



**UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO ESPÍRITO SANTO
CENTRO DE EDUCAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO**



**COVENTRY UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH CENTRE FOR GLOBAL LEARNING
GLOBAL LEARNING: EDUCATION WITHOUT BOUNDARIES**

CARLOS ALBERTO HILDEBLANDO JÚNIOR

**VIRTUAL EXCHANGE AS A THIRD SPACE TO DECOLONISE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Vitória – ES, Brasil / Coventry – ENG, Reino Unido
Dezembro, 2024

CARLOS ALBERTO HILDEBLANDO JÚNIOR

**VIRTUAL EXCHANGE AS A THIRD SPACE TO DECOLONISE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Tese apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação do Centro de Educação da Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo, na linha de Pesquisa Educação e Linguagens, como requisito parcial para a obtenção do título de Doutor em Educação.

Orientadora: Prof.^a Dr.^a Kyria Finardi (Ufes)

Orientadora: Prof.^a Dr.^a Marina Orsini-Jones (Coventry University)

Co-orientadora: Prof.^a Dr.^a Yu-Hua Chen (Coventry University)

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CARLOS ALBERTO HILDEBLANDO JÚNIOR

Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise English Language Teaching

**Tese apresentada ao Curso de
Doutorado em Educação da
Universidade Federal do Espírito
Santo como requisito parcial para
obtenção do Grau de Doutor em
Educação.**

Aprovada em 06 de dezembro de 2024.

COMISSÃO EXAMINADORA

Presidente Ufes: Tânia Mara Zanotti Guerra Frizzera Delboni (PPGE/Ufes)

Presidente Coventry: Katherine Wimpenny (GLEA/Coventry University)

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Ata da sessão da defesa de Tese do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação (PPGE), do Centro de Educação da Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo, do discente **Carlos Alberto Hildeblando Júnior**, candidato ao título de Doutor em Educação, com defesa realizada às 09 horas, do dia 06 de dezembro do ano dois mil e vinte e quatro, apresentada remotamente por meio de videoconferência, conforme recomendado pela Portaria Normativa 03/2020 da PRPPG. A presidente da Banca, professora Kyria Rebeca Neiva de Lima Finardi, apresentou os demais membros da comissão examinadora, constituída pelas/os Doutoradas/es: Marina Orsi-Jones (coorientadora), Tania Mara Z. G. Frizzerra Delboni (presidente - UFES), **Katherine Wimpenny** (presidente - GLEA/Coventry University), **Damian Sutton** (Presidente Independente -CAMC/Coventry University), **Marina Orsini-Jones** (Orientadora - GLEA/Coventry University), : **Luciana Cabrini Simões Calvo** (Membro - Pós-Doc./PPGE/UEM), : **Francesca Helm** (Membro - Università di Padova), : **Mirjam Hauck** (Membro de PPG Externo - The Open University). Em seguida, cedeu a palavra ao candidato que em trinta minutos apresentou sua Tese intitulada “**Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise ELT**”. Terminada a apresentação do aluno, o presidente retomou a palavra e a cedeu aos membros da Comissão Examinadora, um a um, para procederem à arguição. O presidente convidou a Comissão Examinadora a se reunir em separado para deliberação. Ao final, a Comissão Examinadora retornou e o presidente informou aos presentes que a Tese foi **APROVADA**. O Presidente alertou que o aprovado somente terá direito ao título de Doutor após o cumprimento de todas as obrigações Curriculares e Regimentais do PPGE e da homologação do resultado da defesa pelo Colegiado Acadêmico. Então, deu por encerrada a sessão da qual se lavra a presente ata, que vai assinada pelos membros da banca examinadora.

Vitória, 06 de dezembro de 2024.

Presidente Ufes: **Tânia Mara Zanotti Guerra Frizzera Delboni** (PPGE/Ufes)

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REGISTRO DE JULGAMENTO DA TESE DO CANDIDATO AO GRAU DE DOUTOR PELO PPGE/UFES.

A Comissão Examinadora da Tese de Doutorado intitulada **“Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise ELTS”** elaborada por **Carlos Alberto Hildebando Júnior**, candidato ao Grau de Doutor em Educação, recomendou, após apresentação da Tese, realizada no dia 06 de dezembro de 2024, que a mesma seja (assinale um dos itens abaixo):

☒ Aprovada

☐ Reprovada

Os membros da Comissão deverão indicar a natureza de sua decisão através de sua assinatura na coluna apropriada que segue:

Tânia Mara Z. Guerra Frizzera Delboni

Katherine Wimpenny

Damian Sutton

Kyria Rebeca Finardi

Marina Orsini-Jones

Luciana Cabrini Simões Calvo

Francesca Helm

Mirjam Hauck



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NOTE

The examiners are required to submit a joint report on the outcome of the oral (or alternative) examination using this form. The form should report on the result of the examination as a whole and the examiners' recommendation to the University. If an agreed joint report cannot be submitted, each examiner should report separately.

Details of any amendments to be made to the thesis, must be attached to this report and forwarded to the PGR Lifecycle Team immediately or within 7 days of the examination. This will then be sent to the candidate together with a formal outcome letter confirming the examination team's decision.

Section 1

Candidate Details

Student ID number:	Forenames:	Family Name:
12396504	Carlos Alberto	Hildeblando Junior

Section 2

Programme Details

Research Centre:	Centre for Global Learning
Award Examining for:	PHD
Name of Collaborating Establishment (if relevant):	UFES
Thesis Title:	Virtual exchange as a third space to decolonise English language teaching
Date of Submission:	02/10/2024
Viva Date:	06/12/2024

Section 3

Examiners

Title:	Forenames:	Surname:		
Choose an item.	Katherine	Wimpenny	☒ Internal	☐ External
Choose an item.	Luciana Cabrini	Simões Calvo	☐ Internal	☒ External
Choose an item.	Francesca	Helm	☐ Internal	☐ External
Dr	Mirjam	Hauck		X

Section 4

Independent Chair

Title:	Forenames:	Surname:
Choose an item.	Damian	Sutton
	Tania	Delboni

Section 5

Director of Studies

Title:	Forenames:	Surname:
Choose an item.	Marina	Orsini-Jones
	Kyria	Finardi

Section 6

Supervisors present (if applicable)

Title:	Forenames:	Surname:
Choose an item.		

Section 7

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The examiners are requested to report below on the oral examination of the candidate, giving a reasoned assessment of the candidate's performance.

Please delete as appropriate

(a) Are you satisfied that the thesis/submission presented is the candidate's own work?

Yes

If no, please provide comments. If yes, and you wish to make any additional comments, please do so below:

(b) Did the candidate show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of matters relating to the thesis/submission?

Yes

If no, please provide comments. If yes, and you wish to make any additional comments, please do so below:

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The preliminary reports were in agreement.

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- If any party should have a query with the examination or resubmission process, please contact the Doctoral & Researcher College;
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Outcome A	The candidate be awarded the degree for which they are registered.	
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Outcome E	The candidate not be awarded the degree for which they are registered and not be permitted to be re-examined.	
Outcome F	In the case of assessment for PhD , the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.	
Outcome G	In the case of assessment for Professional Doctorate , the candidate be awarded the degree of MSc/MA by Research subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.	
Outcome H	In the case of assessment for MPhil , the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD subject to written confirmation from the examiners that the thesis has made a significant contribution to knowledge.	

Outcome I	In the case of assessment for MSc/MA by Research , the candidate be awarded the degree of Postgraduate Diploma in Research Methods subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.	

Any further additional comments?

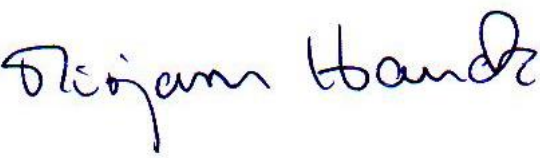
The panel wishes to acknowledge the value of the collaborative arrangement in supervision and examination, which is reflected in the outcome of this examination.

Section 11 Examination Panel Agreement

We confirm that we are in agreement with the above decision and that the student has been provided an oral explanation of the decision and amendments required. **All signatories must physically sign or attach PDF signatures ONLY**

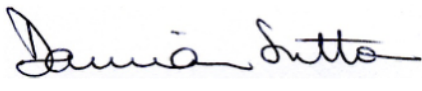
Where required we will provide confirmed list of amendments and/or statement to the University on the above decision.

Examiners

Print Name:	Dr Mirjam Hauck	☐ Internal	☒ External
Signature:		Date: 06/12/2024	
Print Name:	Francesca Helm	☐ Internal	☐ External
Signature:		Date: 13/12/2024	
Print Name:	Luciana Cabrini Simões Calvo	☐ Internal	☐ External
Signature:		Date: 10/12/2024	
Print Name:	Katherine Wimpenny	☐ Internal	☐ External
Signature:		Date: 12/12/2024	

Independent Chair

I certify that, as a proposed Independent Chair for the above candidate, I am independent of the student's project and that there is no line management * with the Director of Studies.

Print Name:	Damian Sutton		
Signature:		Date: 06/12/24	
Research Centre:	CAMC		

If Other Please Specify:
*If you hold a line management relationship with the Director of Studies, please indicate below:

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Abstract

The focus of this PhD thesis is to investigate the potential of Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to decolonise English Language Teaching, particularly in the identification, interrogation, and interruption of biases associated with native-speakerism. The expansion of English is entangled with colonial discourses that constitute power relations, discrimination and ideologies. Despite efforts to decolonise English teacher education, the 'native' English speaker fallacy still prevails in English Language Teaching programmes and contexts. This thesis starts from the assumption that Virtual Exchange enables liminal spaces where (future) English teachers can critically engage, interrogate, and examine their beliefs through global perspectives. The study uses a mixed method approach (Dörnyei, 2007), mostly qualitative, with an interpretive perspective to observe and document the meanings given to experiences in the Third Space. More specifically, it employs a combination of three qualitative research methods (autoethnography, netnography, and action research) to answer four research questions, namely: (1) how can Virtual Exchange support the identification of native-speakerism ideology within ELT, (2) in what ways do beliefs about English among pre-service and in-service teacher education students reflect coloniality, (3) what role can Virtual Exchange play in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs, and (4) how does the *locus of enunciation* influence emotion (specifically anxiety) and affect participation in Virtual Exchange. Pre-and post-surveys, Padlet walls, focus groups with semi-structured interviews, and Microsoft Forms were used to collect data. The data were analysed using SPSS software and Thematic Analysis and interpreted through the lens of a decolonial perspective. The results of this study show that Virtual Exchange can indeed be a transformational Third Space for English Language Teacher Education and has the potential to decolonise dominant narratives and ideologies in English Language Teaching, even if it does not completely interrupt deep-seated beliefs/coloniality. In other words, Virtual Exchange affords Third Space for the purpose of taking a decolonial stand to curricular implementation and, as suggested by

Souza and Duboc (2021) Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt coloniality. However, the recognition of the *locus of enunciation* and colonial legacies are fundamental for Virtual Exchange to become a Third Space.

Resumo

O objetivo desta tese de doutorado é investigar o potencial do Intercâmbio Virtual como um Terceiro Espaço para decolonizar o Ensino da Língua Inglesa, particularmente na identificação, interrogação e interrupção de crenças associadas com o mito do 'falante nativo'. A expansão do inglês está ligada a discursos coloniais que constituem relações de poder, discriminação e ideologias. Apesar dos esforços para decolonizar a formação de professores de inglês, o mito do falante 'nativo' ainda prevalece nos programas de formação de professores e contextos de ensino da língua inglesa. Esta tese parte do pressuposto de que o Intercâmbio Virtual fornece/cria Terceiros Espaços (entrelugares) onde os (futuros) professores de inglês podem se engajar criticamente, interrogar e examinar suas crenças por meio de perspectivas globais. O estudo utiliza uma abordagem mista (Dörnyei, 2007), predominantemente qualitativa, com uma perspectiva interpretativa para observar e documentar os significados atribuídos às experiências no Terceiro Espaço. Mais especificamente, o estudo emprega uma combinação de três métodos de pesquisa qualitativa (autoetnografia, netnografia e pesquisa-ação) para responder a quatro perguntas de pesquisa, a saber: (1) como o Intercâmbio Virtual pode auxiliar na identificação da ideologia do falante nativo dentro do ensino e aprendizagem de inglês, (2) de que forma as crenças sobre o inglês entre (futuro) professores refletem colonialidade, (3) qual o papel do Intercâmbio Virtual na interrogação e reformulação dessas crenças, e (4) como o *lócus de enunciação* influencia a emoção (especificamente, a ansiedade) e afeta a participação no Intercâmbio Virtual. Questionários pré e pós-intervenção, murais virtuais, grupos focais com entrevistas semiestruturadas e formulários Microsoft foram usados para coletar dados. Os dados foram analisados por meio do software SPSS e da Análise Temática e interpretados sob a ótica decolonial. Os resultados deste estudo mostram que o Intercâmbio Virtual pode ser um Terceiro Espaço transformacional para a formação de professores de inglês e tem o potencial de decolonizar narrativas e ideologias dominantes no ensino do idioma, mesmo que

não interrompa completamente as crenças/colonialidade profundamente arraigadas. Em outras palavras, o Intercâmbio Virtual cria Terceiro(s) Espaço(s) com o propósito de assumir uma posição decolonial na implementação curricular e, como sugerido por Souza e Duboc (2021), Identificar-Interrogar-Interromper a colonialidade. No entanto, o reconhecimento do *lócus de enunciação* e dos legados coloniais são fundamentais para que o Intercâmbio Virtual se torne um Terceiro Espaço.

List of Figures

Figure 1 The Three-Stage Development of the Study	92
Figure 2 Real Job Advertisements from LinkedIn	98
Figure 3 Aula Space for the VETSDELT Project.....	103
Figure 4 Final Session Evaluation of the VE (Stage 3a).....	110
Figure 5 Digital Notes stored on the Microsoft OneDrive Institutional Cloud.....	115
Figure 6 Group Posts on Padlet from Session 1 on 7 November 2022	243
Figure 7 Instructions for Introduction on the Icebreaker Padlet	252

List of Tables

Table 1 Models of VE	71
Table 2 Research Objectives, Questions and Instruments	85
Table 3 Study Overview.....	93
Table 4 BMELTEVEP Weekly Activities	94
Table 5 GAZUFES Weekly Activities.....	96
Table 6 The Module Programme.....	100
Table 7 Participants and Nationalities in both AR Cycles of VETSDELT	101
Table 8 VETSDELT Weekly Plan	102
Table 9 Live (Synchronous) Sessions Format Outline	102
Table 10 VETSDELT Outline in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a).....	106
Table 11 Demographic Data of Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) Participants.....	107
Table 12 Reflections on the Feedback from Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) that informed the Planning of Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)	108
Table 13 VETSDELT Outline in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b).....	110
Table 14 Number and Type of Questions in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) Surveys.....	118
Table 15 Number and Type of Questions in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b) Surveys.....	119
Table 16 Percentage of Returns for Each Session	120
Table 17 Phases of Thematic Analysis	124
Table 18 Demographic Data of Respondents who completed the Pre-VE Project Survey in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a).....	137
Table 19 Respondents' Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a)	138
Table 20 Respondents' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership (Statements 22, 23, and 24)	140
Table 21 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 25, 26, and 27).....	141
Table 22 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 28, 29, 30, and 31).....	143
Table 23 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 32, 33, and 34)	144
Table 24 Perceptions on the Spread of English (Statements 35 and 36)	146

Table 25 Respondents' Ability to use Digital Tools and Technologies for Virtual Collaboration (Statements 37, 38, 41, and 42)	147
Table 26 Respondents' Beliefs about the Benefits of Online Collaboration (Statements 39 and 43).....	148
Table 27 Acceptance of the Benefits of Online Collaboration for Pre-Service English Teachers and Professional Development (Statements 40, 44, and 45)	149
Table 28 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statements 47 and 48)	150
Table 29 Openness to Cultural Diversity (Statements 51, 52, and 53)	151
Table 30 Respondents' Cultural Adaptability (Statements 54, 55, and 56).....	152
Table 31 Respondents' Behaviours and Perceptions in Intercultural Situations (Statements 57 and 58)	153
Table 32 Cultural Adaptation (Statements 60, 61, and 62)	154
Table 33 Diversity and Interaction (Statements 63 and 64)	155
Table 34 Respondents' Wish for Cultural Similarity (Statements 65 and 66)	156
Table 35 Verbal Adaptability in Intercultural Contexts (Statements 67 and 68).....	157
Table 36 Opinions on whether Globalisation promotes Homogenisation (Statement 69)	158
Table 37 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 70, 71, and 72).....	159
Table 38 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 73 and 74)	160
Table 39 Participants' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership (Statements 12, 13, and 14)	161
Table 40 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 15, 16, and 17).....	162
Table 41 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 18, 19, and 20).....	163
Table 42 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 21 and 22)	164
Table 43 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statement 23)	165
Table 44 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 24 and 25).....	165
Table 45 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 26 and 27)	166

Table 46 Demographic Data of Respondents who completed the Pre-VE Project Survey in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b).....	177
Table 47 Respondents' Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b)	179
Table 48 Neutrality of English Standardisation (Statements 22, 23, and 26).....	180
Table 49 Views on the Importance of Accent (Statements 24 and 25)	181
Table 50 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 27, 28, and 29).....	182
Table 51 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 30, 31, 32, and 33).....	184
Table 52 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 34, 35, 36, and 37)	185
Table 53 Perceptions of the Spread of English (Statements 38, 39, and 40)	186
Table 54 Respondents' Ability to Use Digital Tools and Technologies for Virtual Collaboration (Statements 41, 42, 45, and 46)	187
Table 55 Respondents' Beliefs about the Benefits of Online Collaboration (Statements 43 and 47).....	188
Table 56 Acceptance of the Benefits of Online Collaboration for Pre-Service English Teachers and Professional Development (Statements 44, 48, and 49)	189
Table 57 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statements 51 and 52)	191
Table 58 Openness to Cultural Diversity (Statements 55, 56, and 57)	192
Table 59 Respondents' Cultural Adaptability (Statements 58, 59, and 60).....	193
Table 60 Respondents' Behaviours and Perceptions in Intercultural Situations (Statements 61 and 62)	194
Table 61 Cultural Adaptation (Statements 64, 65, and 66)	195
Table 62 Diversity and Interaction (Statements 67 and 68)	196
Table 63 Respondents' Wish for Cultural Similarity (Statements 67 and 68)	197
Table 64 Verbal Adaptability in Intercultural Contexts (Statements 71 and 72).....	198
Table 65 Opinions on whether Globalisation promotes Homogenisation (Statement 73)	199
Table 66 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 75, 75, and 76).....	200
Table 67 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (77 and 78)	201

Table 68 Participants' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership (Statements 12, 13, and 14)	202
Table 69 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 15, 16, and 17)	203
Table 70 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 18, 19, and 20)	204
Table 71 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 21 and 22)	205
Table 72 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statement 23)	206
Table 73 Respondents' feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (24 and 25)	207
Table 74 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 26 and 27)	208
Table 75 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)	218
Table 76 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)	219

List of Graphs

Graph 1 No shift in the Perception of English as a Global Language	168
Graph 2 No Shift in the Perception of English Geographical Ties	168
Graph 3 Shift in Belief of Standard English	169
Graph 4 Rejection of English Varieties.....	169
Graph 5 The Importance of Teaching and Learning English Varieties	170
Graph 6 Legitimacy of English Varieties	171
Graph 7 Rejection of the Idea of L2 Speaker Incompetence	171
Graph 8 Rejection of Native-Speakerism Ideology	172
Graph 9 Opposition to Native-Speakerism Ideology	173
Graph 10 Advantage and Prestige of L1 English Teachers	173
Graph 11 Learner Preference for L1 English Teacher	174
Graph 12 Anxiety related to Technology and English	175
Graph 13 Confidence in Intercultural Communication through English	175
Graph 14 Confidence in speaking English with L1/Proficient Speakers	176
Graph 15 Comfort Level in speaking English with People from the same Culture	177
Graph 16 Shift in Opinion of Standard English.....	209
Graph 17 Perception of English as a Global Language	209
Graph 18 Perception of Geographical Boundaries	210
Graph 19 Acceptance of English Varieties.....	210
Graph 20 Importance of Teaching and Learning English Varieties.....	211
Graph 21 Legitimacy of English Varieties	212
Graph 22 Rejection of the Idea of L2 Speaker Incompetence	212
Graph 23 Rejection of Native-Speakerism Ideology	213
Graph 24 Opposition to Native-Speakerism Ideology	213
Graph 25 Advantage and Prestige of L1 English Teachers	214
Graph 26 Learner Preference for L1 English Teacher	214
Graph 27 Anxiety related to Technology and English	215
Graph 28 Confidence in Intercultural communication through English	216

Graph 29 Confidence in speaking English with L1/Proficient Speakers	216
Graph 30 Comfort Level in speaking English with People from the same Culture	217

Appendices

Appendix A. Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – Reading List	318
Appendix B. Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – Reading List	320
Appendix C. Pre-VE Survey	322
Appendix D. Post-VE Survey	325
Appendix E. Microsoft Forms	327
Appendix F. Focus Group Interview Questions	328
Appendix G. Transcription of Focus Group 1 (Cycle 1, Stage 3a) – 8 December 2022	329
Appendix H. Transcription of Focus Group 2 (Cycle 1, Stage 3a) – 14 December 2022	341
Appendix I. Transcription of Focus Group 3 (Cycle 2, Stage 3b) – 12 April 2023	351
Appendix J. Transcription of Focus Group 4 (Cycle 2, Stage 3b) – 19 May 2023	363
Appendix K. Guidelines for E-Mediators	371
Appendix L. Session Checklist for E-Mediators	372

List of Abbreviations

AR	Action Research
BMELTEVEP	Blending MOOCs into English Language Teacher Education with Virtual Exchange during a Pandemic
BoR	Breakout Room
BRaVE	Brazilian Virtual Exchange
CAPES	Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior
CD	Compact Disc
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
CovUni	Coventry University
CVE	Critical Virtual Exchange
DoS	Director of Studies
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMF	English as a Multilingua Franca
FG	Focus Group
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GE	Global English(es)
GLEA	Centre for Global Learning
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IaH	Internationalisation at Home
IoC	Internationalisation of the Curriculum
L1	First Language/Native Language/Mother Tongue

L2	Second Language
MEC	Ministério da Educação
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NESs	Native English Speakers
NESTs	Native English-Speaking Teachers
NICTs	New Information and Communication Technologies
NNESs	Non-Native English Speakers
NNESTs	Non-native English-Speaking Teachers
NNSs	Non-native Speakers
NSs	Native Speakers
OIE	Online Intercultural Exchange
PPGE	Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação
PPP	Present, Practice, Produce
PRP	Progress Review Panel
RQ	Research Question
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SUNY	State University of New York
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UFES	Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo
UK	United Kingdom
UN	The United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
VALIANT	Virtual Innovation and Support Networks for Teacher
VE	Virtual Exchange
VETSDEL T	Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise ELT
VHS	Video Home System

ViVEXELT

Viet Nam Virtual Exchange for English Language Teaching

WE

World English(es)

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction	36
1.1 My Locus of Enunciation	38
1.2 The Research Problem	47
1.3 Organisation of the Thesis	50
Chapter 2 – Theoretical Frameworks	53
2.1 Decolonial Theory	53
2.2 Third Space	58
2.3. Conclusion	60
Chapter 3 – Literature Review	62
3.1 Internationalisation of the Curriculum	62
3.2 Virtual Exchange	68
3.3 Native-Speakerism and Language Ideology	73
3.4 English Language Teaching and Language Teacher Education	78
3.5 Second Language Anxiety and Language Performance	81
3.6 Conclusion	84
Chapter 4 – Methodology and Methods	85
4.1 Research Methods	86
4.1.1 <i>Autoethnography</i>	87
4.1.2 <i>Nethnography</i>	88
4.1.3 <i>Action Research</i>	89
4.2 Study Stages and Development	92
4.2.1 <i>Stage 1: The Student Participant Perspective</i>	93
4.2.2 <i>Stage 2: The E-Mediator Perspective</i>	96
4.2.3 <i>Stage 3: The Project Leader Perspective</i>	98
4.2.3.1 The VETSDELTA Project	99

4.2.3.2 Obtaining Consent.....	104
4.2.3.4 VETSDELT Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)	105
4.2.3.5 VETSDELT Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)	110
4.3 Data Collection.....	111
4.3.1 <i>Participant Observation</i>	112
4.3.2 <i>Field Notes</i>	113
4.3.3 <i>Surveys</i>	115
4.3.4 <i>Padlet Walls</i>	119
4.3.5 <i>Microsoft Forms</i>	120
4.3.6 <i>Focus Groups</i>	121
4.4 Approach to Data Analysis	123
4.5 Conclusion	125
Chapter 5 – Results and Analysis.....	126
5.1 Stages 1 and 2 Field Notes – Autoethnography	126
5.1.1 <i>Stage 1: The Student Participant Perspective</i>	127
5.1.2 <i>Stage 2: The E-Mediator Perspective</i>	132
5.2 Stage 3: My own VE Creation and Delivery – Netnography	136
5.2.1 <i>Surveys</i>	136
5.2.1.1 Pre-VE Survey: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – November to December 2022	137
5.2.1.2 Post-VE Survey: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – November to December 2022	160
5.2.1.3 Pre- and Post-Surveys Results: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)	167
5.2.1.4 Pre-VE Survey: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – March to April 2023	177
5.2.1.5 Post-VE Survey: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – March to April 2023.....	201
5.2.1.6 Pre- and Post-Surveys Results: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)	208
5.2.2 Thematic Analysis.....	217
5.2.2.1 The Effects of Native-Speakerism	220

5.2.2.2 Job Opportunities and Payment Gap.....	220
5.2.2.3 Value for the Symbolic Representation of ‘Native’ Speakers.....	221
5.2.2.4 Discrimination faced by L2 Teachers.....	222
5.2.2.5 Selection based on Qualification	223
5.2.2.6 Colonial Matrix of Power.....	223
5.2.2.7 Coloniality and Power Dynamics	224
5.2.2.8 The Impact of VETSDEL on Participants in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)	225
5.2.2.9 The Impact of VETSDEL on Participants in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)	225
5.2.2.10 Initial Feeling of Stress/Expectation.....	226
5.2.2.11 Microsoft Form Feedback on Session 1	227
5.2.2.12 The Influence of the <i>Locus of Enunciation</i> on Anxiety	227
5.2.3 Focus Group	228
5.2.3.1 Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a): Focus Group 1 – 8 December 2022	228
5.2.3.2 Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a): Focus Group 2 – 14 December 2022	234
5.2.3.3 Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b): Focus Group 3 – 12 April 2023	243
5.2.3.4 Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b): Focus Group 4 – 19 May 2023.....	254
5.3 Conclusion	261
Chapter 6 – Discussion of Research Findings	262
6.1 Research Question 1	266
6.2 Research Question 2	269
6.3 Research Question 3	271
6.4 Research Question 4	275
6.5 Conclusion	278
Chapter 7 – Conclusion	279
7.1 Synthesis of the Findings	279
7.2 Suggestions for Future Research	282

References	286
Appendices	318
Annexes	373

Chapter 1 – Introduction

According to the British Council report *The Future of English: Global Perspectives* (Patel et al., 2023, pp. 160-167) in 2023 there were approximately 2.3 billion people speaking English as a first (L1) and/or as second (L2) or an additional language. L1 speakers make up only a quarter of English users globally (Baker et al., 2025). Most interactions through English take place in multicultural contexts where English is not the speaker's mother tongue (Patel et al., 2023). This has important implications for how we understand English used on a global scale, as it is by far the most widely used and learnt language (Baker et al., 2025). As a result of the expansion of English around the world, as reported by Larsen-Freeman et al. (2015) and Baker et al. (2025), the L1 of most English teachers is not English.

