolving body of EMI literature across and beyond Türkiye. To begin with, one possible future work would be the further exploration of the disengagement between abstract policy discourse and everyday lived realities. Here, longitudinal ethnographic studies tracing how higher education actors engage with and make sense of HEIs' practices are worth considering, capturing how English-mediated identities are formed and destabilized over time, both inside and outside the classroom. In the second place, a useful direction for future research would be to address the gap in the existing literature regarding how plurilingual and decolonial pedagogies are practiced, resisted, or institutionalized in the Global South or semi-peripheral higher education contexts. Such studies could be advanced by empirical inquiries, which examine EMI settings that deliberately integrate translanguaging, indigenous epistemologies, or locally rooted content. Collaborative case studies across various regions would be of interest to uncover how minoritized linguistic identities navigate EMI spaces and how alternative models of GC can be realized through critical pluralistic approaches. Equally important is to focus on how Anglo-Western systems that center around

English shape scholarly recognition, career progression, and epistemic authority in peripheral contexts. Finally, affect-oriented research employing narrative inquiry or critical autoethnography methods is noteworthy in investigating how affective experiences are produced and mediated through linguistic regimes within internationalized HEIs.

5.11 Conclusion

This study, in fact, began with a deceptively simple question: What is the role of English in the internationalization and global citizenship identity within the Turkish higher education context? However, what has unfolded throughout this multi-scalar and context-sensitive inquiry was not a singular answer but rather a constellation of tensions, contradictions, and negotiations that reveal how deeply English is entangled, both symbolically and materially, in the current landscape of academia. It is evident that English is not merely a present element in Turkish higher education; it exists as a structurally constitutive force that shapes how internationalization is imagined, how institutional legitimacy is performed, and how global subjectivities are constructed, validated, or excluded.

The current research, reporting data from multi-dimensional data sets, has demonstrated that in the Turkish higher education landscape, English functions simultaneously as a policy instrument, an ideological anchor, a pedagogical terrain, and an emotional battleground- offering hope and opportunity, also imposing pressure and precarity. Despite the fact that it is often framed, articulated, and promoted as a neutral lingua franca, English comes with layered histories, ideological investments, and structural inequalities shaping who belongs, who counts, and who holds value. At this point, it is worth noting that English in the Turkish higher education context does not function as a neutral medium of communication and instruction but rather as a discursive, epistemic, and affective infrastructure of power, which determines not only what can be said but also who gets to speak and whose knowledge is considered valuable.

By combining policy analysis, institutional document review, and lived stakeholder narratives, this study has revealed the fragmented misalignment between policy ideals and pedagogical practice. While national policy discourse envisions

English as a symbol of modernization, international alignment, and global competitiveness in line with geopolitical aspirations, the fragmented implementations, resource limitations, and pedagogical inconsistencies within HEIs have become sites of struggle for stakeholders. Faculty are caught in a paradox in which the burden of EMI internationalization is placed upon them with limited infrastructure and uneven support. On the other hand, it appears that navigating EMI environments creates emotional strain for students, particularly those without early access to linguistic capital. Yet, at the margins, moments of contestation and agency are also evident in the current research, revealing vivid but largely unacknowledged implications.

Situated at the intersection of theory, practice, and place, the study engages multiple layers of contribution: Initially, it contributes to theory by reconceptualizing English beyond managerial and pedagogical domains and reframes it as an epistemic regime that governs belonging, legitimacy, and symbolic capital embedded within broader logics of neoliberal governance. Then, it urges a shift from performative internationalization toward linguistically and epistemically inclusive practices, decentering English as the silent standard of legitimacy and investing in pedagogies that support linguistic justice, epistemic multiplicity, and affective belonging. Ultimately, what this study has unfolded is that contested, hybrid, and aspirational non-core contexts like Türkiye are not peripheral to theory but central to rethinking the assumptions embedded in EMI internationalization. In this regard, this study emphasizes the need for context-sensitive, politically reflective, and ethically responsible EMI research to shape the future of higher education.

In conclusion, English will continue to play a role in the university of tomorrow. However, the question is: on whose terms, for what purposes, and with which voices at the table? At this point, this study invites not only answers but also new questions- those rooted in justice, complexity, and shared imagination.

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