The expansion of English is entangled with discourses of colonialism that reflect power relations, discrimination and ideologies. In the context of Latin America (particularly in Brazil, Chile, and Colombia), the effects of colonialism are evident in language teacher education policies (Finardi, 2019; Chiappa & Finardi, 2021; Bonilla-Medina & Finardi, 2022). Despite efforts to decolonise education and teacher education, the 'native' English speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) – that is to say the claim that 'native speakers' (NSs), a term I need to use here acknowledging its controversial nature (Holliday, 2015), of English are better teachers than non-native speakers (NNSs, again, term I need to use) – still prevails in English Language Teaching (ELT) in many teacher education programmes (Yang & Forbes, 2025). Due to the pervasiveness of 'native speaker' norms and views, this thesis represents a contribution and decolonial exercise to identify and interrogate (and hopefully interrupt) (Souza & Duboc, 2021) deep-seated beliefs about native-speakerism that still affect students engaged in ELT Higher Education courses. This will be investigated through by means of

utilising virtual exchange (VE) as a Third Space to decolonise ELT (Hildeblando Júnior, 2023). According to the EVOLVE¹ project team (2024):

Virtual Exchange (VE) is a practice, supported by research, that consists of sustained, technology-enabled, people-to-people education programmes or activities in which constructive communication and interaction takes place between individuals or groups who are geographically separated and/or from different cultural backgrounds, with the support of educators or facilitators. Virtual Exchange combines the deep impact of intercultural dialogue and exchange with the broad reach of digital technology.

The conceptualisation of VE will be further explored in the Literature Review chapter below, but it is argued here that VE enables local-global knowledge-sharing and stimulates novel ways of seeing English for students involved in teacher education in HE, opening up pluricentric and decolonial reflections on how to teach and learn it. For the purposes of this study, the term VE will be used henceforth, although VE and COIL will be treated as synonyms even if some literature treats them as distinct concepts (i.e. Rubin & Guth, 2022). As argued by Rubin, “virtual exchange appears to be the broadest and most inclusive term” (2022, p. 9).

With the growth of varieties of English worldwide, Marlina (2014) and Sadeghpour (2020) call for a pluricentric approaches to English (Finardi, 2022) that are in line with decolonial views and calls for pluriversalism (e.g., Guilherme & Souza, 2019; Mignolo, 2017), through an ecology of knowledges (Santos², 2007) and languages (e.g., Finardi, França & Guimarães, 2022; 2023). Crystal (2001) argues that it is necessary to recognise the importance of diversity as a reflection of identity. Sadeghpour (2020) highlights the need for ELT programmes to bring the structural and cultural changes in English to their curricula and

¹ [https://evolve-erasmus.eu/about-evolve/what-is-virtual-exchange/#:~:text=Virtual%20Exchange%20\(VE\)%20is%20a,and%20For%20from%20different%20cultural](https://evolve-erasmus.eu/about-evolve/what-is-virtual-exchange/#:~:text=Virtual%20Exchange%20(VE)%20is%20a,and%20For%20from%20different%20cultural)

² This thesis includes works by Boaventura Sousa Santos. While there are allegations of harassment against him, those works were included based on their relevance to the study and the literature review, which was completed prior to the allegations. It is important to note that the inclusion of Santos' works does not condone or minimise the experiences of victims of harassment. As of the finalisation of this thesis, he has not been proven guilty in a court of law.

pedagogical practices. Clyne and Sharifian (2008) claim that ELT programmes and professionals need to develop mindsets to foster the diversity intrinsic to English.

VE affords a fluid and liminal Third Space (Bhabha, 1994) that enables exchanges and clashes, contrast, rearticulation, constituting a space for negotiation rather than of resolution (Mendes & Finardi, 2018) and, for this reason, a place where teachers can critically assess and discuss their beliefs on English teaching and learning. The Third Space emphasises the rhetoric of ambivalence in Bhabha's view, and as such, it has the potential to weaken not only the authority of colonial discourse and the beliefs that accompany it, but also the means by which it is exercised.

The Third Space can provide novice and experienced English teachers engaged in teacher education with opportunities to examine, elaborate, and integrate new information into their existing belief systems (Finardi, Hildeblando Júnior & Guimarães, 2020). Also, as previously mentioned, the Third Space is a place to identify, interrogate and possibly interrupt colonial views and decolonise ELT. As different geographically distant and virtually close groups interact through the Internet, there is an inevitable contact and clash of political, economic, social, ethical and environmental beliefs, values and views (Orsini-Jones, 2015) by means of evaluation, interrogation and connection of different types of knowing, being and expressing (Wimpenny et al., 2022). It is necessary, as argued by Helm (2018), to expose (future) English teachers to different models of thinking and strategies to establish relationships, review and challenge positions and perspectives.

1.1 My Locus of Enunciation

Decolonial theory emphasises the need to challenge and deconstruct colonial structures and ways of thinking that have historically marginalised and oppressed certain groups of people. Souza (2019a) advocates for 'bringing back the body' and 'marking the unmarked' as a decolonial exercise to reintegrate embodied experiences into knowledge creation.

When we bring into account the space from which we speak, then we bring into account something which has been eliminated in academic discourse, which is the body. To speak from a space means you are speaking from a body located in space and time. When a body is located in space and time, a body has memory, a body has experience, a body has been exposed to history and the various conflicts of history. (Souza, 2019a, pp. 10–11)

This means recognising and valuing the embodied knowledge from our diverse experiences and identities. By doing so, it is possible to challenge colonial hierarchies and open space for an ecology of knowledges as proposed by Santos (2007) and languages as put forward by Finardi, França and Guimarães (2022, 2023). Souza and Duboc (2021) and Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez (2021) claim that the critical awareness of one's own *locus of enunciation*, referred to as *lugar de fala* by Ribeiro (2017) in the Brazilian academic context, is the starting point for a decolonial exercise – or a self-decolonising practice (Duboc, 2023). The *locus of enunciation* is therefore about acknowledging the perspective/positionality from which an individual speaks. The body is not just a physical entity but a vessel of experiences, memories, and histories. When we speak from a particular *locus of enunciation* (a unique location in space and time), we are not just voicing our thoughts but also echoing the experiences and histories that our bodies have been a part of.

Acknowledging our *locus of enunciation* entails recognising that historical, geographical, and sociopolitical contexts deeply influence our perspectives and the knowledge we produce. In research, it involves acknowledging and critically reflecting on one's positionality and how it influences the research process. The central argument therefore is that by taking our positionality into account, we reintroduce an often-neglected element in Western scientific and academic discourse: the human experience. Moreover, and as put forward by Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez (2021), the revelation of the researcher's *locus of enunciation* is a way of decolonising scholarly knowledge. As Mpofu (2014) suggests, speaking from a specific space or position implies a rejection of universality in favour of recognising the existence of different *locals* in a pluriversal world where one could hope for an ecology of knowledges – yes, in the plural.

In addition to embracing and revealing my *locus of enunciation*, this study adopts another fundamental decolonial strategy, which involves a three-step process of identifying, interrogating, and interrupting coloniality, as advocated by Souza (2019a; b). Souza and Duboc (2021) emphasise that this triad is fundamental in any decolonial exercise. Once coloniality is identified in one's *locus of enunciation*, it can be interrogated and interrupted. In essence, to decolonise our minds, it is essential to embark on a journey where we first recognise and comprehend the coloniality that has constituted us, and then take deliberate actions to interrogate and hopefully interrupt it.

I accept Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez' (2021) invitation to bring to the fore my *locus of enunciation* as a decolonial strategy to challenge the notion of a single universal truth towards an inclusive understanding of knowledge production that represents the diversity of the human experience. My *locus of enunciation* is the starting point and motivation for this research endeavour. My perspective, rooted in various aspects of my identity, encompasses a complex interplay of factors that have profoundly shaped my worldview. I am a 'non-native English-speaking' teacher, an Afro-Brazilian man, cisgendered, single, not a father, a member of the middle class, and a Ph.D. student in a public university in Brazil, speaking from the Global South (Santos, 2012) though peeking at and speaking from the Global North at the same time, for I am part of a privileged minority who can attend Higher Education (HE) and more, travel abroad and have an experience in the UK/Global North as part of my cotutelle. Each of these facets of my identity is intricately intertwined with social, cultural, and historical influences that have significantly contributed to how I perceive and engage with knowledge.

In the context of ELT, it is important to contextualise how coloniality has left its mark on my beliefs and perspectives as a student, then a teacher and later as a researcher in the ELT field. The historical dominance of English as a global lingua franca and its colonial legacy have undoubtedly played a role in shaping my understanding of English and its role in education. Recognising these influences is the first step in interrogating and interrupting

coloniality within the realm of ELT and seeking a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse approach to language education. I now contextualise how my *locus of enunciation* (sociocultural context and coloniality) has shaped my beliefs regarding English and ELT in what follows.

English is seen as a marketable commodity in Brazil (Jordão, 2004; Rajagopalan, 2003; Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2005; Finardi, 2016). It is believed that those who speak English fluently tend to have better job positions and salaries, as well as social opportunities (Rajagopalan, 2003). Also, a high level of English proficiency is attached to social status (social capital), because only a small number of people can afford to study it in private language institutes and those who learn English in state schools do not learn it well (Gimenez, 2013; Finardi, 2014; Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2005). Furthermore, there is a widely held belief that English taught in state schools is not of a sufficiently high standard and students do not necessarily see themselves as English speakers (Lagares, 2013) even after many years of English tuition at school. Hence, those who depend on state education, that is to say, the majority of the population, cannot afford to learn English. Only those who can go to private language institutes or private schools thus learn English with a good level of proficiency. Thus, English is entangled with issues of class inequality and privileges (Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2005). National policies in Brazil have a considerable impact/influence on this process (Finardi, 2016). For example, the Brazilian National Education Guidelines and Framework Law enacted in 2017 states that English teaching is mandatory from the sixth year of elementary school until the last year of high school (Brasil, 2017). Before that, one foreign language was mandatory though not necessarily English, so it is possible to say that the teaching of English in basic education became mandatory only recently (Finardi, 2017).

I come from two distinct ethnic families in the Brazilian suburbs. Even though my parents did not have access to formal education, they made me believe that I could go further. I have studied my whole life in state institutions, from kindergarten to HE. During my

school life in the late 1990s and 2000s, that is, during my elementary and high school life, I was not exposed to themes such as race, sexuality, human rights, equality, politics and other critical themes. At home, my parents never talked to me and my sister about those issues. Besides school itself, the TV was another mediator in my education.

My first formal contact with English happened when I was a child in elementary school. Among other educational gaps, the school I attended only had one teacher to teach all levels. My English teacher was very motivated, although classes had around 40 students. She was an Afro-Brazilian woman in her mid-30s, and this was enough to raise suspicion among my classmates on whether or not she was a 'good' teacher because of her colour. In the late 90s and in the context where I grew up, it was a common belief that English teachers should be white and north Americans. This very same imaginary applied to English teachers with an aggravating factor: they had to sound like a 'native'. Thus, I remember my classmates questioning my English teacher 'where' and 'how' she had learned to speak English. She constantly had to deal with society's covert racism materialised in some of my classmates' questions. Moreover, the fact that she was a black English teacher in state suburban school in Brazil also disrupted some paradigms, or imaginaries. In order to show those students that she had actually lived abroad to study English (as if it mattered at all), she used to play a VHS in some moments with her host family in the USA. As a child I was not able to understand the purpose of those supposedly naïve questions that she was asked.

During four years of elementary school, she was my only English teacher and contact/model for the language. Year after year she struggled to be respected, and she had a huge impact on my life as both student and human being. Although she tried her best to teach us English (and she did), it was difficult because of the lack of materials and infrastructure. For example, there were only a few textbooks available, and the CD player was usually broken so the only oral input we received was hers. She was my first role model and my inspiration to become an English teacher.

The context in high school was much the same. Out of the three years, I only had English classes in the first year. In the other two, English was replaced by Spanish classes because of the national education plan. When I was close to graduating from high school, I decided to learn English by myself. So, I used to borrow textbooks from my school's library weekly. I focused mainly on grammar (and writing) and later I realized my other language skills should also be improved. I thought that technology would be useful for this purpose. Then, I looked for opportunities to interact with 'native speakers' and improve my listening and speaking skills by using Skype. Skype offered many opportunities to interact with people from all over the world in separate rooms. After engaging in those rooms, I was frustrated because there were no 'native speakers', but only different varieties of spoken Englishes that I was not able to recognise. In fact, I strongly believed those varieties were not 'real English'.

I started university in 2010 carrying the 'native speaker' imaginary with me. During my undergraduate course (teaching degree in English), the curriculum endorsed this belief. Looking back at my student transcript, some disciplines included: English language: British studies; British literature: from origins to the Elizabethan age; English language: American studies; Teaching project in English language: American studies; British literature: from the 17th century to the Victorian age; American literature: from the colonial period to realism; Modern and contemporary British literature; Modern and contemporary American literature. The curriculum taught 'American' and 'British' (England) English as standards ideologies (Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2014), and other English varieties were not included, as discussed by Finardi and Ferrari (2008), two of my undergraduate professors at UFES. Even English variations from the Global North were disregarded, such as Australian, Canadian, Scottish, South African, and New Zealand. Most of my colleagues and I graduated from the ELT degree course at UFES with a feeling that we did not speak English 'correctly' and that the 'native speaker model' should be pursued.

After completing my undergraduate studies, I came into contact with the concept of COIL – Collaborative Online International Learning (Rubin & Guth, 2022) – which, as

previously mentioned, I will use here as a synonym for VE, even though the two terms are not fully equivalent, as discussed in the Literature Review chapter. I also realised that very few COIL case studies included its impact on ELT (Hildeblando Júnior & Finardi, 2018). I therefore decided to pursue a Master's degree to investigate the impact of COIL on ELT; more specifically, on the learning experience of students on English language teacher education courses in HE in Brazil and Chile (Hildeblando Júnior, 2019), and this was the beginning of my VE journey. The reason to select these two groups of participants (who were pre-service English teachers from Brazil and Chile) was related to the fact that both were being trained to be teachers of a language that was not their L1, which I believed had implications for their identity as L2 teachers of English and their professional beliefs. This VE-COIL project was the beginning of my VE journey in questioning the colonial legacy of ELT and the notions of 'standard English' and the 'native speaker'. I interacted with future English teachers from Chile through COIL, and I was exposed to another variety of English, which was the language used for our exchange. The Chilean peers shared many similarities with us in Brazil in terms of our professional identity as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers (Archanjo et al., 2019). This led me to reflect on the fact that English exists in many different forms and that there is no single 'correct' way to speak it.

Before engaging with VE-COIL, my 'entrenched' beliefs about English were shaped by both social experiences and formal education. I had internalised the notion that English belonged to its so-called 'native-speakers', and I perceived non-canonical' (non-US/UK) varieties as incorrect, illegitimate and deficient. However, these assumptions were challenged through my engagement with VE-COIL as a student participant, as mediator, and as project leader. My VE engagement caused a gradual yet transformative shift in my positionality, given that I was exposed to diverse perspectives and Englishes during my Master's and doctoral degree research. Moving away from native-speakerism and my long-established beliefs was not easy and involved a process of self-decolonising, reimagining, and reflective becoming. My VE transformational journey started with my Master's research,

that triggered a decolonial reflection on my *locus of enunciation* and led me to explore VE as an alternative, decolonial and inclusive Third Space approach to ELT and language education in my PhD research.

My VE journey started in 2021, when I had the opportunity to immerse myself as a student participant in a VE project. My participation involved actively engaging in online discussions and collaborative tasks. This first encounter with VE as a participating student provided me with insights into the practical aspects of participating in a VE project, such as collaboration dynamics, communication challenges, and the overall participant experience. During this VE experience, I became aware of the issue of the discrimination and marginalisation faced by 'non-native speaker' English teachers in ELT. This marked a critical moment in my positionality and made me realise I needed to address native-speakerism in language teacher education myself in an active way.

I tried therefore to reflect further on this topic when I had the opportunity to take the role of e-mediator in a different VE project in 2022. My e-mediator role involved guiding and moderating discussions, ensuring smooth communication, resolving conflicts, and creating an atmosphere to foster meaningful interactions. Through this VE project, I gained insights into the dynamics of facilitating Breakout Rooms (BoR), understanding the challenges faced by e-mediators, and identifying potential ways of facilitating a debate on native-speakerism. Observing the participants as an e-mediator gave me the opportunity to reflect more critically on native-speakerism as a deeply rooted ideology in ELT, which not only marginalises but also leads to self-marginalisation among L2 English teachers. I could see that most participants (all novice or experienced teachers of English language) were anxious about interacting in English online as they were not NSs. I therefore realised that native-speakerism affects equally all students in English language teacher education who feel disempowered by the fact that they do not have the perceived to be powerful symbolic capital of the so-called 'native speaker'. This ideology reinforces hierarchies that continue to shape professional identities, teacher and employer beliefs and ELT opportunities.

My experience of engaging in VEs caused my positionality shift towards equity and social justice in language education and became the driving force of this VE-focused research. Each one of these embodied experiences in VE-COIL paved the way for me to critically engage with the potential of VE as a Third Space to decolonise ELT. Thus, I designed a VE project to address the 'native' English speaker myth and counter discrimination against English teachers whose mother-tongue is not English. In parallel, I also sought to boost the confidence of higher education students in ELT in relation to their variety of English and their right to be English language teachers. I believe it is necessary to discuss native-speakerism from the perspective of the Global South, and I proposed the utilisation of VE as a language teacher education approach to support the decolonisation of ELT and stimulate a critique of native-speakerism by questioning deep-seated beliefs amongst both novice and experienced teachers engaging in language education in HE.

As a language teacher now with an MA and pursuing a PhD in a Global South-North cotutelle agreement, I still see the dominance of native-speakerism and entrenched language ideologies in language teacher education programmes in general and in Brazilian pre-service English teachers' beliefs in particular. Since curriculum change depends on hierarchical policies and politics, it is important to create spaces, opportunities and bottom-up, grassroots movements for pre-service English teachers to reflect on their deep-seated beliefs about native-speakerism, ownership of English and standard English ideologies aiming to foster multilingual appreciation, awareness of different varieties of English, and appreciation of their own local English variety and accent. Therefore, this thesis is a decolonial effort to identify and interrogate, and hopefully interrupt, colonial views in ELT through the Third Space created in VE.

1.2 The Research Problem

Discrimination against NNESTs (Simoneli & Finardi, 2020; Bonilla-Medina & Finardi, 2022), self-perceived language competence (Dombi, 2021), native-speakerism ideology (Holliday, 2015) and other beliefs/ideologies may affect the perceptions and identity of pre-service English teachers about English and ELT (Archanjo et al., 2019). In online contexts, another major issue for language teacher education is technology anxiety, which can affect performance, attitudes, behaviour and interpersonal relationships (Ajmal & Ahmad, 2019). According to Meuter et al. (2003), technology anxiety is related to a user's apprehension towards technology-related tools. Unfamiliarity/insecurity about technology can be source of anxiety (e.g., Có, Amorim & Finardi, 2020; Amorim, Có & Finardi, 2021; Hapsari, 2021; Waterman et al., 2023).

Despite the belief that the Internet is a culturally neutral environment – since, as pointed out by Kramsch and Thorne (2002, p. 85), users may have access to each other “as linguistic entities on a screen, unfettered by historical, geographical, national or institutional identities” – a significant part of the research on online interaction suggests otherwise (e.g., O'Dowd, 2007; Ess, 2009; Gunawardena, 2014). The Internet is based on specific cultural principles and values, in which users bring along their own norms of behaviour and communication that are culturally specific and vary according to the local, national and global context. According to Helm (2018), although all discourse in virtual environments is mediated, identity assumes an additional technological layer of operations beyond the social interactional one. This view refutes the notion that technology is a neutral or transparent means for communication and identity work and rather sees mediation radically transforming these social processes, including identity (Kern, 2014; 2015). Thus, communication mediated by technology is never culture-free or an area where cultural differences become neutralised or irrelevant, quite the contrary, it is a Third Space of conflict and hybridisation (Mendes & Finardi, 2018). Rather than simply mixing two or more elements that form a new one, hybridism is a place of cultural contact at the margins of culture, between cultures. It is

a space in which cultural elements are continuously rearticulated and reconstituted. Instead of disappearing into a fusion, the processes of cultural hybridisation perpetuate rather than resolve the difference.

Focusing only on the effects of the Internet on communication and education is reductionist and fails to take into account the multiple forms of online mediated activity: the contexts of creation, development, uses and technological transformations and its mediating effect (Helm, 2017). Recent technological developments (e.g. live videoconferencing) have strongly affected mediation in online contexts, so this mediating effect of technologies as well as the affordances they offer cannot be ignored. The virtual environment is “full of demands and requirements, opportunities and limitations, rejections and invitations, affordances, and constraints – in short, affordances” (van Lier, 2000, p. 253).

Cultural differences do not disappear in online interactions; they are transformed, questioned and hybridised by different users. Identity can be seen as an essential construct for successful learning and interaction, as it links the subject to the social world, inside and outside the classroom (Block, 2014; Norton, 2013). For Dervin (2015), by focusing on fluidity and co-construction of identity in interactions, one can move away from the static and monolithic representations of culture and essentialist understandings of interculturality. Identities can be empowered or disempowered, as well as naturalised, assumed, questioned, or challenged (Helm, 2018).

Pennycook (2004, p. 41) suggests the possibility of increasingly destabilised, fluid and hybrid identities that “desire to go beyond, to think otherwise, to transcend the boundaries of the modern”. Even though Bhabha (1994) does not discuss VE itself, I propose that through the use of technologies in VEs, students in English teacher education can engage in identity construction and negotiation through authentic interaction with geographically distant peers. VEs afford participants a Third Space in which semantic frames meet, conflict, cling and detach from unintended meanings – aligning with Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hybridity and meaning-making.

According to Bhabha (1994), the main purpose of the Third Space is not to build bridges to merge, mix or reconcile, but to promote questioning and rupture with naturalised meanings by promoting other alternatives. It is neither the old culture nor the entirely new, but something constantly emerging from the exchanges of the participants. Therefore, it can be a space to rethink modernity moving away from its violent project of epistemic and territorial expansion, revealing, understanding its past and pointing out different, alternative decolonial futures or futures “otherwise”, as proposed by Andreotti (2011).

In a multicultural and globalised world, with cross-border flows, the idea of ownership is removed from ‘native speakers’; instead, an expert or proficient user is preferred. For Kirkpatrick (2007), it has been increasingly recognised that ‘native English speakers’ do not speak a standardised version of the language and, thus, it is difficult to define a ‘native speaker’ in a multilingual society where English is the lingua franca. The ownership of English no longer rests with ‘native speakers’ because it belongs to everyone who speaks English to interact successfully in any contexts (Patel et al., 2023).

This study aims therefore to explore the potential of VE to decolonise ELT, particularly in the identification, interrogation and interruption of biases associated with native-speakerism. Related to this main objective, the study will address four research questions (RQs):

- RQ1. How can VE support the identification of native-speakerism ideology within ELT?
- RQ2. In what ways do beliefs about English among pre-service and in-service teacher education students and reflect coloniality?
- RQ3. What role can VE play in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs?
- RQ4. How does the *locus of enunciation* influence emotion (specifically anxiety) and affect participation in VE?

1.3 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into seven chapters written in both the third and first person when referring to autoethnographic data and due to its decolonial lens. The aim of this introductory chapter is to lay the necessary context of the thesis, and the research problem addressed. It also contextualises my *locus of enunciation* as the starting point for this research endeavour. Chapter 2, Theoretical Frameworks, includes a discussion of theoretical frameworks. These conceptual lenses provide a critical perspective for examining the potential of Virtual Exchange in the process of decolonising English Language Teaching.

Chapter 3, Literature Review, reviews the literature relevant to the study. The first section discusses the concept of Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) in HE. It also highlights the shift from mobility-focused to curriculum (at home) approaches and the role of Virtual Exchange to this process, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. The second section delves into the importance of Virtual Exchange as a pedagogical approach to internationalising HE. It highlights that Virtual Exchange promotes student collaboration and understanding of global issues. The third section discusses the native-speakerism ideology as a colonial legacy in English Language Teaching and learning and the consequences to L2 English teachers. The fourth section delves into the effects of coloniality in teacher education and the call to decolonise the curricula of teacher education programmes. The last section explains the underpinning relation between second language anxiety and language performance.

Chapter 4, Methodology and Methods, presents the research design, methodological framework, data collection methods, and data analysis procedure. It begins describing the qualitative methods employed (autoethnography and nethnography) and its relevance for the study. The chapter then outlines the three stages of the study (student participant, mediator, and project leader perspectives). The final sections describe the instruments used for data collection and provide an explanation of the data analysis approach adopted.

Chapter 5, Results and Analysis, presents the analysis of the data gathered in the study. The chapter is organised according to the three stages of the study. It begins with my autoethnographic reflections from Stages 1 and 2, outlining my experience and development as a researcher and L2 English teacher. This is followed by the analysis of the data collected from research participants in Stage 3, which is subdivided in Stages 3a and 3b. The data from Stage 3 are divided into three main sections: 1) the quantitative results from pre-and post-surveys are presented and then contrasted. 2) the qualitative results (open-ended questions in the post-surveys, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms) are present in themes through thematic analysis. 3) the results of four focus group meetings conducted across both cycles of the study are presented. The data are presented in tables, graphs, figures, and excerpts for further triangulation and interpretation in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6, Discussion of Research Findings, is devoted to the discussion of the research findings presented in Chapter 5 in light of the literature review. It is divided into four sections, each of which corresponds to the four research questions (RQs), (1) how can VE support the identification of native-speakerism ideology within ELT?, (2) in what ways do beliefs about English among pre-service and in-service teacher education students reflect coloniality?, (3) what role can VE play in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs?, and (4) how does the *locus of enunciation* influence emotion (specifically anxiety) and affect participation in VE?. In this chapter, the results from both cycles of the AR are compared and contrasted with my reflexive VE journey. Interpretations of the findings are also provided. Chapter 7, Conclusion, addresses pedagogical implications and acknowledges limitations of the study ending with suggestions for future research on Virtual Exchange and ELT.

Before the theoretical frameworks are presented in Chapter 2, it is necessary to briefly clarify that I place the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' in inverted commas to indicate these labels are contested by both the decolonial lens of this thesis and my *locus of enunciation*, a Black L2 English teacher speaking from the Global South. Drawing on Jordão (2014), the 'native speaker' is a socially constructed label in terms of

race, nationality, accent, and several othering factors. I also use inverted commas in some words to place opposition to Western paradigms (i.e. 'good', 'standard', 'real' or 'aesthetically pleasing') and "indicate a burden that has to be endured until the issue can be undone" (Holliday, 2015, p. 12).

Chapter 2 – Theoretical Frameworks

This chapter explores the frameworks that inform the theoretical stance of the study. This research is situated within the theoretical frameworks of Decolonial Theory and Third Space. These conceptual lenses provide a critical perspective for examining the potential of VE in the process of decolonising ELT. By drawing on these theories, this thesis seeks to explore the potential of VE to identify and interrogate biases associated with native-speakerism to hopefully interrupt them. Decolonial theory offers a framework for understanding the historical and ongoing legacies of colonialism and its impact on language education and ELT. By identifying and interrogating the colonality of power within ELT, this theory supports a critical analysis of the ways in which native-speakerism perpetuates colonial ideologies. The concept of Third Space provides a lens for examining the hybrid and liminal spaces that VE can create in conjunction with decolonial theory. This framework enables an exploration of the potential for VE to challenge/interrupt ideologies and promote a more inclusive and equitable knowledge co-construction.

2.1 Decolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory, also referred to as postcolonial studies, seeks to understand historical ways of knowing, doing and being as a result of the European colonisation (Eurocentrism) in certain territories – especially Africa and Asia (Mignolo, 2012; Ballestrin, 2013) and Latin America in the case of Decolonial theory. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995) argue that postcolonialism is the discourse of oppositionality inherent to colonialism. Colonialism and imperialism are at the core of this investigation because these concepts shaped both Western and non-Western people's imaginaries, perceptions and discourses (Bhabha, 1994).

Postcolonial theory “investigates the complex and deeply fraught dynamics of modern Western colonialism and anti-colonialism resistance and the on-going significance of the colonial encounter for people’s lives both in the West and in the non-West” (Prasad, 2003, p. 5). The focus of postcolonial theory is to interrogate and critique the remnants of (post)colonial Eurocentric worldviews and logic, which ignore the variability in cultures. Postcolonial theory also investigates the processes of repression, exclusion, oppression, marginalisation and otherness that Europe used to establish itself as the locus of truth (universalism) (Prasad, 2003). Moreover, postcolonial theory “[...] develops propositions about, the cultural and political impact of European conquest upon colonized societies, and the nature of those societies’ responses” (Ashcroft, 2012, p. 15). It is therefore a concern how formerly colonised societies resisted to those processes and, most importantly, reacted (postcolonial situation) to them after gaining political sovereignty (Ashcroft, 2012). Also, culture, knowledge, inequality, power, representation, among other issues, are central to this theory (Ashcroft, 2012).

Another theoretical paradigm appeared as a reaction to coloniality and its effect as an underside of modernity, or the “colonial matrix of power” (Quijano, 2007). Emerging from the lived colonial experiences in Latin American, decolonial theory seeks to contest modern/colonial structures because coloniality constitutes “the darker side of Western modernity” (Mignolo, 2011, pp. 2–3). In Mignolo’s view, coloniality and modernity are two sides of the same coin, but modern Western thinking has prioritised only one side, modernity. Latin American scholars, e.g., Andreotti, Castro-Gómez, Diniz de Figueiredo, Dussel Finardi, Freire³, Grosfoguel, Jordão, Maldonado-Torres, Mignolo, Quijano, Santos, Souza, Walsh, and others, argue that modernity emphasises the sociocultural universalisation of Europe materialised in practices, discourses, and institutions through the combined effects of *abyssal thinking* (Santos, 2007) and zero-point hubris (Castro-Gómez,

³ Although Freire is not a decolonial thinker, his work aligns with decolonial theory.

2021). These two critical frameworks explain how modernity legitimise Eurocentric epistemologies.

From the Western point of view, social reality is divided into *this side of the abyssal line* and *the other side of the abyssal line* (Santos, 2007, p. 45). Santos (2007) claims that abyssal thinking creates a hierarchical and exclusive worldview where one side of the line is privileged and considered 'real', while the other side is marginalised and rendered non-existent. This thinking perpetuates social inequalities and injustices by denying the existence and validity of certain groups, experiences, and perspectives. The *Global South* (Santos, 2012) is portrayed on *the other side of the abyssal line* by hegemonic Western thinking as a vacuum of nonexistence. This marginalized location of the *South* is geo(socio)political, not geographical. Santos (2009) suggests the term *Global South* to refer to material and intellectual histories excluded by the narrative of modernity. He explains that:

The South is metaphorically conceived as a field of epistemic challenges, which try to address and repair the damages and negative impacts historically created by capitalism in its colonial relation with the world. Such conception of South overlaps the geographical South, the group of nations and regions in the world that were subjugated to European colonialism and that, with the exception of Australia and New Zealand, never achieved levels of economic development similar to the Global North (i.e., Europe and the United States of America) (p. 12-13).

As argued by de Souza (2019a), and shown by Moore and Finardi (2019) with examples from Spain and Brazil, there may be several *Souths* in the North and there may be several *Norths* in the South. That is why Santos calls for *Southern* epistemologies, "[...] the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experiences of resistance of all those social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression, and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy" (2018, p. 1). Therefore, the coexistence of different knowledges, people and languages. This metaphor of *South* is also used by the decolonial theory to narrate the colonial-modern matrix of injustices. Walsh (2018) describes decolonial thought as a praxis of thinking "from and with standpoints, struggles, and

practices” (p. 20), which emerges from and within the margins (Quijano, 2007). Thus, this perspective shifts away from the rhetoric of modernity/coloniality to the plurality of alternative knowledges, the Epistemologies of the South. That is why Maldonado-Torres (2006) sees the curriculum as an important tool for “the dismantling of relations of power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geopolitical hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world” (p. 175).

According to Quijano (2007), the globalised world is a result of the consolidation of Western colonisation and the establishment of world capitalism in the 16th century. Quijano (2000; 2007) claims that global asymmetrical power structures still exist between former colonies and coloniser through the colonial matrix of power, or matrix of modernity, whereby local knowledge systems and existing forms of social organisation are dismantled. In Quijano’s words “this coloniality of power, expressed through political and economic spheres was strongly associated with a coloniality of knowledge (or of imagination), articulated as modernity/rationality” (2007, p. 168). Therefore, knowledge production (the circulation of ideas of subjectivity, sexuality and gender) is controlled by imperial centres in the West, which also retain control of the economies of non-Western countries. As pointed out by Quijano (2007), coloniality, characterised by asymmetries of power and unequal circumstances of existence, is still the most general form of domination in the world today.

Quijano (2007) explains that the colonial matrix of power presents itself as a universal totality in four mutually articulated domains, namely: control of economy (land appropriation and exploitation of labour), control of authority (state forms, politics, and military), control of gender and sexuality (the Christian family, and sexual values/conduct), and control of subjectivity and knowledge (being, epistemology, and education). Of these, the control of subjectivity and knowledge, as argued by Mignolo and Walsh (2018), reflects the colonisation of cognitive perspectives and knowledge production as exclusively Western, white, and Eurocentric. The colonial matrix of power is therefore the root of global

inequalities. As a result, it led to forms of social discrimination that eventually were categorised in different ways – cultural, racial, religious, sexual, religious, ethnic, aesthetic, military, epistemic etc. – depending on specific sociohistorical and geographic contexts.

Quijano (2007) conceptualises decoloniality as epistemological decolonisation, or a means to eliminate the provincial tendency to universalise the Western European thinking/rationality/modernity and liberate from all forms of domination. He emphasises the need to “clear the way for new intercultural communication, for an interchange of experiences and meanings, as the basis of another rationality which may legitimately pretend to some universality” (p. 177). Therefore, for Quijano (2007), decolonisation entails epistemological reconstitution. Expanding on this perspective, Mignolo and Walsh (2018) argue that decoloniality is both the path to delinking from the colonial matrix of power and the praxis of otherwise thinking. Walsh (2012) views decoloniality as an ongoing process of creation and transformation of power relations, social imaginaries, ways of being, and knowledge systems that are radically different from Western paradigms. She emphasises the importance of the *locus of enunciation* in this process as a means to “think and act with” (p. 12) other ways of being and existing (identities, knowledges, and subjectivities) grounded in different geopolitical and historical locations. The acknowledgement of the *locus of enunciation* is therefore the first step toward the process of decolonisation.

Drawing on decolonial theory, I propose to decolonise language teacher education using the lens of an *ecology of knowledges* (Santos, 2007) in the VE Third Space for “the enunciation and expression of non-Western cosmologies and for the expression of different cultural, political and social memories” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 51). In other words, a space for decolonial praxis that, in my experience, brings together different epistemologies and ways of knowing and being (Wimpenny et al., 2022).

2.2 Third Space

As presented in the previous section, overall postcolonial and decolonial theories deal with the interconnection between colonial experience and critique of modernity. As a Black Brazilian man speaking from the Global South, I believe that the decolonial theory unveils hidden features of modernity, especially those of knowledge within academic discourse (curriculum), by embracing border thinking (the desubalternisation of knowledge and rationality) and subjugated knowledges. Although Bhabha is a postcolonial theorist, I will appropriate his concept of Third Space in this study through a decolonial lens. Although others have also done so (e.g., Wimpenny et al., 2022; Orsini-Jones, 2023b; Orsini-Jones & Finardi, 2024) before me in the context of COIL-VE, my focus is on how to decolonised ELT through VE curricular interventions that stimulate an active reflection on what English is and challenge its participants' (experienced and novice students in English teacher education) beliefs on ELT and native-speakerism. Also, as a Black L2 English-speaking researcher from the Global South, I bring to my analysis my epistemic diversity.

I do not see a theoretical conflict in drawing from both postcolonial and decolonial theories; rather, I propose that their combination opens up various types of ecologies of knowledges and approaches (Finardi, 2022). Moreover, I also think both postcolonial and decolonial theories contribute to the delinking from Western Eurocentric colonial knowledge systems, as they emphasise concepts such as pluriversality, hybridity, ecologies of knowledge, *inbetweenness*, border thinking, and *Third Space*.

The concept of Third Space comes from the hybridity theory (Bhabha, 1994) as a critique of the modern notion of culture – an epistemological object. Bhabha argues that:

[...] the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom (1990, p. 211).

In this sense, different identities and cultural practices are interdependent and mutually constructed through dialogical encounters in the Third Space. The Self only exists through a relationship with the Other, because “in order to see ourselves, we must appropriate the vision of others [...] I see myself as others might see it. In order to forge a self, I must do so from outside. In other words, I author myself” (Bakhtin 1990, as cited in Holquist, 1990, p. 28). So, the Third Space only exists when one shows his/her positioning as the Other. For Bhabha (1994), dialogical encounters are not supposed to resolve cultural differences but intensify them. He explains that:

It is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their hybridity. ... It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity of fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37).

Third Space is an *in-between* space, metaphorical or representational, that moves beyond the duality of space as material and as a concept, as well as cultural polarity. It is “thus is a territory where we can escape the dilemma of dichotomies and hierarchies” (Stolt, 2010, p. 1). According to Bhabha (1994, p. 56), by “exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves”. Bhabha (1994) asserts that the meaning of culture is located, and mediated, in the Third Space, “the space of the inscription or writing of identity” (p. 49), because cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory space.

For Bhabha (1994), culture is a processual construction. Thus, Third Space is neither the old culture nor the entirely new; rather, it is something emerging from interaction, negotiation and assimilation. This space therefore calls into question the colonial belief that cultures are homogenous, static and uniform. The encounter between cultures always entails a discontinuity of discursive practices in a “highly contradictory and ambivalent space

of enunciation” (1994, p. 37). Hence, Bhabha (1990) proposes the notion of *cultural difference* as opposed to *cultural diversity* and multiculturalism. He argues the latter assumes culture as a close entity, and the former understands culture as antagonisms.

In a curricular sense, the VE Third Space may be understood as potential site for creating more open and inclusive imaginaries of language use and appropriation as well as for reconceptualising/reimagining language teacher education (see Guimarães & Finardi, 2021). The encounter with the Other in the Third Space offers new possibilities for disruption, displacement and transcendence of authoritative narratives and the opening of liminal transformational and collaborative learning landscapes. The VE Third Space can be initially challenging for learners, as it involves a process of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). I therefore understand the emergence of the VE Third Space as an expression of the tensions and contradictions that arise at the intersection of different cultural and linguistic worlds.

2.3. Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical frameworks that inform this study, namely: Decolonial Theory, and the concept of Third Space. By drawing on authors from the Global South, Decolonial Theory provides the lens to critique the legacies of coloniality in ELT, perpetuated through the ‘colonial matrix of power’ and ‘abyssal thinking’. Decolonisation is therefore the interrogation (and interruption) of colonial conditions of domination through which Western paradigms operate. The Epistemologies of the South (situated and embodied knowledges) are proposed to reimagine the world and address coloniality through the triad of ‘identity-interrogate-interrupt’ (Finardi & Salomão, 2024). The concept of Third Space is also appropriated through a decolonial lens to account for the dialogic encounters in VE, where hybrid identities and alternative ways of being and knowing can emerge. The ‘in-between’ Third Space provides a framework to understand VE as an unsettling space that affords the deconstruction and construction of new positions/possibilities. Together, these theoretical

frameworks provide a synergetic foundation to investigate the potential of VE as a Third Space to decolonise ELT. In the next chapter I discuss the literature review that underpins this study.

Chapter 3 – Literature Review

“The peripheral voices must be heard, not assumed” Ha (2009, p. 39)

This chapter will delve into the key concepts for this thesis: 1. Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC), 2. Virtual Exchange (VE), 3. native-speakerism and language ideology, 4. English Language Teaching (ELT) and language teacher education, and 5. second language anxiety and language performance. These interconnected topics will be explored in the light of the challenges and opportunities associated with the integration of VE, IoC, and a decolonial perspective into teacher education.

Firstly, the literature review will address the potential of VE to foster intercultural understanding and awareness through collaborative learning. Similarly, the concept of IoC will be explored in relation to how VE projects integrate international perspectives and experiences into educational curricula. Next, the review will critically analyse the impact of native-speakerism on ELT and teacher education by addressing its implications for novice and experienced ELT teacher students at both personal and professional levels. In addition, the role of language teacher education and curricula in promoting ideologies and hierarchy in ELT will be investigated. Finally, the last section of the chapter explores relation between second language anxiety and language performance.

3.1 Internationalisation of the Curriculum

The term *internationalisation* has multiple definitions. Rumbley et al. (2022) argue that internationalisation is “a multifaceted and evolving phenomenon. It touches on a wide scope of issues and can be defined in a multitude of ways” (p. 19). Over the last four decades (de Wit & Jones, 2022), the term has evolved to capture its complexity, and many scholars have attempted to outline a common definition in the field of HE (Hunter et al., 2022). However,

Majee and Ress (2018) note that little effort has been made to understand and define internationalisation under the historical particularities of the postcolonial condition.

The first definition was provided by Knight (1994, p. 3) as “the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of higher education”. Despite the influence of this definition in the HE context, Hunter et al. (2022) claim it is uncritical, generic, and intentionally neutral for not including activities, outcomes, and rationales – see Hawawini (2016), and de Wit & Hunter 2016).

Knight’s definition was expanded and broadened as “an intentional process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society” (de Wit et al., 2015, p. 281). This explicit normative definition takes into account desired goals to be achieved through an ongoing and continuous process. Moreover, Hunter et al. (2022) state this definition is a conscious effort to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality by giving internationalisation a comprehensive purpose and urging institutions to think carefully about their own rationales.

Craciun (2022) suggests an “improved” (p. 57) definition for internationalisation of HE. This updated definition states that internationalisation is “the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purposes, functions, and delivery of postsecondary education, in order to achieve intended academic, sociocultural, economic, and/or political goals” (p. 57). Craciun (2022) explains that her definition of internationalisation includes the diverse goals pursued through HE internationalisation because it “is a means to an end, not an end in itself” (p. 57). She also explains that the motivations for fostering internationalisation differ from institution to institution and from context to context, but they invariably fall into one of four categories of expected benefits: political, economic, sociocultural, and academic.

Overall, those definitions reflect the awareness that most students are non-mobile and therefore internationalisation needs to become more inclusive (de Wit, 2016) and less elitist (Richardson, 2016; Finardi & Guimarães, 2020), since a small number of students will not engage in physical international mobility experiences (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020; Passos, & Stallivieri, 2023), around 1 and 5% (Gacel-Ávila, 2021). As Díaz (2018) notes, this is due not only to the cost involved but also to the direction of academic mobility. There is an intersection between English and Global North/power asymmetries whereby more than half of all international students are attracted to only four countries; that is, anglophone from the Global North (UK, USA, Canada, and Australia), accounting for more than half of all international students (Guimarães, Finardi, & Amorim, 2021).

Worldwide, many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have attempted to provide students with global perspectives (Landorf, Doscher, & Hardrick, 2017) and thus “with diverse ways of knowing, diverse perspectives, and cultural identities, ... new opportunities to understand and critically examine the ways in which their own identities, ways of knowing, and daily practices are rooted in and shaped by the social, cultural, and political conditions of their lived experience” (Starke-Meyerring & Wilson, 2008, p. 10). De Wit and Leask (2015, p. 11) explain:

the importance of the ‘at home’ component of internationalisation; that is, the curriculum as taught and experienced by all students on the home campus. [...] A shift in focus is required – from a nearly exclusive focus on mobility for the elite to a focus on curriculum and learning outcomes for all students, mobile or not.

With the rise of research on the topic from the Global South, scholars have been advocating for a situated approach that begins with the revelation (and recognition) of one’s *locus of enunciation* (Diniz de Figueiredo & Martinez, 2021) leading to the reconceptualisation of internationalisation by proposing frameworks such as responsible internationalisation (Stallivieri & Vianna, 2020), ethical internationalisation (Pashby & Andreotti, 2016), critical internationalisation (Leal, Finardi, & Abba, 2022; 2024), internationalisation otherwise (Stein & McCartney, 2021), to acknowledge the political, ethical and epistemological dimensions of

this process. A decolonial approach to the internationalisation of HE takes into consideration three key aspects, criticality, positionality and pluriversality, and calls for “ecologies of knowledges and pluriversities rather than universities” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021). Some authors (e.g., Heleta & Chasi, 2023; Leal, Finardi, & Abba, 2022; 2024; Leal, Abba, & Finardi, 2024) argue that dominant approaches to the internationalisation of HE have been shaped by the Global North to legitimise all aspects of what is considered ‘international’ and to serve to the neoliberal needs and priorities of HEIs in Europe and North America. George Mwangi and Yao (2021) claim that the internationalisation of HE has evolved into a form of neo-imperialism and therefore tends to overlook how the legacies of colonial expansion impose unique demands on universities in the Global South (Majee & Ress, 2018).

Heleta and Chasi (2023) propose a redefinition of internationalisation of HE through a decolonial lens. This definition emphasises the need to critically engage with historical and contemporary complexities, inequalities and injustices in different HE contexts, as well as challenge hegemonic structures, to foster equitable global engagement in the internationalisation of HE. For the purpose of this thesis, the definition by Heleta and Chasi (2023) is adopted, as follows:

Internationalisation of higher education is a critical and comparative process of the study of the world and its complexities, past and present inequalities and injustices, and possibilities for a more equitable and just future for all. Through teaching, learning, research and engagement, internationalisation fosters epistemic plurality and integrates critical, anti-racist and anti-hegemonic learning about the world from diverse global perspectives to enhance the quality and relevance of education.” (pp. 269–270)

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the internationalisation scenario in HE. It impacted on how mobility is conceptualised (Hildeblando Júnior & Finardi, 2020) shifting the focus from the physical to the virtual mobility experience. It brought new challenges to internationalisation (McKeown, Bista, & Chan, 2022), but also opened up new opportunities through VE (Finardi and Guimarães, 2020). Guimarães, Finardi and Amorim, (2021) argue that one positive outcome for HEIs in the Global South was the opportunity to collaborate

and establish sustainable connections with HEIs with both the Global North and South. Leask and Gree (2020) emphasise that online learning offers a rich opportunity for global education as it allows students from all over the world to connect and learn together, learn about different cultures, and develop global citizenship skills (UNESCO, 2014).

Moreover, de Wit and Jones (2022) discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic brought about an important reflection on the internationalisation of HE: social responsibility or internationalisation for society (see Brandenburg et al. [2020] and Jones et al. [2021]). Jones et al. (2021) call for urgent alignment of internationalisation and social responsibility in HE. Likewise, Brandenburg et al. (2019) and Hauck (2023) note that the internationalisation of HE has neglected the social responsibility component. According to Jones (2022), themes such as equality, human rights, diversity and inclusion, social justice, and decolonisation are important for the understanding of internationalisation. Thus, Brandenburg et al. (2019) claim that “limiting internationalization to the higher education community [...] is to miss tremendous opportunities. Our global society and environment are seriously endangered, and internationalisation has immense potential to help solve major social issues of relevance locally and globally” (n.p.). De Wit and Jones (2022) argue that internationalisation should shift from the competitive paradigm to global cooperation strategy, since internationalisation still mirrors the inequities of the global context.

The internationalisation of HE has changed the focus from abroad to *at home*, from mobility to curriculum, and from a peripheral activity to a comprehensive one (de Wit, 2016). Both Internationalisation at Home (IaH) and Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) emphasise the relevance of internationalised learning outcomes for all students. According to Beelen and Jones (2015, p. 9), “internationalization at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments”. IaH emerged as a strategy to support internationalisation of teaching and learning and offer international and intercultural opportunities to all students in all programmes (both the formal and informal

curriculum) within their home institution, not simply those who have a mobility experience (Beelen & Jones 2015; Guimarães et al., 2019).

For Leask (2015), the formal curriculum is “the syllabus as well as the orderly, planned schedule of experiences and activities that students must undertake as part of their degree program” (p. 8), while informal curriculum is defined as “various support services and additional activities and options organized by the university that are not assessed and do not form part of the formal curriculum, although they may support learning within it” (p. 8). Both curricula have impact on the processes of teaching and learning and also shape students’ experience, which contributes profoundly to their awareness of global issues (Smith, 2015).

Due to the importance of the curriculum for internationalisation, Leask (2015) describes IoC, also known as Comprehensive Internationalisation (Hudzik, 2011; Gacel-Ávila, 2012), as “the process of incorporating international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study” (p. 69). Leask emphasises the importance of students’ engagement with diversity, students’ development of intercultural competence, and the need for curriculum, teaching, activities and assessment to be aligned with learning outcomes. De Wit and Leask (2015) argue that there is not a one-size-fits-all model of IoC and explain that:

Disciplinary, institutional, local, national, regional and global factors interact in different ways to facilitate and inhibit, drive and shape approaches to internationalization, including the way in which learning outcomes are defined, taught and assessed. Hence we see approaches to internationalization of the curriculum that are both similar and different within and across disciplines (p. 11).

IoC must be based on the context, values, needs, priorities and motives of each institution and thus be carefully planned and flexible (i.e. Smith, 2015; de Wit, 2020). Leask (2013) proposes five-stage process of IoC: 1) review and reflect to identify where one sits in the IoC process; 2) imagine possibilities to internationalize the curriculum; 3) revise and plan to achieve effectiveness; 4) act and determine how to assess the IoC; and 5) evaluate if the

goals were achieved. This step-by-step process supports partners to plan short, medium, and long-term goals for the IoC. One of these key goals of IoC and IaH is to foster Global Citizenship Education (GCE) through the integration of global issues, intercultural competences, and diverse epistemologies into the curriculum. GCE promotes the development of critical democratic practices and reflexivity so that students can engage ethically and responsibly in local, national and global contexts (Guimarães & Finardi, 2021).

In a post-mobility world (White & Lee, 2020), VE has proven to be a powerful approach and a catalyst in advancing efforts to internationalise home curricula (IoC), particularly through the incorporation of intercultural and global dimensions (Guimarães et al., 2019). The New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) have impacted the internationalisation of HE, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Hildeblando Júnior & Finardi, 2020; O'Dowd, 2021; Satar, 2021), and so have emerging initiatives/activities/practices to IaH enhancing cooperation, collaboration and partnerships between HEIs, students, faculty and staff. These experiential initiatives are relevant for both IaH and IoC.

3.2 Virtual Exchange

As previously mentioned, the practice of online collaborative projects has existed for several decades in foreign language education, as discussed by O'Dowd (2022), and it has been referred to as Telecollaboration (Belz, 2003; Orsini-Jones & Lee, 2018), Telecollaboration 2.0 (Helm & Guth, 2010), E-tandem (O'Rourke, 2007) or Teletandem (Telles, 2009). The term VE has emerged in the last decade (O'Dowd, 2018; 2021; 2022; Helm, 2024), often in parallel and used jointly with Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) (Rubin and Guth, 2016; Rubin, 2022). Telecollaboration was one of the first terms used to describe the practice of engaging geographically distant language learners through Internet-based communication tools to develop intercultural and digital competences and foreign language

(Helm & Guth, 2016). With the popularisation of the Internet and the development of NICTs, Telecollaboration has evolved in different contexts and gained popularity especially after the COVID-19 pandemic (Orsini-Jones, 2023a). While Telecollaboration places emphasis on foreign language instruction, VE projects follow different approaches to international collaboration, within and outside the field of foreign language education, in the HE context as an integrated part of educational programmes (O'Dowd, 2018).

Telecollaboration has gained popularity outside of foreign language learning contexts (Helm & Guth, 2016) and this led to a range of pedagogic approaches under the umbrella term VE (see O'Dowd, 2018; 2022; Helm & Guth, 2022). O'Dowd (2018; 2022) argues that the heterogeneity of the activity in the HE context has positive and negative consequences. As a positive outcome, the diversity of terminology referring to VE shows it is adaptable to different contexts and teaching and learning objectives. On the other hand, different terminology makes it "harder for the practice to be more commonly understood and implemented" (Rubin, 2016, p. 263), thereby promoting VE among faculty, stakeholders and decision-makers, resulting in a lack of communication and collaboration between researchers in this field O'Dowd (2018).

Despite the diversity in terminology, all these initiatives under the umbrella of VE share the goal of developing intercultural awareness through direct interaction with peers in geographically distant locations using the affordances of technology (O'Dowd, 2018; Rubin & Guth, 2015; Rubin, 2022). There are slight differences among these initiatives of VE such as type of partnership, values, objectives, activities, interaction and so on. Furthermore, O'Dowd (2021) argues that adopting a moniker would contribute to promoting VE in the context of HE. The term VE represents the virtual and intercultural aspects of this activity and therefore it is sufficiently inclusive as to act as an umbrella term for the many different incarnations and models of online international teaching and learning. VE is a technology-enabled approach to internationalisation to promote student-to-student learning and diverse perspectives on glocal (global and local) phenomena by connecting students, faculty, and

institutions from different cultures, geographically distant locations and contexts. According to O'Dowd, VE is:

[...] a pedagogical approach which involves the engagement of groups of learners in extended periods of online intercultural interaction and collaboration with partners from other cultural contexts or geographical locations as an integrated part of their educational programmes and under the guidance of educators and/or expert facilitators (2020, p. 478).

O'Dowd's definition highlights three elements of VE for IaH: international/intercultural collaboration, integration into the course/programme, and support of facilitators. Garcés and O'Dowd (2020) and Helm and Guth (2022) argue that VE is one of a wide variety of technology-enabled approaches that can be used to support IaH and IoC. According to Helm (2018, p. 1), VE "combines the deep impact of intercultural dialogue and exchange with the broad reach of digital technology". Helm's definition encompasses the idea the VE offers students a chance to improve language skills, intercultural communication competence, besides critical digital literacies (see Helm & Guth, 2010). As argued by de Wit (2016, p. 78), VE/COIL programmes are relevant to internationalisation of HE due to their unique combination of four essential dimensions: 1. collaborative and international exercise, 2. online technology integration, 3. active intercultural and international learning, and 4. integration into the learning process.

However, new definitions of VE have expanded the concept to encompass a wider range of activities, contexts, and outcomes in HE. For example, the definition by Fuchs and Orsini-Jones (2022) highlights the potential of VE for language teacher education and L2 teaching and learning. The authors claim that VE affords decolonised Third Space for dialogue, negotiation, and transformation, where participants can challenge their existing beliefs and develop new perspectives. Hauck (2023) proposes critical virtual exchange (CVE) that focuses on providing a more equitable and inclusive experience to a diverse range of students in HEIs. This approach aims to address social justice and inclusion at both individual and institutional levels. According to Hauck (2023), key characteristics of CVE include the use of low bandwidth technologies, the systematic inclusion of students from low

socioeconomic backgrounds who are often underrepresented in VEs, the alignment of content/topics with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the integration of student outreach work with locally with businesses with non-governmental organisations, and the integration of translanguaging approaches. O'Dowd (2023) argues that challenges such as language proficiency, digital access and structural gaps need to be addressed to promote inclusion and diversity in VE. Abba, Leal and Finardi (2022) claim that efforts to internationalise HE that do not address colonial legacies embedded in HE contexts intensify and reproduce the asymmetries of power.

O'Dowd (2021) and Lewis and O'Dowd (2016) claim that VE has been a peripheral activity carried out by individual teachers (bottom-up initiatives) who want to use technology to implement intercultural learning into their content-based courses, without training and institutional support. This scenario, however, has been affected and changed by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A document⁴ by the European Commission (2020) suggests that VE can take teachers out of their comfort zones and challenge their teaching methods. This document assumes the role of VE as a major tool for the internationalisation of HE. Helm and Beaven (2020), based on the Stevens Initiative⁵ (2020), divide VE into two categories: *ready-made* and *codesigned* (see Table 1).

Table 1 Models of VE

Ready-made	Codesigned
These exchanges are developed and implemented by organisations that have specialised in this activity. Universities have students participate in these projects, which are integrated into curricula, and students may be awarded recognition for their participation. Examples of these are the Connect Programme, a facilitator-led dialogue exchange developed and implemented by Soliya ⁴ and thematic, dialogue-based exchanges such as those developed by the Sharing Perspectives Foundation	These 'grassroots' exchanges are collaboratively designed by educators who develop a shared curriculum for (part of) their course. Activities or projects are designed so that students in partner classes interact and collaborate with one another in order to meet the learning objectives. In non-formal education contexts these activities are collaboratively designed by youth workers.

⁴ Also see the documents by the European Commission (2020): [Communication from the Commission on achieving the European Education Area by 2025](#) and [Digital Education Action Plan \(21-27\)](#).

⁵ See: <https://www.stevensinitiative.org/resource/virtual-exchange-typology/>

Source: Helm and Beaven (2020)

The ready-made exchanges are developed and managed by specialist educational organizations that create partnerships with multiple universities to implement multilateral projects, usually integrated into already existing courses or offered as stand-alone courses (Helm, 2019). The Virtual Innovation and Support Networks (VALIANT⁶) project falls into this category of VE, for instance.

The codesigned exchanges are structured upon the creation of coequal, team taught learning environments where faculty from two or more cultural backgrounds work together to co-develop a shared syllabus to meet the needs and interests of each party. COIL developed at State University of New York (SUNY), see Beelen, Wimpenny and Rubin, (2021), is an example of this type of VE.

Technology and the NITCs have provided unprecedented affordances and opportunities to enhance interactions between learners worldwide. In the case of VE projects in the Global South, it has also stimulated a more critical internationalisation process there (Guimarães et al., 2019), with possibilities to develop Global Citizenship (Guimarães & Finardi, 2021) and Internationalisation at Home (Finardi, Salvadori & Wehrli, 2024; Finardi & Asik, 2024) including more voices from the South after the pandemic (Finardi, Guimarães, 2020), with the potential to recalibrate relationships between North and South (Guimarães, Finardi & Amorim, 2021). In particular, I believe that VE affords many possibilities and opportunities for language teacher education as argued by Fuchs and Orsini-Jones (2022) and Simoneli and Finardi (2024). Moreover, teacher education is one area in which VE is increasingly being adopted to prepare future teachers (Helm, 2018; Finardi & Asik, 2024).

⁶ For more information, see: <https://valiantproject.eu/>

3.3 Native-Speakerism and Language Ideology

Tracing back the colonial effects of English on non-native speakers, Kachru (1986) states that English is a “colonial language” (p. 5) and a “language for oppression” (p. 13).

Canagarajah (1999, p. 230) defines colonisation as:

in this form of geopolitical relationship, communities related to each other in a hierarchical and unilateral fashion. The dominant communities assumed the superiority of their cultural and social systems, even that of their language, and attempted to spread their influence at the cost of local traditions.

Pennycook (2001) views colonialism as global capitalism and explains that it is “about far more than just economic and political exploitation; it was also a massive movement that both produced and in turn was produced by colonial cultures and ideologies” (p. 67). One of the most significant effects of the spread of English has been the emergence of questions of power and ideology. Kroskrity (2015, p. 98) argues that “notions of what is ‘true’, ‘morally good’, or ‘aesthetically pleasing’ about language and discourse are grounded in social experience and often tied to their political economic interests”. Therefore, it is important to look at language ideologies along with underlying belief systems: what is considered correct, standard, and appropriate because of their influence on people’s language use.

Defining language ideology has proven problematic for some scholars and experts because “there is no particular unity... no single core literature, and a range of definitions” (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 496). In the studies of language ideology, there is a fundamental distinction between neutral and critical approaches, although both consider language ideologies as belief systems. In neutral approaches, speakers’ views or beliefs are considered to be formed by the cultural systems in which they are immersed, but no effort is made to detect variation within or across these systems. Thus, a single ideology represents an entire community or culture. For Kroskrity (2004, p. 496), those approaches do not “problematize language ideological variation (by age, gender, class, etc.) and therefore

promotes an overly homogeneous view of language ideologies within a cultural group”, ignoring the existence of contradiction and variability.

Yet, critical approaches investigate how language ideologies are used to maintain social power and domination. So, multiple ideologies co-exist within a culture/community, presenting different clusters of beliefs that compete to become dominant. As discussed by Gal (1998, p. 320), “different ideologies construct alternate, even opposing realities; they create differing views arising from and often constituting different social positions and subjectivities within a single social formation”. Critical approaches address larger social and historical structures and the multiplicity because language ideologies are “constructed from the sociocultural experience of the speaker” (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 496) and thus the community members have different perceptions of them.

Language ideology is a complex concept and there are a variety of definitions and interpretations. For the purposes of this study, Kroskrity’s definition will be used. Kroskrity (2010, p. 192) defines language ideology, also linguistic ideology, as “beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use which often index the political economic interests of individual speakers, ethnic and other interest groups, and nation-states”. Drawing on Kroskrity’s definition, a language ideology may be utilised to silence, empower, or oppress people deliberately or subconsciously because they “reflect people’s beliefs about what language is and how it should be used” (Dragojevic, Giles, & Watson, 2013, p. 3). Moreover, language ideologies foster some types of identification between certain groups of people while also allowing individuals to dis-identify and distance themselves from speakers of other languages, dialects, or vernaculars.

According to Kroskrity’s model of language ideologies (2004), language ideologies are organised in five levels, with “partially overlapping but analytically distinguishable layers of significance” (p. 501), namely: 1) group or individual interests, 2) multiplicity of ideologies, 3) speakers’ awareness, 4) mediating functions of ideologies, and 5) link between language ideology and identity constructions.

First, according to Kroskrity, “language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group” (2004, p. 501). Speaker’s social and cultural experiences are represented in language ideologies, which are not neutral and reproduced according to particular or social/cultural interest. Second, Kroskrity states that “language ideologies are multiple” (2004, p. 503) because of the different social divisions, such as race, nationality, gender, class, sexuality etc. Third, community members “may display varying degrees of awareness of local language ideologies” (2004, p. 505) that they adopt. The sites where ideologies are produced influence the degrees of awareness (e.g., church, school etc.). Fourth, “language ideologies mediate between social structures and forms of talk” (2004, p. 507). In other words, linguistic difference and sociocultural experience are bridged through ideologies. Finally, language ideologies have a great impact on the construction and reproduction of social identities, such as ethnicity and nationality. That is, social groups base their identities on language use to distinguish themselves from outsiders. Gal (1998) highlights the importance of considering language ideologies:

[...] because they participate in the semiotic processes through which ideas become naturalized, essentialized, universalized, or commonsensical; ideas about language are implicated in the process by which any cultural ideas gain the discursive authority to become dominant (p. 321-322).

Language ideologies thus naturalise created representations as universal or timeless, objective and impartial, and politically unquestionable because they “rooted in tacit sociohistorical cultural beliefs and practices” (Golombek & Johnson, 2019, p. 28). Language ideologies may spread in limited domains and discourse groups and therefore not all language ideologies reach the national level. In this sense, language teachers’ education is heavily influenced by the curriculum and instruction, which are capable of creating and disseminating dominant ideologies. Curriculum and instruction also highlight local dominating ideologies about language and, for this reason, language teachers should be provided with new encounters with otherness in order to explore new thinking and different

views. That is why Pennycook examines English language policies as components of the ideology of colonialism. For Swan, Aboshiha and Holliday (2015), the ideology of native-speakerism is the colonial character that continues to envelop the globalised profession of ELT.

According to Pennycook (1994), the concept of 'native speaker' is supported by three language ideologies. The first ideology is concerned with the relationship between having citizenship of a nation-state and being a 'native speaker' of that nation-national state's language. The second ideology is that language is a stable and homogenous system with a homogeneous speaking group, allowing for "a rigid and clear distinction between being a native speaker and not being so" (Pennycook, 1994, p. 176). Language ideology makes invisible certain people or behaviours that are incompatible with the ideological framework. The third ideology is that being a 'native speaker' inevitably confers a high degree of proficiency and performance in all aspects of one's first language, meaning that 'native speakers' have "a complete and possibly innate competence in the language" (Pennycook, 1994, p. 175). For Kirkpatrick (2007) and Saraceni (2009), it is reductionist to adopt the term 'native speaker' in a multilingual society.

The ideology of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006; 2015) is the notion that the so-called NESTs are the ideal and more qualified English teachers, whereas NNESTs are frequently excluded, marginalised and stigmatised. In language education, native-speakerism is defined as "the idealisation and promotion of teachers who are constructed as 'native speakers' as representing a 'Western culture', from which springs the ideals both of English and of the methodology for teaching it" (Holliday, 2015, p. 13). The segregation of teachers as 'native' and 'non-native' entails a hierarchical relationship in the profession, as well as dominant professional discourses.

Native-speakerism, according to Houghton and Rivers (2013, p. 14), is a "prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination, typically by or against foreign language teachers, on the basis of either being or not being perceived and categorised as a native speaker of a

particular language". In this sense, native-speakerism operates by means of *Othering* NNESTs and ideological discourse used to reinforce particular relations of domination, such as cultural disbelief (Holliday, 2015) – a disbelief in the cultural contribution of NNESTs. Swan, Aboshiha and Holliday (2015) state that native-speakerism is specifically White and colonialist.

Frequently, this ideology is also supported by another idea that both American and British English should be taught as standard (Cameron & Galloway, 2019; Matsuda, 2019). However, as pointed out by McIntyre (2020, p. 36), "the notion that English belongs to Britain and America is simply no longer true (if, indeed, it ever was) and we can fully expect to see other communities worldwide exerting an influence on the development of any new standard". Phillipson (1992) states that idea of 'native speaker' is a fallacy.

Canagarajah (1999) points out that "the native speaker fallacy also contributes to the narrow definition of expertise in ELT" defining teaching expertise "in terms of linguistic considerations" (p. 84). Rajagopalan (2005) also argues that the concept of native-speakerism has been transformed into a certificate of quality and authenticity, resulting in NNESTs' lack of confidence in speaking English. Therefore, Canagarajah (1999, p. 84) states NNESTs "feel compelled to spend undue time repairing their pronunciation or performing other cosmetic changes to sound native". That is why Kumaravadivelu (2015) points out that native-speakerism is a form of implicit racism or unperceived violence.

To overcome the ideology of native-speakerism, Holliday (2015) advocates for cultural belief, that is, the belief that all teachers of English, regardless of their background, have equal professional worth. This view recognises that everyone has cultural proficiency and appreciates the contributions of the cultural Other as significant.

3.4 English Language Teaching and Language Teacher Education

Coloniality and cultural globalisation contributed directly to the global spread of English. As an effect of both phenomena, English assumed diverse local forms, roles, functions, statuses, uses, and users worldwide and since then this trajectory has had implications for ELT and language teacher education (Selvi & Rudolph, 2017). The globalisation of English has required that language teachers be prepared for intercultural confrontations and mediations.

English is spoken as a L2, foreign or international language (EIL) (Jenkins, 2000) by billions of speakers from various language and cultural backgrounds in international and intercultural settings as a means of communication giving that language a unique position (Selvi & Yazan, 2021). Other acronyms usually associated with English also gained prominence such as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (Jenkins, 2015), World English (WE) (Kachru, 2005) and Global English(es) (GE) (Pennycook, 2007), just to name a few. For the purpose of this thesis, and to avoid misinterpretations in the utilisation of the various terms associated with the status of English in different contexts because English varieties are in complex relations of power with other varieties (Pennycook, 2019), I will primarily focus on the concept of ELF. Seidlhofer, (2011, p. 7) defines ELF as “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often only option”, or the contact language used among speakers from different linguacultural backgrounds, including L1 English speakers. Jenkins (2015) proposes the term English as a Multilingua Franca (EMF) to emphasise the importance of multilingualism in global encounters across languages and cultures through English. Since NNEs outnumber NESs, English is spoken and taught by a majority of NNEs (Floris & Renandya, 2020; Baker et al., 2025). In this context, language teacher education programmes need to prepare NNEs pre-service teachers to act in this context helping to support their identity construction (e.g., Archanjo et al., 2019).

El Kadri and Gimenez (2013) argue that teacher education plays an important role in teachers' beliefs if we consider that instruction and curriculum are sites capable of forming dominant ideologies, or "structured and consequential ways we think about language" (Seargeant, 2009, p. 26). For Larsen-Freeman (2001), teacher education is "the sum of experiences and activities through which individuals learn to be language teachers" (p. 72). For example, curricula based on principles of 'native' versus 'non-native' speakers can reinforce beliefs and power relations. Matsuda and Friedrich (2012, p. 17) argue that the "linguistic, cultural and functional diversity associated with English today challenges some of the fundamental assumptions of ELT and requires that we revisit our pedagogical practices". Otherwise, curriculum will continue to contribute to the maintenance of dominant ideologies that can seriously affect ELT teachers and students.

For El Kadri, Calvo and Gimenez (2017), one of the big challenges for English language teacher education is to deal with the critical assumptions underlying historically persistent practices in the teaching of English. Sifakis and Bayyurt (2015) highlight the necessity for teachers to challenge, transform and be aware of deep-seated beliefs about teaching and learning. Nero (2012, p. 151) argue that teacher education must be "more attuned to the diverse linguistic reality of the 21st century, to be less prescriptive and to have more context specific goals". Thus, teacher education is the starting point for shifting language teachers' attitudes or mentality (Bayyurt & Akcan, 2015; Cameron & Galloway, 2019).

Education can serve as a tool for colonisation and therefore reinforce dominant ideologies while suppressing, marginalising, and disregarding any form of knowledge that is not considered standard. Andreotti (2011) states that education is a key location for decolonisation and both teachers and curriculum designers are essential to achieve it. Decolonisation of the curriculum means therefore to produce counter knowledges and also include excluded people into it. For language teacher education specifically, it means to abandon notions of language concerning hierarchy, native-speaker centrality and ownership.

Kumaravadivelu (2016) argue that the *decolonial option* is the only meaningful way to address these issues in ELT. He emphasises that it takes action to do so.

Therefore, curricula need to reflect how the language is used today and to promote debates about proficiency, native-speakerism, local contexts, varieties of English, and global and intercultural perspectives. Furthermore, Johnson and Golombek (2020) point out that curriculum should create “opportunities, practices, and resources that are socially, culturally, historically, and institutionally situated in and responsive to teachers’, students’, and community needs” (p. 120) in a process of “critical interrogation of their social locations and the ways they engage with the realities of teaching and learning” (Haddix, 2015, p. 66). Hence, it involves questioning established canons of thought and authoritative voices that invisibilise and marginalise local knowledges.

For Galloway (2017), understanding student teachers’ attitudes towards language is the crucial first step when considering curriculum innovation. Galloway and Rose (2021) argue that curriculum change is a gradual process informed by the affordances and constraints of the local context. In order to prepare effective teachers, according to Elsheikh (2016), a careful examination of teacher education programmes and their curricula becomes imperative. Rose and Galloway (2019) advocate for an ecological approach (van Lier, 2004) to curriculum, that is, a curriculum that challenges the top-down and one-size-fits-all mechanistic models of education and moves away from the established normative and idealised mindset and aiming to decenter and decolonise teacher education (Dharamshi, Johnson & Sharkey, 2022).

I draw on Freire (2005) and Biesta (2013) to propose a decolonised curriculum (and language teacher education) as “an orientation toward emancipation, that is toward ways of doing and being that do not simply accept the given order but have an orientation toward the change of the existing order so that different ways of doing and being become possible” (p. 64). From a Freirean perspective (2005), the curriculum serves as a means to achieve emancipation through educational practices that allow students to acquire, analyse and

produce both social and self-knowledge. He critiques the adherence of the curriculum to a single universal truth grounded in Western thinking, rather than embracing multiple subjective truths emerging from diverse standpoints. In order to decolonise the curriculum, it is necessary to weaken the “traditional link between standard languages and national cultures” (Kramsch, 2019, p. 50), or delink from the Western thinking in a movement of disobedience as suggested by Mignolo (2011). A decolonised curriculum should embrace multiple possibilities and points of rupture through continuous negotiation and struggle.

Therefore, decolonising the curriculum means to bring together marginalised perspectives into being and to decenter Western paradigms. As argued by Pennycook (1989, p. 613), “rather than trying to understand our practice according to some form of totalizing or universal discourse, we need to recognise the complexities of language teaching and its contexts and strive to validate other local forms of knowledge about language and teaching”. This process for language teacher education entails “rethinking the ways we look at languages and their relation to identity and geographical location” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007, p. 3). It is crucial that language teachers are exposed to multiple epistemologies so that they can engage in a learning and unlearning process to ultimately imagine possible alternatives.

3.5 Second Language Anxiety and Language Performance

According to Zhang (2019), L2 anxiety is correlated with language performance and is, therefore, a significant negative predictor of language achievement. Manchado-Nieto and Fielden-Burns (2024) identified a range of anxiety-related emotions that shape L2 speakers’ language/communication experiences, including fear, concern, shame, nervousness, insecurity, disinterest, and confidence. Furthermore, MacIntyre (2017) argued that L2 anxiety is both a cause and consequence of language learning difficulty and lower language proficiency. Similarly, Wang and Devitt (2022) suggest that lower language proficiency might

increase anxiety levels and frustration in VE contexts. Zheng and Cheng (2018) found that listening and speaking were the most anxiety-inducing skills, while cultural differences also have a major contribution to high levels of anxiety and poor language performance. Socioeconomic background can also be an L2 anxiety trigger as noted by Ali et al. (2021). Their study indicates that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often have negative self-perception of their language proficiency and performance. Similarly, Khan et al. (2024) emphasise that English speaking anxiety is significantly influenced by the socioeconomic status of the students. Some studies (e.g. Johnson et al., 2019; Lee & Park, 2020; Elanthiraiyan & Priyanath, 2023; Waterman et al., 2023) conducted with pre-service and in-service English teachers in/from rural and remote areas in developing countries show a clear correlation between socioeconomic background and English proficiency. These studies suggest that pre-service and in-service English teachers from these contexts experience moderate to high levels of L2 anxiety due to limited access to adequate infrastructure, digital technologies, teaching resources, institutional support, and online intercultural exchange opportunities.

Ma (2022) highlighted that both emotional and cognitive factors affect language performance, particularly oral communication. The study emphasises a triarchy involving: a) cognition, L2 speakers' self-efficacy – their belief in their ability to perform tasks – b) emotion, foreign language anxiety, and c) language performance, speaking skills. These factors are interdependent and influence one another. Sources of self-efficacy include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional states, whereas foreign language anxiety is associated with fear of failure, low self-confidence, and cultural unfamiliarity.

Silveira (2020) characterises L2 anxiety as a situation-specific form of anxiety that negatively affects language performance. Therefore, L2 anxiety is linked to speakers' self-perception, beliefs, and attitudes, which are manifested as communicative apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Perfectionism tendencies and language performance beliefs

further contribute to L2 anxiety, leading L2 speakers to avoid participation due to fear of making mistakes. According to Vural (2019) and Abdullah et al. (2022), L2 anxiety is also linked to individual personality traits; for instance, introvert speakers tend to experience higher levels anxiety compared to their extrovert peers. On the other hand, Zhang et al. (2024) argue that emotional intelligence can mitigate the effects of negative emotional states and indirectly enhances language performance. Similarly, Han et al. (2022) found that L2 speakers with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to control impulses, manage stress, and keep a positive attitude when facing difficulties and frustrations during language use.

In their exploration of affective barriers in VE, Fondo and Jacobetty (2020) found that engaging in online intercultural communication through a L2 can pose affective challenges for students and elicit language anxiety. As a result, L2 anxiety and related affective barriers might negatively influence the overall experiences of more anxious students in VE initiatives. Waterman et al. (2023) discussed how students in online learning environments experienced higher levels of L2 anxiety than those in in-person and hybrid formats. Additionally, Orsini-Jones (2023b) pointed out that the lack of digital literacy, the reliability of technology, and the perceived lack of proficiency in English are causes of anxiety. Fondo and Jacobetty (2020) suggests that scaffolding online interactions and familiarising students with digital tools can reduce anxiety in VE settings. Lee and Song (2019) observed that students often experience some level of anxiety at the beginning of a VE, which may decrease once they become familiar with their peers and cultural backgrounds. Marull and Reese (2022) further highlight that students with less experience in VE projects report greater initial L2 anxiety than those with more experience.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Zhou (2023) demonstrates that participation in VE positively impacts speaking skills and decreases L2 anxiety. Regarding English, Nguyen et al. (2024) suggest that VE can be beneficial for students at all levels. In the context of English teacher education, Orsini-Jones et al. (2025) found that COIL-VE can

significantly contribute to lowering anxiety among students, particularly those from contexts where native-speakerism and language insecurity persist. Their study illustrates how COIL-VE as a postdigital Third Space fostered a psychologically safe and inclusive environment in which linguistic diversity, solidarity, and self-confidence were promoted, while feelings of linguistic insecurity (inferiority complex) and language-related stress/anxiety among L2 participants were reduced.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed central concepts in the literature that frame this study: IoC, VE, native-speakerism and language ideology, ELT and language teacher education, and the impact of anxiety on language performance. These concepts provided the foundation to explore the potential of VE to decolonise teacher education through the integration of international perspectives into the curriculum. In the case of this study, VE is conceptualised as a Third Spaces where teacher students can critically analyse the impact of native-speakerism on ELT and their identity. The chapter also addressed the role of language teacher education (and the formal curriculum) in reinforcing dominant ideologies in ELT, as well as the effects of anxiety on language performance. In Chapter 4 I will illustrate the research design and methodology of this study

Chapter 4 – Methodology and Methods

This study aims to investigate the potential of VE for decolonising ELT by addressing native-speakerism ideology and its implications for language teacher education – as explored by Holliday (2015), Fandiño-Parra (2021), Guerrero Nieto, Jordão and Veronelli (2022), Canagarajah (2023), and Jordão (2023). The central concern revolves around the potential of VE to afford Third Spaces for identifying, interrogating and interrupting beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes across different sociocultural and educational settings.

As a consequence of native-speakerism, epistemological racism (Bonilla-Medina, & Finardi, 2022), scholarly knowledge myopia (Diniz de Figueiredo & Martinez, 2021), and discrimination perpetuate hierarchies in ELT, reinforcing the dominance of certain cultural and racial groups in shaping what is considered ‘standard’ and ‘good’ English. Therefore, language teacher education (and curricula) needs to incorporate a critical pedagogy to challenge systems of knowledge that have historically marginalised and excluded certain perspectives, particularly those speaking from the Global South. Hence, this thesis seeks to explore the affordances of VE to the process of decolonising ELT, particularly in the identification and interrogation of the biases associated with native-speakerism. Related to this main objective, the study will address four research questions (RQs):

Table 2 Research Objectives, Questions and Instruments

Specific objective	Questions	Instrument for data collection
To understand the potential of VE supporting participants to identify native-speakerism in ELT	How can VE support the identification of native-speakerism ideology within ELT?	Pre-and post-surveys, Padlet postings, focus group, and Microsoft Form
To analyse how beliefs of participants reflect colonial legacies	2) In what ways do beliefs about English among pre-service and in-service teacher education students reflect coloniality?	Pre-and post-surveys, Padlet postings, focus group, and Microsoft Form
To understand the potential of VE in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs	3) What role can VE play in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs?	Pre-and post-surveys, Padlet postings, focus group, and Microsoft Form

To examine how <i>the locus of enunciation</i> influence specifically anxiety and affect participation in VE	4) How does <i>the locus of enunciation</i> influence emotion (specifically anxiety) and affect participation in VE?	Pre-and post-surveys, Padlet postings, focus group, and Microsoft Form

This chapter addresses the method used to answer the research questions. The study uses a mixed method approach (Dörnyei, 2007), mostly qualitative, and draws on data produced in the three stages of the research, namely: Stage 1 (participant perspective), Stage 2 (e-mediator perspective), and Stage 3 (project leader perspective). The chapter describes the research design, the methodologies employed in the research, the methods used to collect data, and the approach to data analysis.

4.1 Research Methods

The study followed a mixed-method approach, Qual/quant (Dörnyei, 2007). The overall design was qualitative with an interpretive perspective (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) aiming to observe and document the meanings people give to their experiences. After Denzin and Lincoln (2018), qualitative research aims to comprehend the depth and intricacy of experiences by observing them in their authentic settings. It focuses on interpretation, the process of giving meaning and the personal perspectives of people or groups engaged in the study. However, quantitative data were collected and analysed too (illustrating demographics, and analysis of Likert scale questions in surveys).

This research study employed a combination of three qualitative research methodologies: autoethnography, netnography, and AR. The integration of these methodologies reflects a deliberate effort to capture both the collective dynamics (objective) and individual experiences (subjective) embedded in the VE Thirds Space. In the subsequent sections, I will provide a detailed explanation of each of these methodologies.

4.1.1 Autoethnography

I used autoethnography to examine my experience alongside participants' "as situated in cultural, social, and political contexts" (Adams et al., 2021, p. 3). Adams et al. (2022) argue that autoethnography consists of three main activities: a) the *auto* (self), b) the *ethno* (culture), and c) and the *graphy* (representation, writing or story). Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) argue that autoethnography combines the researcher's self-reflection and personal experiences as source of knowledge and insight into a cultural experience. This approach emphasizes the subjective nature of the researcher's perspective and acknowledges the influence of culture on individual experiences.

I accept Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez' (2021) invitation to reveal my *locus of enunciation* to decolonise scholarly knowledge by means of autoethnography. The authors emphasise the importance of exposing our loci of enunciation to challenge dominant narratives, contextualize knowledge, and promote a more inclusive and diverse understanding of the world. This approach encourages critical thinking and recognises that knowledge is shaped by individual perspectives and social context.

Ellis and Adams (2014) highlight the importance of personal life stories to understand the broader human experience. Similarly, Chang (2008) states that personal stories transcend individual lives and contribute to a deeper understanding of cultural dynamics. According to this perspective, the researcher actively engages in introspection and reflects on their own cultural background, experiences, and identity. This introspection becomes a crucial part of the research process, influencing the way data is collected and interpreted. The goal is therefore to produce a narrative that not only explores personal experiences but also sheds light on broader cultural patterns and social phenomena.

4.1.2 Nethnography

Building on the principles of qualitative research outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2018), this research sought to unravel the complexities embedded in lived experiences within their natural contexts. However, this study diverges from conventional qualitative ethnographic norms. Instead of focusing solely on geographical fieldwork, the research ventured into the digital realm – the Internet (and the affordances of technology) – as a virtual/online space for exploration. Thus, the traditional notion of *field site* (Hine, 2000) is challenged here because the internet (the affordances of technology, I argue) transcends geographical boundaries (Oreg & Babis, 2023).

So, the concept of Third Space, as articulated by Bhabha (1990), comes to the forefront. Bhabha's theory challenges binary divisions, emphasizing the hybrid nature of cultural encounters. In this context, virtual Third Space emerges, allowing for the nuanced examination of lived experiences within the affordances of technology. Therefore, I argue that (online) Third Space also brings forth new forms of culture, value, and behaviour, expanding the horizons of qualitative inquiry into the digital domain.

The study employed the online ethnographic methodology known as nethnography (Hine, 2017; Kozinets, 2010; 2015; Tavakoli & Wijesinghe, 2019), a form of ethnographic research that focuses on understanding online communities, interactions, and practices. In the digital era, people are increasingly interacting and sharing their experiences through various online platforms, especially social medias such as Instagram, YouTube, and X (former Twitter). These digital spaces have become a rich source of data for ethnographers (Oreg & Babis, 2023).

The advent of digital technologies has revolutionized the field of ethnography and researchers have used this approach to observe and understand online spaces, gaining insights into the social dynamics and cultural phenomena in the virtual world (Kozinets, 2015). Essentially, as argued by Hine (2017) and Kozinets (2015), nethnography helps

understanding beliefs, views, and perceptions expressed in the Third Space. It also helps exploring the complexities of digital culture and how people engage with each other in online environments.

According to Kozinets (2002), netnography adapts ethnographic techniques, especially participant observation (Kozinets, 2015), to research cultures and communities that materialise from online communications because the relationship between technology and culture is dynamic and reciprocal, influencing and shaping each other. It is particularly useful for investigating social phenomena within online spaces or virtual communities. Netnography is an adaptable and responsive method that allows the researcher to examine and analyse cultures in their local contexts of naturally arising behaviours. Kozinets (2010) states that descriptions in netnography are always a combination of what is seen on the screen and what is experienced by the researcher.

4.1.3 Action Research

This thesis employed AR design to investigate the affordances of VE for decolonising ELT. AR is a research approach that addresses practical issues and problems within a specific context through reflective practice (Burns, 2009). I opted for AR, characterised by a cycle development process, in which practice is improved through the systematic oscillation between action and research. That is, AR involves a cyclical process of systematically alternating between taking action to address a problem and conducting research to understand and improve the outcomes of that action (Burns, 2009).

According to Waterman et al. (2001), AR researchers aim to understand and address specific problems or challenges in a particular context, focusing on generating practical and applicable solutions. In this approach, researchers and participants work together as partners (Burns, 2009), recognising the value of their expertise and experiences to achieve desired outcomes. This collaborative engagement fosters a deeper understanding of the

investigated issue and allows for the development of more contextually relevant and effective interventions or strategies. Considering the context in which the study was carried out, Burns (2009; 2010) claims that AR is a transformative approach to teacher education and an approach to investigating curriculum innovation. Waterman and Hope (2008) claim that key characteristics of AR include:

1) Participatory approach: AR emphasizes the active involvement of participants throughout the research process. They are not just subjects of the study but play an active role in identifying research questions, designing interventions, and interpreting findings.

2) Iterative (or cyclical) process: AR typically involves a cyclical or iterative process, with multiple cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2009; 2010). Each cycle builds upon the previous one, allowing for continuous learning and refinement of strategies. The primary objective is to engage in a continuous learning process and refine understanding and actions through multiple cycles (Dick, Stringer, & Huxham, 2009).

3) Problem-centred focus: AR addresses real-world problems and challenges. The study aims to generate practical solutions and change in both contexts of VE projects and ELT courses. By revealing my *locus of enunciation* within the research framework, I intended to acknowledge my dual role as both subject and object of investigation as well as capture experiences and beliefs of the research participants. While AR traditionally centres on practical problem-solving, a decolonial lens prompts a shift towards localizing these issues within the specific cultural, historical, and contextual contexts of the study.

4) Contextualized knowledge: AR seeks to produce context-specific knowledge relevant and applicable to the particular setting in which it is conducted. The findings are often highly situated and may not be easily generalised to other contexts, requiring careful consideration and validation to ensure the relevance and applicability of the findings in different contexts. Similarly, the decolonial theory refers to localized/situated knowledge as

opposed to the universalising tendencies of Western epistemology and emphasise the importance of specific cultural, historical, and local context.

5) Reflexivity and reflection: action researchers engage in critical reflection and reflexivity, examining participants' assumptions, biases, and values throughout the research process. McNiff and Whitehead (2010) claim that it also refers to the researcher's awareness and acknowledgment of their influence and subjectivity in the research process. For the authors, the researcher's background, beliefs, and experiences can shape their perspectives, interactions with participants, data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

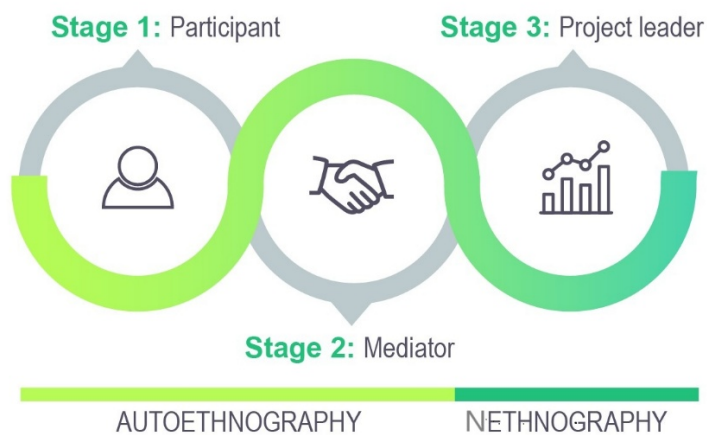
6) Collaboration and co-learning: AR promotes collaboration between researchers and participants. It emphasizes mutual learning, dialogue, and shared decision-making, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment among participants. The key idea is to move away from a stance of studying or researching *about* a particular group or context and, instead, engage in a process of knowledge production that occurs in collaboration *with* the people and communities involved. The adoption of a decolonial lens seeks to address historical power imbalances in knowledge production, where certain groups have been marginalized or misrepresented by dominant narratives.

Burns (2009) considers the existence of four phases in AR: planning, "develop a plan of critically informed action to improve what is already happening" (p. 290); action, "act to implement the plan" (p. 290); observation, "observe the effects of the critically informed action in the context in which it occurs (p. 290); and reflection, "reflect on these effects as the basis for further planning, subsequent critically informed action and so on, through a succession of stages" (p. 290). Therefore, AR is a spiral of cycles that ends when the researcher achieves the desired outcomes (Burns, 2010). AR cycles are fluid, overlapping, and non-linear. According to Burns (2009), this iterative nature allows for flexibility and adaptation as the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the problem and its potential solutions.

4.2 Study Stages and Development

The study employed a combination of autoethnographic (Stages 1 and 2) and nethnographic (Stage 3) approaches to capture a comprehensive frame of the online Third Space. The study involved three distinct stages, and each one had a different research approach, as in Figure 1. The autoethnographic approach was employed in Stages 1 and 2 of the study, while the nethnographic approach was employed in Stage 3.

Figure 1 The Three-Stage Development of the Study



In Stages 1 and 2, I took part in VE projects designed by my tutor at UFES. I kept a logbook of my reflections on my experience ‘in action’, during the VE exchange, ‘on action’ after each session had taken place and ‘for action’, reflecting on how I could embed VE in my future VE practice, as suggested by Mann and Walsh (2017). This autoethnographic approach allowed me to examine two VE projects from my perspective through reflective practice by assuming the roles of participant and mediator. In Stage 3, I utilised a nethnographic approach in conjunction with AR, as I observed, analysed and reflected on the experiences and behaviours of others who were participating the two cycles of the VE I had designed. The three stages provided me with a rich reflective opportunity from different viewpoints on the

VE projects I was involved with, in my different roles that changed from participant (Stage 1), to mediator (Stage 2), to project leader (Stage 3), as summarised in Table 3.

Table 3 Study Overview

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3a	Stage 3b
Role	Participant	E-Mediator	Project leader Cycle 1 AR	Project leader Cycle 2 AR
Approach	Autoethnographic	Autoethnographic	Nethnographic	Nethnographic
Duration	March-April 2021	April-June 2022	November-December 2022	March-April 2023
Objective	Participate in a VE to understand what it consisted of and reflect on the experience	Take an active mediator/facilitator role informed by my prior experience as participant. Further reflect on the impact that VE had on my conceptualisation of ELT and my future practice	Design and deliver a VE project building on the lessons learnt from my prior reflections	Design and deliver a revised version of the VE project in 3a

Having outlined the development and the three stages of the study, the following section describes each one in detail.

4.2.1 Stage 1: The Student Participant Perspective

I participated in the VE project BMELTEVEP (Blending MOOCs into English Language Teacher Education with Virtual Exchange during a Pandemic) carried out between March and April 2021 (see Orsini-Jones & Finardi, 2024). The project had a total of 39 participants from three HEIs, two in the Global South (Brazil and Sri Lanka) and one in the Global North (the United Kingdom).

Participants from Brazil were BA English and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), from Sri Lanka were BA English and TESOL, and from the UK were MA in ELT and Applied Linguistics. There were 11 nationalities involved in the project: Brazilian, Chinese, Egyptian, Indian, Maldivian, Nigerian, Jordanian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan

students, Sudanese, and Romanian. None of the participants had taken part in a VE project before.

The project required around 2 hours of engagement per week across 4 weeks, with the VE (synchronously)/MOOC (asynchronously) set activities for the duration (see Table 4). It included a blend of online in-class and online distance learning, and, for some participants from outside the UK, their classes could include in-class instruction face-to-face.

Table 4 BMELTEVEP Weekly Activities

Week	Content
1. 1st March	Pre-project survey & MOOC Registration
2. 8th March	March MOOC1: Language Teaching in the classroom and what is there to learn
3. 15th March	MOOC2: Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching
4. 22nd March	MOOC3: Content and Language Integrated Learning
5. 29th March	MOOC4: Teaching and learning online
6. 5th April	MOOC 5: Global Englishes
7. 12th April	Post-Project online survey

BMELTEVEP aimed to foster:

- the development of more inclusive and critical internationalisation processes in the form of IaH (Internationalisation at Home) strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- the adoption of a holistic approach to the integration of internationalisation through COIL into English language teacher education while also providing the students involved with the opportunity to engage with a global ELT community of practice of over 200,000 participants through a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching (see Annex 1);
- the development of its participants' critical digital literacy and intercultural awareness *in action*, *on action* and *for action* (Orsini-Jones et al., 2018; Orsini-Jones & Cerveró-Carrascosa, 2019).

I engaged with flipped learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012) on this VE as we were assigned to watch some mini lectures to watch at home on the MOOC as well as other instructional

materials before the synchronous workshops. Then, during the class session, the time was dedicated to active learning activities such as discussions, problem-solving, and group work. We were encouraged to reflect on our VE experience in action, during the synchronous exchanges, then on action after the sessions had taken place and finally for action in relation to our future ELT practice.

During BMELTEVEP, participation involved reflection on the tasks carried out through engagement on Zoom meetings (synchronous task-based discussions) and collaborative tasks shared via Padlet wall, engagement through synchronous discussions with the partners in Zoom in BoRs, completion of collaborative tasks in small groups that included students from each of the three universities involved and presentation of the task during the VE synchronous sessions. There was also the option of posting our reflections on the MOOC discussion forum. This process involved self-reflection and introspection, as I examined my beliefs, values, and biases and considered how these factors shaped my observations and interpretations.

As a participant-observer, I immersed myself in the studied context, actively participating in the activities and interactions while observing and taking notes on what happened. As a participant, I built rapport with the participants, gained their trust, and developed a more detailed understanding of virtual exchange from an insider's perspective. As an observer, I recorded the interactions and behaviours in a logbook. Overall, this process allowed gaining a holistic understanding of the group through firsthand experience.

The outcomes of this stage included a deeper understanding of my experience as a student participant, which served as a foundation for the subsequent stages (mediator and project leader). The insights gained (the impact of native-speakerism in ELT and a widespread and deeply-rooted bias against 'non-native speaker' L2 English teachers in different contexts) helped me design my VE project, considering the challenges and benefits I faced as a participant.

4.2.2 Stage 2: The E-Mediator Perspective

During my reflective practice in Stage 2, I was invited to become a mediator for the GAZUFES (Gazi University in Turkey with Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo in Brazil) Virtual Exchange (VE) Project (see Aşık & Finardi, 2024). The project had a total of 25 participants, 20 pre-service English teachers and 5 mediators (Master's and PhD students), and ran between April and June 2022 for 6 weeks (see Table 5). It aimed to give pre-service English teachers on BA English and TESOL courses their first experience in using online technologies to collaborate with other student teachers, explore new approaches to language teaching, and develop professional and intercultural competence. The synchronous sessions were delivered through Zoom for one hour each.

Table 5 GAZUFES Weekly Activities

Week	Content
1. 25 April to 5 May	Getting to know each other
2. 9-13 May	Similarities and differences between ELT in Brazil and Turkey
3. 16-21 May	Similarities and differences between ELT in Brazil and Turkey
3. 16-21 May	Design a cultural activity/task for the secondary school context
5. 23-28 May	Design a cultural activity/task for secondary school context
6. 30 May to 4 June	Evaluation, feedback, and reflection
6. 6-11 June	Evaluation, feedback, and reflection

The GAZUFES VE Project was part of the Valiant program, a VE programme support network that brings together teachers, student teachers and experts in facilitated online collaboration around real-world educational issues involving in-service and pre-service teachers and students from different countries. The VALIANT Moodle platform was used to share content, organise asynchronous activities and set the tasks for the participants.

The project aimed to provide pre-service English teachers with an opportunity for experiential learning to enhance their understanding of the role that VE approach can have for ELT and how it could be used in their future teaching by:

- Developing digital, intercultural communication, and language skills that are required to communicate effectively and appropriately with other people in online contexts;
- Practising digital communication and collaboration skills which will allow you to interact, communicate and collaborate through digital technologies with ELT students and teachers from other cultures;
- Co-operating and learning conflict resolution skills needed when engaging with others on joint activities and tasks;
- Learning about the pedagogy of teaching-learning languages through carrying out cultural and ELT tasks online.

The tasks focused on comparing the ELT contexts in Brazil and Turkey and co-creating ICC-based activities for secondary school contexts (see Annex 2). As a mediator, I coordinated the student engagement with the activities set through Zoom meetings. The GAZUFES project offered me the opportunity to observe and record naturally occurring behaviours through participant observation. I used field notes (a logbook) to document my observations, experiences, and interactions. Ethics approval was obtained from the University of León, Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo and Gazi University Ethics Committees prior to the commencement of data collection. As suggested by Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, (2011), field notes are an essential tool for researchers engaged in qualitative research to record chronological written records of the setting, participants, and activities and capture moment-by-moment accounts of the context. Writing my field notes also supported my reflective approach to the integration of VE into the ELT curriculum.

The aim was to understand the context/culture of VE in ELT and how my personal experiences as a mediator would contribute to my reflections and interpretations for designing the VE project for Stage 3. In this second stage as a mediator, I reviewed the data collected in Stage 1. I also looked for patterns, recurring themes, and connections between my experience as student participant and that of mediator. Additionally, I engaged in a process of introspection, considering how my biases and assumptions influenced my

experiences in both VE projects in Stages 1 and 2 and how they shaped my interpretations as an L2 English-speaking teacher. I reflected that the native-speakerism theme was emerging as a major discussion topic in the VEs I took part in. Both BMELTEVEP and GAZUFES brought to the fore issues relating to the native-speakerism ideology (Holliday, 2006; 2015) as a recurring issue in ELT.

4.2.3 Stage 3: The Project Leader Perspective

After completing Stages 1 and 2 as a student participant and mediator, I had the opportunity to build on the lessons learned to design and implement a VE project in Stage 3 of the study with the joint support of my Directors of Studies (DoS) in the UK and in Brazil. As discussed previously, I started reflecting further on the native-speakerism ideology and on the fact that VE appeared to provide an ideal platform to raise the awareness of students in ELT towards this colonial construct. Galloway (2017) explains that the native-speakerism ideology still prevails in many ELT circles. L1 English-Speaking teachers from Kachru's Inner Circle (2005) appear to be considered to be 'better' than L2 English-Speaking teachers, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Real Job Advertisements from LinkedIn

The figure displays three distinct job advertisements for English teachers, arranged horizontally. The first advertisement on the left is from 'NEW TIMES' and is titled 'Teaching Jobs in China'. It lists requirements for an English Teacher, including being a native English speaker or having a native country degree, a bachelor's degree, TEFL or TESOL certification, and teaching experience. It also mentions a salary of 10,000 RMB per month and a round-trip air ticket. The middle advertisement is from 'AMES ENGLISH' and is titled 'NOW HIRING: ENGLISH TEACHER'. It specifies the location as 'Ha Noi City' and lists requirements: Native Speaker, Full proficiency in English across all 4 skills, Experience Preferred but not required, and Undergraduate degree (BA or equivalent / higher). The third advertisement on the right is from 'STATION 51 DEVHUB' and is titled 'WE'RE HIRING'. It is for 'ESL TEACHERS' and specifies 'Chinese Account' and 'Native Speakers only'. It lists requirements: College graduates, with 1-2 years teaching experience (preferred), can work from 9 AM to 5 PM (weekdays), can work on overtime (weekends), living time, and preferably South African, Canadian or American. It also includes contact information for Teacher Analene Pam.

In Stages 1 and 2 of my VE experience, I also noticed with some concern that many of my peers on ELT courses involved in the VE saw the ideal English language teacher as a US and or UK national, even if they were all training to become teachers of English and were not from those countries. This motivated me to design a VE that aimed at raising the awareness of students involved in teacher education about this topic that was informed by my reflections and observations in Stages 1 and 2. I designed the VETSDELTA (Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise ELT) project to stimulate a critique of native-speakerism through the re-examination (and decolonisation) of existing beliefs about English and ELT amongst pre-and in-service L2 English-Speaking teachers.

This VE included two cycles of AR that is a powerful methodological approach to transforming practice in a bottom-up way (Burns, 2009). The VETSDELTA project in cycle 1 was carried out between November to December 2022, and its second cycle from March to April 2023. Before describing the cyclical process (planning, action, observation, and reflection) carried out in Stage 3, I will describe VETSDELTA in the section that follows.

4.2.3.1 The VETSDELTA Project

As part of my cotutelle doctoral studies, I spent academic year 2022-2023 in the UK. This gave me the opportunity to attend classes on the *MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, a course that had been integrating a VE experience into the formal curriculum since 2014 into module *Theories and Practice of Language Learning and Teaching* (7.5 ECTS credits). I had already experienced part of the curriculum of this course when I engaged in BMELTEVEP as e-mediator, as discussed above, in Stage 2 of my VE journey. One of the learning outcomes for this module related to the students' VE experience: "Critically evaluate how teacher education can benefit from an engagement with global online communities of practice" (Module Learning Outcome 4, Coventry University, internal document). The assessment of the module included an oral task requiring students

to critically reflect on the topics covered during the year. Students could elect to choose the questions relating to how their learning experience on the VE had affected their professional outlook on ELT and their beliefs on language education.

The module was delivered with a mix of lectures and workshops/seminars for eleven weeks, and its aim was to provide students with an in-depth understanding of theories related to second language learning/acquisition/development. Additionally, it aimed to illustrate how these theories are connected to various approaches and methods used in language teaching. By encompassing diverse perspectives, the module intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of second language learning and acquisition, incorporating insights from linguistics, psychology, and sociology.

Table 6 The Module Programme

Week	Topic
1	Introduction to the module
2	Conceptions of what language is in language teaching theory
3	SLA Input/Output/Interaction
4	Towards autonomy in LL/LT
5	Error Analysis 1
6	Learner Language and their errors 2
7	Independent learning week
8	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
9	Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)
10	Task-based language learning and teaching (TBLL/T)
11	Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
12	Assessment
13	Assessment

The module was delivered by three tutors, each one specialised in different aspects of language learning and teaching. It was delivered on Mondays as shown in Table 6: 1. One hour of academic skills and extended induction, and 2. (a) Two hours of lecture/activities and (b) An additional hour of COIL/VE with international partners. This gave me the opportunity to propose to my DoS in the UK to trial an alternative VE project to integrate in the MA curriculum that would address my concerns about native-speakerism. As both my DoSs also feel that the ELT curriculum should be decolonised, it was agreed that I could design a VE

addressing this topic that would build on my reflections from Stage 1 and 2. Also, my DoS has implemented student-informed/designed VEs in prior academic years.

This is how the **Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise English Language Teaching (VETSDELT)**, that built on my experience and reflections learnt as a student participant and mediator in the previous VEs I had taken part in was created. I believed that a critical reflection on how to decolonise ELT through a VE as a safe Third Space, in a Global-North-South collaborative project, would provide an ‘otherwise’ and powerful learning opportunity to the students on the MA.

Table 7 Participants and Nationalities in both AR Cycles of VETSDELT

Cycle 1 November-December 2022	Cycle 2 March-April 2023
Four institutions	Five institutions
Brazil Spain Sri Lanka UK	Brazil China Turkey UK
44 participants	61 participants
11 Nationalities	12 Nationalities
Brazilian, Chinese, Indian, Italian, Nigerian, Pakistani, Romanian, Spanish, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese	Bangladeshi, Brazilian, Chinese, Italian, Malaysian, Nigerian, Romanian, Spanish, South Korean, Thai, Turkish, and Vietnamese

The content of VETSDELT, which included the preparatory articles students were asked to read before the synchronous sessions, is attached in Appendices A and B. VETSDELT included four synchronous sessions on Zoom that lasted 75 minutes each (see Table 6). Before each session, participants were asked to read a relevant text on the topic (see Appendices A and B) as an asynchronous preparation task so that the seminar could be run in flipped mode (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Abeysekera & Dawson, 2014). The sessions

were delivered through the institutional Zoom and Padlet walls⁷ were utilised to support the discussion on the topics debated by participants in BoRs, with the facilitation of e-mediators.

Table 8 VETSDELT Weekly Plan

Session	Topic	The objective was to reflect about
Session 1	Varieties of English	how participants felt about 'standard English' and the (other/local) varieties of English and how this topic was outlined in the article assigned to read
Session 2	Beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes	what were the participants' beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes about which English to teach, and how this related to the articles read
Session 3	Teaching English as a Global Language	what were participants' beliefs about English as a reflection of other linguistic realities, and how this topic was addressed in the article assigned
Session 4	Native-speakerism	how participants felt about the apparent market preference for Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and contrast it with Holliday's definition of native speakerism

Table 9 Live (Synchronous) Sessions Format Outline

Activity	Time
Introduction/Presentation of the week's topic	15 minutes
Task setting	2 minutes
Discussion on the topic in BoRs facilitated by e-mediators, posting of group reflections on the relevant Padlet Wall, and selection of the speaker from each BoR who reports back	25 minutes
Reporting from each BoR	10 minutes (2 minutes per group)
Completion of a short anonymous evaluation Microsoft Form for the session	4 minutes
Wrap up and preview of the session to follow + Q&A	4 minutes

Participants were divided into five groups of eight for the BoRs tasks, facilitated by one or two e-mediators. I designed and delivered the training for the e-mediators, that was based on the experience and outcomes of a British-Council funded project, see A ViVEXELT⁸ (Viet Nam Virtual Exchange for English Language Teaching) Guide for E-CIIC1 Mediators in Synchronous Online Zoom BoRs. I trained the e-mediators a week before each of the two cycles (Stage 3a & b) started. They were self-selected students from either the current

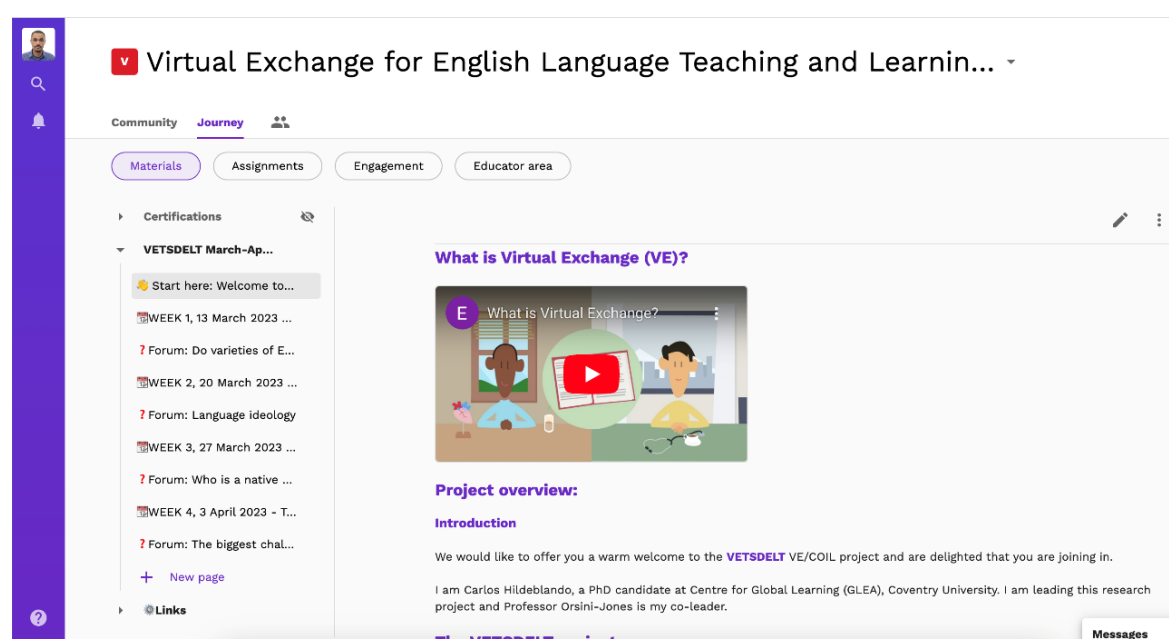
⁷ See: <https://teach.coventry.domains/articles/padlet/>

⁸ See: <https://vivexelt.com/breakout-room-guide/>

iteration of the module or those from the prior one, as the MA had two starts, one in September and one in January.

All materials and contents used in VETSDELT were available in the Learning Management System (LMS) available at Coventry University: *Aula*⁹ (see Figure 3). After registering, participants had full access to articles, videos, and the links for the Zoom synchronous sessions, Padlet Walls, Microsoft Forms, and Surveys.

Figure 3 Aula Space for the VETSDELT Project



In both cycles of VETSDELT, I made a conscious choice to be transparent regarding my dual role as a project leader and researcher. Even before the start of the VE, student participants were aware of this through written communication and icebreaker activity. In order to build trust, I emphasised my research interest in looking into their VE experience; therefore, I explicitly communicated that I was not evaluating their language performance, participation or intercultural knowledge and/or assessing them. This encouraged students to

⁹ See: <https://www.aula.education/>

view me as a reflective practitioner since I am also a L2 English teacher who is affected by native-speakerism. Moreover, student participants were able to contact me throughout the VE, and I observed gradual development of trust through their participation and engagement. Being transparent with them was important to create a space for dialogue and reduce hierarchies.

Being a male researcher working predominantly with female students and partners from different cultural backgrounds also raised important questions about gender and power. From a cultural perspective, I was aware of the potential implications this power dynamics could have in participation and overall experience in the VE. The fact that the MA students knew I was an English L2 student from the Global South myself appeared to mitigate this. I also carefully structured the sessions in a way that was not hierarchical, I did not position myself as “the sage on the stage” (King, 2019, p. 30), so that students could feel safe and appreciated. I also took the decision not to interfere in/join their BoR discussions to enhance the opportunity for them to feel at ease in an all-female safe space where the support was provided by female e-mediators instead of myself.

4.2.3.2 Obtaining Consent

Both cycles of VETSDELT (projects P144000 and P148086 respectively) were submitted for approval before implementation to the Coventry University’s Research Ethics Committee. Cycle 1 of VETSDELT was approved on 31 October 2022, and Cycle 2 on 2 March 2023. The project followed the ethical conduct to guarantee the participants’ protection and right in adherence with the General Data Protection Regulation¹⁰.

The informed consent form was written in a language that could be easily understood by the participants to ensure that they fully understood the implications of their participation.

¹⁰ See: <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/gdpr-and-data-protection/the-law/>

The informed consent included the nature of the study, the procedures involved, any potential risks and benefits, confidentiality issues, and participants' rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Participants had one week to consider participation, read the informed consent form, and sign it. Following ethical standards, there was no external influence in their decision. Their consent was obtained prior to the start of the project and was documented. They were also informed about how the data collected would be used, who would have access to them, and how long they would be kept.

4.2.3.4 VETSDELT Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)

Cycle 1 of VETSDELT (Stage 3a) ran between November and December 2022, but the planning and design started in September 2022. I followed the AR spiral based on Burns (2009) and McNiff and Whitehead (2010):

- Identify a concern: in this initial stage, I worked closely with my DoSs to define and address the problematic issue identified, native-speakerism ideology in ELT. The key aspects of native-speakerism were explored, and a plan was developed for conducting the implementation of the VE. At this stage, I also identified relevant subtopics to discuss in the VE: 1. Varieties of English; 2. Beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes; 3. Teaching English as a Global Language.
- Implement the plan: I designed the VE sessions to address native-speakerism and stimulate a critical approach to it. This step involved identifying the VE partners, training e-mediators, obtaining ethics approval and then proceeding to the implementation stage with the partners.
- Observation: I observed and gathered data on the effects of the interventions. Data collection involved various methods such as pre- and post-surveys, Microsoft evaluation forms, Padlet Walls, focus group interviews, and observations.

- Reflection: After collecting data on the implemented actions, I reflected on the outcomes and effects of the interventions with the support of my DoSs. This stage included a deep analysis of what worked, what did not, and what unexpected outcomes or insights had emerged.
- (Re)planning: I reviewed the original plan based on the reflections and analysis of the outcomes of the first cycle. This stage involved modifying strategies, adjusting actions, and redesigning the VE intervention in the light of the lessons learned during cycle 1.
- Start a new cycle: a new cycle was carried out with the revised actions being implemented, observed, and reflected on. Cycle 2 of VETSDELT was restructured to address participants' feedback and my reflections on it, as described in detail at the end of this section.
- Then proceed to the analysis of the second cycle to inform future VETSDELT iterations.

As illustrated in Table 7 (p. 90), Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) of VETSDELT involved participants from four different HE contexts: institution A in the United Kingdom, institution B in Spain, institution C in Sri Lanka, and institution D in Brazil. Table 10 illustrates the VETSDELT outline in Cycle 1.

Table 10 VETSDELT Outline in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)

Institution and degree course involved	Academic staff	Topics	Pre-reading	Sessions	Platform	Activities
UK Institution A MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics	1 co-project leader and 1 tutor	Varieties of English	<u>Cameron & Galloway (2019)</u> <u>Melitz (2016)</u>	One-hour synchronous session per week for 4 weeks	Zoom (institutional)	Flipped learning (pre-reading)
Spain Institution B BA English and TESOL	1 tutor	Beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes	<u>Kroskrity (2010)</u>		Padlet (institutional) Aula Space (institutional) Mentimeter (Freeware)	Mini lectures BoR collaborative tasks

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)			<u>Rose & Galloway (2017)</u>			Collective oral reflections
Sri Lanka Institution C BA English and TESOL	1 tutor	Teaching English as a Global Language	<u>Johnson & Golombek (2020)</u> <u>Melitz (2016)</u>			
Brazil Institution D BA English and TESOL	3 tutors	Native-speakerism	<u>Holliday (2006)</u> <u>Holliday (2018)</u>			

91% of the participants were female. Regarding their age, 72.73% (32) of the participants were in the 18-30 years old group, and 27.27% (twelve) were in the 31 or above group (see Table 11). Most participants (88.64%) self-rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate to advanced, while only 5 rated themselves as lower intermediate. As for teaching experience, only 6 participants reported not having taught English before.

Table 11 Demographic Data of Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) Participants

Institution	Age		Gender		Level of proficiency		Have you ever taught before?		Length of teaching experience (year)		Are you a student (ST), practicing teacher (PT), or teacher			Total
	>30	<31	M	F	>B1	<B2	Yes	No	>3	<4	ST	PT	TT	
A	5	6	0	11	0	11	9	2	3	6	8	2	1	11
B	18	2	3	17	3	17	16	4	10	6	16	3	1	20
C	7	2	1	8	2	7	9	0	6	3	5	4	0	9
D	2	2	0	4	0	4	4	0	0	4	1	3	0	4

Amongst the 38 participants with teaching experience, half reported having 3 years or less of experience, and half reported having 4 years or more of experience. Regarding their teaching careers, thirty participants were pre-service teachers (students), twelve were practicing teachers, and two were teacher trainers. Out of the initial 44 participants, 26 completed the post-VETSDELT survey.

I followed Burns's (2009) recommendations when implementing the second cycle of AR, so I did not follow a rigid process but tried to be responsive to emerging insights. Table 12 reflects the adjustments I put in place for Cycle 2 (Stage 3b).

Table 12 Reflections on the Feedback from Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) that informed the Planning of Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

Feedback from Cycle 1	Action(s) in Cycle 2	My reflection/'take away'
Introduce an ice-breaker activity	An ice-breaker was introduced: Participants were invited to introduce themselves on a shared Padlet wall a week before the synchronous session started. They were also given the option to upload a video and/or a picture and/or an artifact of their choice. They were also invited to comment on each other's post	This was an oversight on my part as I knew from the relevant literature and my prior VE experience that an introductory 'warmer' is needed to ease the VE participants' journey and lower their anxiety about what is normally a novel experience for most of them
The sequence of the topic was not clear	Reorder the topics to follow a clearer logical sequence	The students' feedback helped me to realise that a switch between two of the topics would provide a more coherent VE programme
Not all e-mediators were able to facilitate effectively in the BoRs	Provide in-depth training for e-mediators to make BoRs safe/friendly spaces for participation, interaction and reflection	I realised I had underestimated the pivotal role that an e-mediator played in the BoRs, so invested more time in the training materials and extended the training workshop
The AULA area needed to be populated with more relevant material	The interaction potential of the LMS was maximised and utilised to post the collaborative task designed by participants. More materials were uploaded	I had never utilised a LMS as project lead before, so it was useful to receive feedback on my design. Not many students utilised the AULA area, but the asynchronous back up provided by the LMS is necessary to support the delivery of inclusive VEs
Two preparatory journal articles to read per week proved to be a challenge for many participants	Assign only one article as preparation for the synchronous sessions	I realised that there are different academic traditions in different countries. On my MA course in Brazil, we used to have a considerable amount of reading to do every week, but this did not appear to be the case in other countries. I reflected that I would need to discuss issues like these further with partners if/when engaging with VE again
Inclusion of authors from the Global South in the reading material	Include authors from the Global South to align the reading material with the project purpose	This made me stop and reflect on my positionality (how my ways of knowing and being may have unconsciously reproduced epistemic hierarchies), and on this major oversight in view of the title

		of my study. I realised the gap between my decolonial intent, and more importantly my <i>locus of enunciation</i> , and the knowledge systems I was privileging
Creation of different groups for the BoRs in each synchronous session	Create different groups for each session to bring different perspectives, values, and beliefs to the composition. The aim was to enrich participants' learning experiences, raise their intercultural awareness, and foster multicultural understanding through engagement in diverse groups	I am still not sure what the best course of action is in this respect. A group that 'gets' well works better, but being exposed to different voices is also beneficial. I reflected that this will need to be decided on a case-by-case basis and would depend on the outcomes that the VE aims to achieve
Addition of a gamification element	Add a gamification element such as Socrative, Kahoot, and Mentimeter to review and check what participants learned from the session through a ludic approach. Fifteen minutes extra were added to the session to carry out the gamification activity	I realised that my initial VE approach was very serious and academic. The students also knew I was a student myself. Their suggestion to add a formative quiz proved to be quite successful and also enabled me to capture more data (e.g. via Mentimeter, see Figure 4 Final session evaluation of the VE). In the figure the 'fun' element is reflected by words like 'enjoyable', 'interesting' and 'fun'
Introduction of a collaborative co-construction task at the end of the project	Introduce a final collaborative task at the end of the project through exchange, negotiation, and comparison of information. Participants worked together to produce a video, audio, or written file of how their culture/context influenced their beliefs about English and ELT. Then, they compared it with their partner's answers to gain awareness of how beliefs are constructed and how similar or not their beliefs are	I reflected that I had initially believed that the process-oriented and collaborative way in which students worked in the BoRs every week was sufficient to knowledge-share on their ELT contexts. The introduction of the co-created task appeared however to provide extra motivation for most of them

Figure 4 Final Session Evaluation of the VE (Stage 3a)



4.2.3.5 VETSDELT Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

Drawing on Burns (2009), I repeated the intervention and implemented the changes discussed in Table 12. Cycle 2 (Stage 3b) involved 65 participants from five different HE contexts: institution E in the United Kingdom, institution F in Turkey, institution G in China, institution H in Brazil, and institution I in China. Table 13 illustrates VETSDELT outline in Cycle 2.

Table 13 VETSDELT Outline in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

Institution and degree course involved	Academic staff	Topics	Pre-reading	Sessions	Platform	Activities
UK institution E MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics	1 co-project leader and 1 tutor	Varieties of English	<u>Proshina & Nelson (2020)</u>	75 minutes synchronous session per week for 4 weeks	Zoom (institutional Zoom)	Icebreaker
Turkey institution F BA English and TESOL (Teaching	2 tutors	Beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes	<u>Gilakjani & Sabouri (2017)</u>		Padlet (institutional)	Flipped learning (pre-reading)
					Aula Space (institutional)	Mini lectures
					Mentimeter (Freeware)	BoR collaborative tasks

English to Speakers of Other Languages)					Socrative Quiz (Freeware)	Collective oral reflections
China institution G BA English and TESOL	1 partner	Native-speakerism	<u>Holliday (2006)</u>			
Brazil institution H BA English	3 tutors					
China institution I BA English and TESOL	1 partner	Native-speakerism Teaching English as a Global Language	<u>Finardi (2014)</u>			

56 out of 61 participants were female. Regarding their age, fifty-five participants were in the 18-30 years old group, and six were in the 31 or above group. Most participants (50) self-rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate to advanced, while 11 rated themselves as lower intermediate. As for teaching experience, 37 participants reported having taught English before.

Amongst the 37 participants with teaching experience, twenty-eight reported having 3 years or less of experience, and nine reported having 3 years or more of experience. Regarding their teaching careers, all participants were pre-service teachers (students).

4.3 Data Collection

I used the Internet as a medium or culture in which people develop specific forms of communication and/or take on specific identities. For this reason, I found it essential to adapt ethnographic methods for internet research, particularly for studying modes of communication and self-presentation. Online contexts, in my view, serve as legitimate sites for ethnographic study.

Qualitative research involves multiple data sources to create a highly detailed account of a phenomenon, context, or social setting (Creswell, 2009) and produce credible results. Therefore, I adopted a combination of different methods to create a systematic

approach to data collection and increase the rigour of each one (Flick, 2013). This multimethod strategy supports triangulating findings (Flick, 2006), which allowed me to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the data.

Following Ravitch and Carl's (2015) work on iterative rather than linear approach, I structured my data collection with flexibility and adaptability in mind. So, the following sections I describe the methods I used to collect data for this study in a cyclical order, not chronologically.

4.3.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a method that researchers use by immersing themselves into settings to observe and record naturally occurring behaviours of a group of people in authentic situations. The researcher becomes a part of the group from whom the data is to be collected to be as close to the members of that group as possible. This method aims to develop an in-depth understanding of behaviour from participants' perspectives than would be possible when using questionnaire surveys alone by gathering information on social practices, rules, and identities.

For Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018), participant observation "breaks with conventional ways of constructing research, as it concerns doing research with people and communities rather than doing research to or for people and communities" (p. 56). Researchers can access attitudes, motivations, and behaviours through interaction with participants in their natural settings. Participant observation involves researchers becoming part of the group under study and, by active engagement, researchers have dual roles of participant and observer. In this sense, Flick (2006) describes a continuum of social roles encompassed by a participant observer that range from complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant, and complete observer.

According to Simpson and Tuson (2003), observational research is carried out to be as unobtrusive as possible since the presence of an outsider can affect the behaviour of those being observed. Thus, researchers should consider how they may influence a specific setting to mitigate the effect of their presence. Observations can be triangled with other forms of data to explain quantitative findings by providing contextual meaning.

The inability to observe interactions in the BoRs was a limitation in terms of participant observation since they are designed to provide private spaces for participants to collaborate and interact without direct interference from the organiser. The organiser (or host) and co-organiser do not have direct visibility into participants' engagement, collaboration, or adherence to the collective discussion while they are in BoRs. Therefore, the discussions in BoRs were facilitated by at least one e-mediator, who was responsible for providing clear instructions, managing time, and fostering an inclusive environment for all participants.

Another strategy for participant observation in BoRs was to use two features of Zoom for meeting hosts: join BoRs temporarily and broadcast messages/instructions. Once participants were in BoRs, moving temporarily among rooms to observe discussions, provide guidance, and assist e-mediators as needed was possible. Important messages, reminders, and instructions were also sent to all BoRs simultaneously before ending the BoR reflection. This feature was beneficial for supporting e-mediators, addressing concerns, or providing additional instructions to participants.

4.3.2 Field Notes

Researchers produce observational and experiential records from participant observation to document field activities in “keywords or phrases” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011, p. 29). Field notes are chronological written records of the setting, participants and activities that capture moment-by-moment accounts of a social context. Bucholtz (2011, p. 37) explains

that field notes “are traditionally used to systematically document the details and meaning of everyday social science”. Field notes contain the researcher’s thoughts, impressions, reflections, and experiences that provide detailed descriptions of the research setting and the context (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). So, they are used to provide more in-depth background and to help the observer remember important details.

The date and time of the observation should be included, and every event or aspect that the researcher believes to be worth recording. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2011) suggest that the field notes should be taken either in real-time or as soon as possible after leaving the field because of the importance of “preserving experience close to the moment of occurrence” (p. 17). Researchers use field notes, video or audio recordings, or a combination to record data. Creswell (2006) states that field notes enhance data and provide a rich context for data analysis and interpretation. Therefore, field notes should be complete and accurate as far as possible.

Digital notes were used to create a comprehensive and easily accessible repository of the field notes (see Figure 5). It enabled easy recording of observations and insights during Cycles 1 and 2.

Figure 5 Digital Notes stored on the Microsoft OneDrive Institutional Cloud

18 April 2022 (Icebreaker)

I'm really excited for this VE with Gazi university. It's been kind of difficult to manage the Moodle platform because this is my first time dealing with one. However, Aline managed to figure out what has to be done and that saved us lots of time. I'm interested to see how interaction will take place on Moodle because most students usually save face during synchronous meetings. I get the feeling the Moodle will be handful for our collaboration and to get the best out of it.

Even though there are less Brazilian participants than Turkish (their participation is voluntary), I think the ones enrolled will engage seriously. Since I don't know much about Turkish culture, I'm curious to discover as much as I can about it. Also, I wanna see their view about English and its teaching and learning process.

I had a really good impression of our Turkish partners and I think this VE will be interesting for everyone. Overall, the whole team is focused to make this VE as good as possible. Thus, I have high expectations. I'm excited to get to know everyone and begin to work together.

1 June 2022 (Task 2)

Our group met today synchronously for the first time. Everyone was super excited to interact and the discussion was really great. Every student fully participated and shared their thoughts about their experiences regarding ELT in their contexts. The students brought up a lot of interesting topics about ELT. They said they would like to have other synchronous meetings because the collective discussion was insightful. We also talked about cultural differences.

As planned, I posted a discussion topic for task 2 on the Moodle on the 16th of May, but the students didn't interact at all. So, I contacted them on our WhatsApp group suggesting a synchronous meeting to do task 2. The students appreciated the idea and we decided to meet on the 25th of May. However, due to the time zone difference of 6 hours, not everyone would be able to attend the meeting. Thus, they suggested the 2nd of June so that everyone could participate. They also mentioned that having another week to read the texts for task 2 would be helpful.

I had a really good impression of the Turkish students. They seemed so motivated and engaged. They like to interact and give their opinions (different from Brazilian students, in general). Although there were some divergent opinions, they showed respect and openness for new ideas. Besides me, there's one Brazilian student who is also participative and motivated. I'm really enjoying working with my group.

4.3.3 Surveys

A Survey is “a self-report data-collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study” (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 303). Surveys, or self-administered questionnaires (SAQ), are structured instruments consisting of a series of questions prepared by the researchers to elicit information about participants' thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, and perceptions (Dillman, 2007). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018), online surveys are “cheap, reliable, valid, quick and easy to complete” (p. 471) and an efficient method of collecting data from a large number of respondents.

Surveys can be composed of open-ended, closed-ended, or a combination of the two depending on the data collection type (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Open-ended questions allow respondents to express their opinions and answers in their own words; thus, they are not advised for large samples. Closed-ended (or fixed-alternative questions) questions offer respondents several alternative replies from which the subjects must choose the one that most likely matches the appropriate answer. Using questions with fixed alternatives ensures the comparability of responses and facilitates analysis. On the other hand, data from open-ended questions are often more complex to interpret and Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2020) suggest content analysis to extract meaning and interpret information. Each item must be clearly written so that the intent of the question and the nature of the response options are clear.

A pre- (Appendix C) and a post-survey (Appendix D) were administered with *Online Surveys*¹¹ consisting of Likert-scale type statements and open- and closed-ended questions. The five-point Likert scale included two positive responses (*strongly agree* and *mostly agree*), two negative responses (*mostly disagree* and *strongly disagree*), and a neutral option in the middle (*neither agree nor disagree*). The scale was balanced so that there was an equal number of positive and negative positions, with the possibility of a neutral position. Respondents could select the point on the scale that corresponded to their level of agreement with the statement provided.

Before administering the surveys, the supervisory team in the UK tested and validated a pilot to ensure the questions were clear and coherent. This pilot testing process allowed the supervisory team to identify and address potential problems before distributing the surveys to the participants. Based on the suggestions and comments received during the pilot testing phase, necessary adjustments were made to improve the clarity,

¹¹ See: <https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/>

comprehensibility, and overall quality of both surveys. After the refinement process, both surveys were made available online on Jisc.

The pre-project survey was divided into four sections to collect comprehensive data on various aspects of the participant's information, teaching and learning practices, use of digital technologies, and their perspectives on culture and language. Here is an overview of each section:

- Demographic information: this section collected demographic data and personal details about the participants, including name, age, gender, educational background, professional experience, and language proficiency.
- Teaching and learning English: This section focused on the participants' experiences, perspectives, and practices related to ELT.
- Use of digital technologies: this section explored the participants' use of digital technologies in English language teaching and learning and their familiarity with technology.
- Culture and language: this section examined the participants' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, perspectives on diversity, and the role of culture in language teaching. It also explored topics such as intercultural competence, attitudes towards different cultures, and the importance of cultural awareness.

The post-project survey focused on the participants' perceptions and experiences, after engaging in the project. It explored the impact of VETSDELT on participants' beliefs about English and ELT. The post-project survey was divided into three sections:

- Personal information: this section collected demographic data and personal details about the participants, including name, age, gender, educational background, professional experience, and language proficiency.

- General questions: this section includes general questions about the participants' overall experience and perceptions of the project. The open-ended questions mainly explored the learning outcomes.
- Beliefs about English: this section focused on the participants' beliefs and attitudes toward English. The questions addressed their perspectives on the role of English in society, its cultural implications, and its impact on ELT.

See Tables 14 and 15 for further detail on the pre- and post-surveys of Stage 3, Cycles 1 and 2.

Table 14 Number and Type of Questions in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) Surveys

Pre-project survey		
Survey section	Number of questions	Type of questions
Personal information	9	Open- and closed-ended
Teaching and learning English	15	Likert-scale type
Use of digital technologies	14	Likert-scale type
Culture and language	24	Likert-scale type
Post-project survey		
Survey section	Number of questions	Type of questions
Personal information	2	Spaces to fill the name/surname
General questions	9	Open-ended
Beliefs about English	19	Likert-scale type

In Cycle 1 of the project, the pre-project survey received a total of 44 responses, indicating the number of participants who completed the survey before the project started. During the post-project phase, a post-project survey was administered to assess the outcomes or impact of the project.

It is important to note that the response rate of 59% suggests that most participants provided feedback through the post-project survey. This response rate can be considered relatively good, indicating the participants' reasonable level of engagement and interest in sharing their experiences and perspectives.

Table 15 Number and Type of Questions in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b) Surveys

Pre-project survey		
Survey section	Number of questions	Type of questions
Personal information	9	Open- and closed-ended
Teaching and learning English	19	Likert-scale type
Use of digital technologies	14	Likert-scale type
Culture and language	24	Likert-scale type
Post-project survey		
Survey section	Number of questions	Type of questions
Personal information	2	Spaces to fill the name/surname
General questions	9	Open-ended
Beliefs about English	20	Likert-scale type

In Cycle 2 of the project, the pre-project survey received a total of 65 responses, indicating the number of participants who completed the survey before the project began. The post-project survey received 25 responses, representing 38.46% of the total participants involved in the second cycle. A 38.46% response rate could indicate a moderately high level of engagement among participants, although it is lower than the response rate in the first cycle.

4.3.4 Padlet Walls

Padlet walls (<https://teach.coventry.domains/articles/padlet/>) were used to ask participants to post the reflections of each group during the BoR sessions on pre-allocated tasks. There were two e-mediators assigned for each BoR, and they assumed one of these roles: e-mediator for the group discussion or scribe. By dividing the responsibilities between the e-mediators, one could focus on guiding the discussion effectively while the other could capture and document the group reflections on the Padlet wall. For the purpose of this study, e-mediator refers to individuals assigned to facilitate or mediate online discussions or activities within BoRs.

While one e-mediator guided the discussion, the other posted the group's reflection on the Padlet wall. The e-mediators were also supposed to allocate a spokesperson

collectively with the students, who should not be any of the e-mediators. There was a section of the Padlet for each group to write on, and everyone could see the posts from the other groups. Aiming to engage more interaction and discussion, the Padlet walls were shared in the main room while each group reported on their reflection after the BoR time was over.

The fact that there was one e-mediator in the BoR in some sessions could be a potential limitation in the study. To mitigate this limitation, my DoS and I provided clear instructions and guidelines to participants before BoR sessions.

4.3.5 Microsoft Forms

Microsoft Forms¹² were administered as a wrap-up at the end of each session (Appendix E). They were designed to be short, straight to the point, and easy to fill in. Each form consisted of 4 questions, and they were designed to obtain immediate participants' feedback on the session. Microsoft forms completion was optional, and Table 16 shows the percentage of returns in each cycle.

Table 16 Percentage of Returns for Each Session

Cycle	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
1	65.90%	61.36%	54.54%	38.63%
2	68.85%	78.68%	63.93%	32.78%

These percentages represent the proportion of returns (responses, participants, or submissions) compared to the total number of participants in each session. For example, in Cycle 1, Session 1 had a return rate of 65.9%, which means that 65.9% of the total number of participants for that session submitted their responses. Similarly, in Cycle 2, Session 2 had the highest return rate of 78.6%, indicating that a higher percentage of participants submitted their responses than other sessions.

¹² See: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/online-surveys-polls-quizzes>

4.3.6 Focus Groups

I chose focus groups instead of individual interviews to gain more collaborative insights into participants' experience as a follow-up to the post-VE survey. This method aligns with the collaborative nature of VE experienced in VETSDELT. As participants had worked in groups for four weeks during the synchronous VE sessions, I believed that maintaining a group-based collective reflection would align better with the way the VE was structured and delivered. I also opted for focus groups because this format would encourage student participants to build on their peers' thoughts, which might not emerge in one-to-one interviews. The focus groups were especially valuable to understand the underlying reasons why some student participants could not detach from deep-seated beliefs and how emotion (more specifically anxiety) affected participation in both VEs. Given that this research is informed by the concept of Third Space, I found focus groups to be a means of extending its liminality and fluidity into data collection and capturing the impact of VETDELST through group dynamics and co-constructed knowledge.

Focus groups are collective discussions to explore a set of topics. Morgan (1997, p. 6) defines a focus group "as a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher". Researchers encourage participants to interact by commenting on one another's points of view, asking questions, exchanging ideas, and so on related to their experiences, beliefs, and attitudes (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). For Denscombe (2014), data emerge from group interaction; hence the interplay of participants is important. Therefore, discussion can bring insights and understandings in ways that questionnaire items alone may not.

Krueger and Casey (2015) note that focus groups are carefully structured and planned. The authors suggest that focus groups should be composed of 8 to 12 participants, and sessions last between 60 and 90 minutes, usually electronically recorded and then transcribed for later analysis. Sessions are led and guided by researchers who assume the role of moderators by making predetermined open-ended questions, although they have

flexibility in asking follow-up questions. Researchers provide focus, and the group provides data.

According to Frith (2000), focus groups are ideal “to gain insight into the personal experiences, beliefs, attitudes and feelings that underlie behaviour” (p. 276) and to explore people’s opinions, wishes, and concerns, as well as how they are constructed. Thus, focus groups also enable researchers to understand lived experiences better as participants operate within a social network. For Morgan (1997), focus groups can often produce information that is not accessible through other methods.

The focus group interviews were carried out with self-selected participants after the completion of each cycle of VETSDELT, in December 2022 and April 2023. In Cycle 1, I conducted two focus group interviews: one with the e-mediators (mediators) and one with the students. A semi-structured interview with 11 questions (see Appendix F) was used for both focus groups. It was decided to carry out separate focus groups to capture the experiences of these two groups (e-mediators and students) in the VETSDELT project. By conducting separate focus groups, it was possible to create a safe and comfortable environment where each group could freely express their thoughts, concerns, and experiences without any potential biases or inhibitions.

In Cycle 1, a Focus Group (FG) for e-mediators was conducted with three participants (Appendix G), and a separate focus group for students with five participants (Appendix H). In Cycle 2, two focus groups were conducted: one with eight participants (except Brazilians) (Appendix I), and one only with Brazilian participants to gain in-depth insights into their anxiety experiences during the project and understand the factors contributing to anxiety in this context (Appendix J). It is important to acknowledge a limitation in the study regarding Cycle 2 because no separate focus group was conducted specifically for e-mediators, despite the contact attempts.

4.4 Approach to Data Analysis

Data will be analysed through the lens of a decolonial perspective. In essence, a decolonial perspective in data analysis allows for a more holistic understanding of the data. It takes into account the historical, social, and cultural contexts that shaped the data, thereby challenging the dominant or colonial ways of understanding and interpreting data. This perspective can reveal biases, inequalities, and power dynamics that are often overlooked in traditional data analysis.

The approach to data analysis was mostly qualitative due to the type of study carried out, preserving participants' points of view, subjectivity, and individuality, seeking a deep and holistic interpretation of reality. Combining several data collection instruments was necessary to promote data triangulation at different moments of the study since ethnography includes as many data collection options as possible and justifiable (Flick, 2013).

Thus, thematic analysis was also used as an analytical tool to interpret patterns within data. A reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2013) was employed to analyse, group, and classify data by themes or categories through an interpretive engagement with the data by the researcher. The reflexive thematic analysis focuses on understanding events, realities, meanings, and experiences in social discourses (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thus, the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), shown in Table 17, were followed to carry out the reflexive thematic analysis. The purpose is to show meanings, associations, and intentions that may only be evident once all phases are accomplished.

Table 17 Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
Phase 1: familiarising with one's data	After the interviews have been recorded, the transcription phase takes place. This presupposes attentive and repeated listening to the material, allowing a deep understanding of the data and drawing the first ideas.
Phase 2: generating initial codes	The pertinent data are coded with the investigative objectives (semantic content or latent). This coding process allows the organisation of the material into groups of meanings that are much broader than the themes.
Phase 3: searching for themes	The researcher tries to find relationships between them to constitute themes. This interactive and interpretative process requires several readings of the written material. A list of themes/categories/keywords is prepared, organising them into themes and subtopics. At the same time, the excerpts from the text must be identified, relating them to the theme in which they are inserted to be easily located. In the end, we will have a list of potential themes and subtopics and all extracts of coded data in relation to these, allowing an understanding of each theme.
Phase 4: reviewing themes	All coded extracts in each theme must be re-read to verify that they form an integrated set. If necessary, they are categorised again, checking their relationship with the themes. In a second moment, the set of themes must be reviewed to guarantee that the information contained in the data is appropriately captured and reflected in the evidenced meanings. That is, we must return to the texts, rereading and recoding them, which may lead to the emergence of new themes or new relational bridges. At the end of this phase, it should be possible to have a good idea about the different themes, how they are articulated and what they tell us about the data, which can be represented as a thematic tree.
Phase 5: defining and naming themes	At this point, we must define and refine the themes that will be presented in the analysis and the data contained in each theme. At the end of this phase, we should clearly define the themes, naming and describing them in a few words, and show how the themes are articulated with each other and the research objectives.
Phase 6: producing the report	It is the last opportunity for analysis. This report can appear as a scientific article to return the results to the interviewees or for doctoral research. However, regardless of the purpose of the text, it must express the entire analysis process, convincing the readers of its merit and validity. Therefore, the report must concisely and coherently describe the data set within and between themes. To this end, the themes must be exemplified with extracts but not limited to these. A narrative must be presented that argues these themes with the objectives of the investigation and its theoretical foundations.

Note. Adapted from "Using thematic analysis in Psychology" by Braun, V. & Clarke, V., 2006, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101 Copyright 2006 by Taylor & Francis Online.

The Likert-scale statements were analysed using SPSS¹³ (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software version 28. The responses ranged from *strongly agree*, indicating the highest level of agreement with the statement, to *mostly agree*, indicating agreement with possible reservations. A *neither agree nor disagree* response represents a neutral position, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. *Mostly disagree* suggests a level of disagreement, but not to the strongest degree, while *strongly disagree* indicates the highest level of disagreement with the statement.

For the purpose of this study, the term *neutral* is used to denote the response category *neither agree nor disagree*. Participants selecting this option might: a) not hold a strong opinion or feel indifferent about the statement presented; b) feel they lack enough information to form a strong opinion; c) see both sides of the argument and therefore do not strongly agree or disagree; or d) prefer not to express their opinion on the matter.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter 4 presented the research design, methodological framework, data collection methods, and data analysis procedure. It began with an explanation of the methodological qualitative approaches employed (autoethnography and nethnography) and its relevance for the study. Next, the three stages of the study (student participant, mediator, and project leader perspectives) were described in detail. The final sections of the chapter outlined the instruments used for data collection and provided an explanation of the data analysis approach adopted. In Chapter 5 below, Results and Analysis, I will illustrate both qualitative and quantitative data collected in the three stages of my study.

¹³ See: <https://www.ibm.com/br-pt/spss>

Chapter 5 – Results and Analysis

In this chapter, the data collected throughout the study are presented and analysed. The chapter is organised into two main sections. The first one presents my autoethnographic reflections recorded in a logbook (field notes) from Stage 1 (student participant perspective) and Stage 2 (e-mediator perspective). These reflections illustrate my development as a VE research practitioner, especially in navigating tensions and complexities prior to the design and implementation of my VE project, VETSDELT. The second section presents the netnographic data generated in Stages 3 (3a and 3b). These data are drawn from the interaction and reflections of research participants and are structured as follows: first, the pre-survey is analysed, followed by the post-survey and then a comparison between them is made, for each cycle of the AR. second, the qualitative results (open-ended questions in the post-surveys, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms) are present in themes through thematic analysis. Finally, the results of four focus group meetings conducted across both cycles of the study are presented and analysed.

5.1 Stages 1 and 2 Field Notes – Autoethnography

In the course of my VE journey and at each of its stages, I realised that my perspective on ELT was changing and that my personal ontological shift was caused by the way that my reflection on my ELT beliefs was affected by the intercultural and international dialogue with peers on the VE. Rereading my autoethnographical field notes on Stages 1 and 2 of my VE journey, I could see how my own beliefs had shifted from a 'convert' to 'native-speakerism' to becoming one of its opponents, proposing a critique of the concept and actively thinking how I could do more to raise awareness about this problematic issue.

This transformational shift was supported by the interaction and dialogue had with peers in the VE Third Space. In my autoethnographical field notes, I also recorded how the

powerful knowledge sharing carried out using ELF amongst students in English teacher education, whose first language was not English in the majority, made me reflect on what English should be taught and ‘whose’ is English (Rugby, 2015). This strengthened further my determination to explore how I could design a VE curricular intervention myself to raise awareness against the widespread acceptance of native-speakerism that still exists on the ELT job market and to also raise the awareness of students in English language teacher education about this problematic issue and its detrimental colonial connotations.

5.1.1 Stage 1: The Student Participant Perspective

During this stage, I participated as a student in the VE project BMELTEVEP, which was carried out from March to April 2021. The project involved a total of 39 participants from Brazil, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom, and was led by a professor based in the Global North who subsequently became a co-director of studies for my PhD. During my student participation in this VE, I fully immersed myself in this learning experience (in action), while reflecting on it in BoRs (on action) and considering how it could inform my future practice as a L2 English teacher (for action). I wrote down my most significant experiences and reflections on what I learned during these online intercultural interactions collaborating with others.

Before engaging in BMELTEVEP, I had limited experience with VE – except for the COIL project with the Chilean University, which sparked my desire to be part of other VE initiatives/projects. Due to infrastructural and technological constraints, I could only deliver two out of four planned synchronous sessions. Although this COIL project was carried out in my Master’s research, I consider it as the first step of my VE journey (self-decolonising process) and the main motivation for this PhD study. When engaging in BMELTEVEP, my initial understanding of my role was mostly shaped by this previous COIL project and reading materials. I thought my student role would involve engaging collectively in intercultural

discussions on themes related to ELT in a main room, and familiarise myself with digital platforms.

As I engaged with my peers, I realised my role required much more than I had initially anticipated. Having some digital literacy is very important for participating in VEs. Many Brazilian and Sri Lankan students had issues signing into Microsoft Teams, mostly because of unfamiliarity with the platform, and the experiences that users have with technology might shape their expectations/learning outcomes. In the context of the Brazilian Higher Education, state universities were not equipped with any technological platforms capable of supporting emergency remote education as they had relied on in-class communication before the COVID-19 pandemic. Google Meet became the primary platform in the Brazilian Higher Education due to its free access and the integration with other Google services, particularly Gmail. Overall, the peer students I connected with voiced their appreciation for Zoom because they were acquainted with the platform and its features (including BoR).

Initially our discussion focused on the implications of the spread of English for ELT over the last two decades, particularly the perception of who should be considered the 'legitimate' English teacher, L1/L2 speakers. The discussion also addressed the fact that English is now used as a *multilingua franca* by L2 speakers around the world and the growing awareness of the contribution of L2 English teachers to ELT. I observed that some Brazilian and Sri Lankan students were not active enough or did not engage at all in BoR discussions. They needed to break the ice and get to know one another before feeling comfortable disagreeing with and challenging one another. Participation in VE online spaces requires a minimum of engagement to support meaning-making, interpretation, and negotiation, as learning develops through interaction with others. Despite these challenges, both the activities designed in BMELTEVEP and the MOOC facilitated meaningful negotiation and collaboration.

We discussed that Global Englishes has also begun to influence both policy and practice, including classroom methodologies and the development of teaching materials.

Even though English has moved away from the traditional 'native-speaker' model and countries in the inner circle such as the US and the UK, we noted that teaching materials are still based around the cultures of these countries. This raised our concern about the relevance of these materials for L2 English learners, who are more likely to use English as a *multilingua franca* to communicate with other L2 speakers in multicultural contexts. We concluded that there is a growing need for a wider perspective on the use of English with more locally-referenced teaching materials and cultural representation.

My engagement in BMELTEVEP led to an interesting reflection on the future of English and the belief that all English varieties may converge and eventually some kind of international variety of English might emerge. With the globalisation of English, there will probably be new English varieties, such as Brazilian/Sri Lankan English. The tendency is that more countries will document their own English variety, and the status of existing English varieties in the inner circle will change. Another concern regarding the spread of English is that English it may contribute to the demise of other languages. Thus, English is not the only hegemonic language that could cause this.

Classrooms as a community of practice, or classrooms as social places where learning and teaching takes place, was explored in our discussion and how this affects our practices as English teachers. There was an emphasis on understanding how the individual learner works, and understanding language acquisition from a psycholinguistic point of view. It was also stressed that has been a social turn in second language acquisition research, and an increasing recognition that important aspects of language learning are socially constructed. As a result, the term language socialisation was created. From this perspective, classrooms are viewed as social settings in which language knowledge is jointly constructed through dialogue between the teacher and the students, and also among the students themselves. Differences in personality, personal background, and culture are also valued for collaborative inclusivity. In classrooms as a community of practice, the learner moves from quite marginal positions to becoming more skilled. Western-imposed projects of language

teaching tend to marginalise local educational cultures. For instance, the traditional Present, Practice, Produce (PPP) approach, which is still common in our contexts, follows a linear syllabus with a strong focus on grammatical rules and other structural language elements. In contrast, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as an alternative to English language teaching, shifting the focus from form to meaning and real-world context language use.

The discussion also focused on the use of technology in teaching in the light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning. One key characteristic of learning online is flexibility because learners can decide when and where to participate. It also gives opportunities to a lot of people who might otherwise not be able to study or learn a language. Another characteristic of online learning is that it is highly learner-centred. Students have the autonomy to choose the topics or the themes relevant to them. This can lead to motivation, engagement, and meaningful learning experiences. Online learning allows language learners to choose the resources to develop specific skills – such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar – thereby creating a level of individualisation in the learning process. Online spaces also offer a number of opportunities for authentic language practise and access language projects. However, online learning has a number of implications. The first challenge is the level of familiarity and confidence in using digital technologies, which affect the learning experience. Limited digital literacy may also lead to frustration. Access is another concern as not all students have reliable internet connection and adequate devices computers.

We looked at field of World Englishes as a reaction the delegitimation of English varieties from the Outer Circle – such as India, Nigeria, and Singapore – which had been colonised by the British Empire. The discussion focused on recognising and valuing the Englishes spoken in these post-colonial contexts. The current global status of English as a common language is result of two main factors. The first is the expansion of British Empire between the 17th and 19th centuries. The second is the rise of the USA as a global

economic power in the 20th century. The British colonisation led to the development of many English varieties or the so-called New Englishes, such as Indian English and Singaporean English. Later, English spread was further propelled by the influence of the USA worldwide. This can be seen in many different areas; for example, English is the official language of many international organisations, the dominant language of science, and the global language of entertainment. Given this dominant role of English, it is predictable that English is now taught as a L2 or foreign language in most countries across the world; as a result, NNEs outnumber NESs, and English serves as a medium or a contact language for intercultural communication.

The field of World Englishes is concerned with geographical and national locations and uses of English, whereas English as a Lingua Franca treats English as a contact language in multicultural contexts. English as a Foreign Language, as opposed to English as a Lingua Franca, looks at communication between NNEs and NESs, where the NNEs are expected to accept and adjust to NESs' norms. Some people believe that ELF is an incorrect or inferior English variety. However, it is a misunderstanding because this view comes from the assumption that 'standard' English is only the variety found in teaching materials or spoken in inner countries.

This firsthand experience as a student participant provided an understanding of the dynamics, challenges, and potential of VE for teacher education. Throughout this stage, I critically reflected on issues of technology access, VE design/logistics, and L2 English teacher identity. The critical perspective I developed in this stage deepened my awareness of the socio-technical dimensions of VE and informed my practice transitioning from student participant role to mediator.

5.1.2 Stage 2: *The E-Mediator Perspective*

In this stage, I was invited to participate as a mediator for the GAZUFES (Gazi University in Turkey with Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo in Brazil) Project. GAZUFES involved a total of 25 participants from both countries and was led by two professors, one from each institution. The project was carried out from April to June 2022 for six weeks. Through this experience, I learnt about the specific requirements of what an e-mediator role entails and the logistics involved in organising and facilitating a VE project.

As part of my role as an e-mediator, I devoted my first week to read the training material which included some strategies to support communication and interaction with different language backgrounds. One of the strategies when meeting students and partners for the first time was to ask how they would like to be addressed. I noticed that icebreaker activities helped students to share their personal stories and establish social presence. Also, sharing my personal experiences contributed to creating a more engaging environment. I encouraged students get to know their peers and build connection, not only focus on completing the tasks. Most times students they kept their camera on, which I believe was partly because we were a small group. Each tutor was assigned a group of students to work with throughout the VE.

My e-mediator experience allowed me to apply and implement some netiquette strategies. Some of them included asking students to: mute themselves not speaking to avoid background noise; look into the camera so that others feel that you are looking at them; use the 'raise your hand' button to signal they wanted to speak. I also directed questions to specific students to encourage participation and suggested using the chat when experiencing internet connection issues.

In the context of a larger-scale VE project, I noticed the importance of creating as many BoRs as necessary, mix the students up and have a least one trained mediator in each room. Breaking students up into smaller groups engaged students to collaborate on a

much deeper level and explore topics in depth. I noted it was difficult for some students to voice their opinions or get involved in the activities during the synchronous meetings when the whole group was connected 'on the screen' at once.

Another issue I found is that when students are working with the same group (and within the same cultural context) throughout the project, ideas and discussions may not be diverse enough, as extrovert students tend to 'take over the floor' while introvert students may withdraw. This results in a lack of new perspectives and decline in engagement as the group was getting familiar with one another. I believe that a culturally homogenous group can negatively impact the learning outcomes and overall experience in VE. This is why the formation of cross-cultural groups is essential in VE, as it encourages reflection on values and principles, as well as fosters intercultural understanding and promotes cultural resilience. In this regard, I also realised how important it is to assign specific roles to group members (i.e., scribe and spokesperson) and periodically rotate these roles to ensure more balanced group participation. Students would take turns assuming the roles of scribe and spokesperson in each session.

Managing multiple interactions synchronously while mediating conflicts in BoRs was not only daunting at first but also presented an opportunity for growth and synergy. I realised that mediation involves a set of essential skills that mediators/facilitators must develop to navigate the complexities of online dynamics, as they are central to the success of VEs. In this VE, all my fellow mediators reported having difficulties in mediating interactions in BoRs, especially due to the lack of facilitation skills and prior experience. The training materials provided were insufficient for developing these basic skills needed for effective mediation, so a practical training session on negotiation, communication, and problem-solving should have been implemented, before the start of GAZUFES. Mediating a BoR requires a thoughtful blend of intercultural awareness, technological competence and procedural techniques to untimely foster a safe environment where everyone feels heard and understood.

Engaging with students as a mediator revealed that native-speakerism was a common issue both in Brazil and Turkey. While I had considered it in the Brazilian context, I had not fully realised the extent to which the Turkish pre-service English teachers were also grappling with the concept, particularly the shift towards intelligibility and embracing their own accents. This made me reflect on how deeply ingrained the 'native speaker ideal' is in ELT imaginary and how it manifests in complete different cultural contexts. Some students showed strong opinions about embracing intelligibility over mimicking the so-called 'standard' accents. However, some of them had negative attitudes towards their own accent. For instance, a Turkish student mentioned that she forces herself to have a 'perfect' English accent. Similarly, the Brazilian students and I observed that the pursuit of a nativist and American English accent is a goal in Brazil for both English teachers and learners. This reflects how pre-service English teachers underestimate their English competence and lack confidence in themselves as owners of English, which ultimately influences and shapes their (future) students' perception and understanding.

The discussions also showed shared challenges between Brazil and Turkey Brazil, with students expressing similar concerns about teaching constraints such as large class sizes, prescriptive curriculum, lack of proper teaching resources, and limited class time. In both ELT contexts, these constraints make it nearly impossible to foster all four language skills effectively. In this sense, it became clear that many challenges attributed to teachers are, in fact, symptoms of broader structural issues within national education systems. I was particularly impressed by how the Turkish students challenged the misconception that private education always yields better outcomes. They acknowledged that teacher quality and learner motivation are far more important than the type of institution.

We also discussed what it means to engage in 'authentic communication' because the students have to cocreate an ELT task for secondary school students. During our collective discussion, the students mentioned that much of content traditionally taught in ELT (e.g., idioms like "it's raining cats and dogs") is outdated and does not reflect real-context

English in both contexts. For example, a Turkish student recalled using that idiom and receiving confused looks from a 'native speaker'. This reflects the need to for ELT to shifts the focus from textbooks to real-world language.

ELT worldwide and L2 English textbooks are entirely focused on inner circle cultures. English textbooks used both in state and private schools in Turkey and Brazil have strongly reinforced inner-circle models, particularly American and British Englishes. In these textbooks, American and British varieties portray the idealised English speaker. A Brazilian student suggested that English classes should go beyond only teaching American or British cultures by including perspectives from non-hegemonic countries, such as India and South Africa. She also emphasised the importance of using context-based or locally relevant content. For example, when teaching winter-related vocabulary in Brazil, lessons should reflect the local context reality such as wearing light jackets rather than focusing on snow-related activities. Thus, L2 textbooks might contribute to cultural prejudice and reinforce stereotypes both explicitly and implicitly through their content.

Another important topic that emerged in the BoRs was the prestige associated with learning English abroad with 'native speakers'. Most students acknowledged the hierarchy this belief creates in ELT. For instance, two English teachers could have the same level of English, but the one who studied abroad, in the inner circle, would be regarded as more competent or proficient. This brought up broader questions around power, legitimacy, and the ideology of native-speakerism, and I was impressed by how critically the group engaged with this issue in ELT.

My mediator experience in GAZUFES highlighted the complex nature of mediation in fostering meaningful collaboration in VE. This role provided me with a deeper understanding of the skills required for an effective mediation process and shed light on how deeply embedded native-speakerism remains across cultures. This highlighted a need to introduce a more pluralistic approach into teacher education in order to question dominant narratives

and create spaces where experienced and novice students ELT teacher students can reflect on their identities as L2 English teachers.

5.2 Stage 3: My own VE Creation and Delivery – Netnography

I believe I learned many lessons on how the VE Third Space could support a discussion on native-speakerism as both participant and mediator, I therefore proposed to my two DoSs to organise my own curricular intervention for students in English language teacher education to further test the hypothesis that the VE Third Space can open up new ways of looking at ELT, support its decolonisation and raise students' awareness about the pernicious effects of native-speakerism on ELT.

As mentioned previously in section 4.2.3.4, I agreed with my two DoSs to implement a VE that would be embedded into the curriculum of her MA ELTAL at Coventry University. Drawing on what I learned both as a student participant (Stage 1) and mediator (Stage 2), I designed and proposed a pedagogically informed VE project (Stage 3). The data presented stem from both cycles of VETSDELT, Stages 3a and 3b. In the next section, the quantitative data will be presented and analysed using SPSS.

5.2.1 Surveys

Pre- and post-surveys were administered in compliance with GDPR regulations to assess potential changes in participants' attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies over time. The repetition of Likert-scale statements was intended to compare respondents' beliefs before and after VETSDELT. By comparing responses to identical questions on both surveys, it was possible to identify patterns of change and draw conclusions about the potential of VE as a Third Space to decolonise ELT. This approach, therefore, aimed to shed light on the extent to which VETSDELT influenced participants to identify and interrogate (and hopefully interrupt)

their beliefs, ideologies and views about English and ELT. Both the pre-survey and post-survey were administered for a week-long period, one before and one after VETSDELT.

The pre-survey Likert-scale statements were organised in thematic groups for analysis of differences between institutions, as well as to facilitate the identification of patterns, trends, and meaningful relationships within the data. Additionally, grouping the statements enhances the understanding and interpretation of the survey data. The comparison between pre- and post-surveys will be presented in graphs.

5.2.1.1 Pre-VE Survey: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – November to December 2022

All 44 respondents who consented to participate in the project in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a) completed the pre-VE project survey (see Table 18). Most respondents (20) were affiliated with Institution B in Spain, followed by 11 respondents from Institution A in the United Kingdom, 9 from Institution C in Sri Lanka, and 4 from Institution D in Brazil. In terms of gender distribution, 88.6% of respondents were female (39 out of 44). Regarding their age, 32 (72.7%) respondents were in the 18-30 age group, and 12 were in the 31 or above group.

Table 18 Demographic Data of Respondents who completed the Pre-VE Project Survey in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a)

Institution	Age		Gender			Level of proficiency		Have you ever taught before?		Length of teaching experience (year)		Student (ST), practicing teacher (PT), or teacher trainer (TT)			Total
	>30	<31	M	F	N/A	>B1	<B2	Yes	No	>3	<4	ST	PT	TT	
A	5	6	1	10	0	0	11	9	2	3	6	8	2	1	11
B	18	2	3	17	0	3	17	16	4	10	6	16	3	1	20
C	7	2	1	8	0	2	7	9	0	6	3	5	4	0	9
D	2	2	0	4	0	0	4	4	0	0	4	1	3	0	4

39 participants (88.6%) self-rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate (B2). According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020), B2 corresponds to a higher intermediate level of proficiency in a language,

indicating the ability to use it effectively for a wide range of tasks, both in spoken and written communication and the ability to handle a variety of real-life situations in the language.

11.4% of respondents rated themselves at a lower intermediate level (B1). All respondents from Institution A in the UK (11) and Institution D in Brazil (4) rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate (B2) to advanced (C1/C2).

38 respondents had some teaching experience, while only 6 had never taught English before. Of the 38 respondents who had teaching experience, half of them (19) had 3 years or less of experience, and the other half (19) had 4 years or more of experience. Regarding their teaching careers, 30 respondents were pre-service teachers (students), 12 were practising teachers, and 2 were teacher trainers.

Table 19 shows the diversity of languages and cultures among respondents in Cycle 1 by nationality, L1s, and L2s or ALs. The respondents came from 12 different nationalities and spoke 16 L1s and 17 L2s. Respondents from Institution A were the most diverse subgroup with the highest number of nationalities (9) and L1s (11) and L2s (9), followed by Institution C (3 L1s, and 8 L2s), institution B (3 L1s, and 7 L2s), and institution D (1 L1, and 4 L2s). As shown in Table 19, all respondents were bilingual or multilingual.

Table 19 Respondents' Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a)

Institution	Nationalities	L1(s)	L2 (s)
A	Chinese	Chinese	Catalan
	Indian (3)	English	English
	Italian/Spanish ¹⁴	Gujarati	French
	Nigerian (2)	Italian	Hausa
	Pakistani	Malayalam	Hindi
	Romanian	Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin
	Taiwanese ROC	Romanian	Punjabi
	Vietnamese	Spanish	Spanish
		Taiwanese	Tamil
B		Urdu	Castilian
		Vietnamese	Catalan
			English
			French
			Portuguese
	Spanish	Catalan	Spanish
		Spanish	Valencian
		Valencian	

¹⁴ The participant holds dual citizenship.

C	Sinhalese Sri Lankan	English Memon Sinhala	Arabic
			Chinese Mandarin
D	Brazilian	Brazilian Portuguese	English
			French
			German
			Spanish

Responses on English standardisation and ownership in Table 20 (results from the statements 22, 23, and 24) reveal a diversity of opinions. 43.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 22 'Only American and British English should be taught as standard'. 31.8% (strongly and mostly combined) agreed, and 31.8% (mostly and strongly) disagreed with this statement. This could suggest a division in opinions but with a slight leaning towards neutrality or against the idea of teaching only American and British English as standard. Additionally, it may reflect a trend towards accepting diverse forms of English in educational settings or a recognition of English varieties.

In the same way, the number of responses for statements 23 and 24 was evenly distributed for each response category in all institutions. 36.5% (strong and mostly) agreed, 27.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 36.4% (strong and mostly) disagreed with statement 23 (English belongs to everyone who speaks it, and it is nobody's mother tongue). Similarly, 38.5% (strong and mostly) agreed, 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 36.4% (strong and mostly) disagreed with statement 24 (English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA).

The data show a diversity of opinions among the institutions and suggest that respondents had a diverse understanding of English as a global language and opinions on whether English belongs to everyone who speaks it. It could also be inferred that while there was a consensus on the historical ties of English to the UK and USA varieties of English as 'canons', there was also a recognition of English as a global language that transcends geographical boundaries.

Table 20 Respondents' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership
(Statements 22, 23, and 24)

22. Only American and British English should be taught as standard												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	3	27.3	5	45.5	1	9.1	1	9.1	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	2	10.0	10	50.0	6	30.0	2	10.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	44.4	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	3	6.8	8	18.2	19	43.2	8	18.2	6	13.6	44	100.0

23. English belongs to everyone who speaks it, and it is nobody's mother tongue												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	4	36.4	5	45.5	2	18.2	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	4	20.0	3	15.0	4	20.0	8	40.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	2	22.2	2	22.2	2	22.2	0	00.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	4	9.1	12	27.3	12	27.3	8	18.2	8	18.2	44	100.0

24. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	4	36.4	1	9.1	3	27.3	2	18.2	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	6	30.0	6	30.0	6	30.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	0	00.0	1	11.1	3	33.3	3	33.3	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	00.0	0	00.0	4	100.0
Total	4	9.1	13	29.5	11	25.0	12	27.3	4	9.1	44	100.0

However, it was interesting to see that even at this pre-VE stage, the respondents' responses illustrated a positive view about varieties of English as shown in Table 21 (results from the statements 25, 26, and 27). Most of them agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 25 'It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible' and 27 'Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)', 68.1% and 72.7% respectively. Overall, the result suggests that there was a consensus among the respondents that teaching and learning varieties of English is important.

In statement 26 (see Table 21 below), 77.3% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) that 'Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned'. The result may indicate respect for the diversity of accents, appreciation for different (local)

English varieties, and awareness of English as a global language. There might be two main reasons for this positive attitude among the respondents. Firstly, all the respondents spoke English as a L2 or AL. So, their personal experience may have made them more sensitive to the challenges and richness of learning and using English in diverse contexts. Secondly, the fact that all respondents were engaged in English teacher education, either as current educators or as future teachers, and had a deeper awareness of this issue.

The highest percentage of respondents who strongly disagreed with statement 25 write what it was (27.3%) in Table 21 were from institution A (in the UK), which consisted of the most diverse group. The result could potentially be attributed to their familiarity with and acceptance of different English accents and dialects in their contexts, Nigeria, Romania, and Vietnam.

Table 21 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 25, 26, and 27)

25. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	3	27.3	4	36.4	1	9.1	3	27.3	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	5	25.0	9	45.0	5	25.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	13	29.5	17	38.6	10	22.7	4	9.1	0	0.0	44	100.0

26. Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	0	0.0	6	54.5	3	27.3	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	0	0.0	2	10.0	12	60.0	5	25.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	2	22.2	3	33.3	1	11.1	3	33.3	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	1	2.3	4	9.1	5	11.4	20	45.5	14	31.8	44	100.0

27. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	3	27.3	3	27.3	2	18.2	3	27.3	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	4	20.0	11	55.0	4	20.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	2	22.2	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	14	31.8	18	40.9	8	18.8	4	9.1	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 22 (results from the statements 28, 29, 30, and 31) explores the concept of native-speakerism in ELT, as discussed by Holliday (2006, 2015). 43% of the respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 28 'The distinction between English teachers as L1 ('native speakers') and L2 ('non-native') speakers is hierarchical'. However, 27.3% neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 28 'The distinction between English teachers as L1 ('native speakers') and L2 ('non-native') speakers is hierarchical', which may suggest that they either did not perceive there to be or believe in hierarchical distinctions in ELT, which appears to be a contradiction to the answer to the focus group.

75% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 29 'L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 ('native') speakers' and 30 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers are ideal, more qualified, and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native') teachers' in Table 22, 74.4% and 70.5% respectively. The findings challenge the notion of native-speakerism in ELT and question the traditional concept of the ideal English language teacher as the 'White Anglo-Saxon and Protestant (WASP)' model. Besides, they may also suggest that the respondents appreciated the variety and richness of L2 English teachers' perspectives and experiences in ELT, as well as their ability to relate to the needs and challenges of L2 learners. Furthermore, the findings may also suggest that the respondents recognised the advantages L2 English teachers might have, such as their understanding of the local context, culture, familiarity with the learners' first language, and learning strategies.

Overall, there was a lack of consensus on statement 31 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it'. 40.9% disagreed (strongly and mostly), and 38.6% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. It could indicate divided opinions with a tendency towards neutrality or mixed feelings. Besides, it can be inferred that the perception of native-speakerism in ELT varies across cultures.

Table 22 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 28, 29, 30, and 31)

28. The distinction between English teachers as L1 ('native speakers') and L2 ('non-native') speakers is hierarchical												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	6	54.5	2	18.2	2	18.2	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	3	15.0	9	45.0	6	30.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	3	33.3	1	11.1	3	33.3	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	14	31.8	12	27.3	12	27.3	1	2.3	44	100.0

29. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 ('native') speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	1	9.1	1	9.1	2	18.2	7	63.6	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	2	10.0	4	20.0	6	30.0	8	40.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	3	33.3	3	33.3	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	0	0.0	3	6.8	8	18.2	12	27.3	21	47.7	44	100.0

30. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are ideal, more qualified, and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native') teachers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	1	9.1	2	18.2	3	27.3	5	45.4	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	1	5.0	4	20.0	4	20.0	9	45.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	4	44.4	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	2	4.5	2	4.5	9	20.5	12	27.3	19	43.2	44	100.0

31. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	3	27.2	4	26.3	3	27.2	1	9.09	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	1	5.0	11	55.0	6	30.0	2	10.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	4	44.4	1	11.1	3	33.3	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	1	2.3	8	18.2	17	38.6	12	27.3	6	13.6	44	100.0

Table 23 (results from the statements 32, 33, and 34) explores respondents' views on the discrimination L2 English teachers face in the job market. 61.4% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 32 'L2 ('non-native') teachers often encounter discrimination in the job market/or at the workplace'. However, 44% of respondents from Institution C neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 32. This could indicate that they did not perceive or experience discrimination themselves, or that they had different criteria or definitions for

what constitutes discrimination or possibly they saw themselves a 'native speakers' of English.

In statement 33 (L1 'native speaker' teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace), 72.8% (strongly and mostly) that 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace'. The result may imply that there is a widespread belief in the advantage held by L1 English teachers among the respondents. As a result of this prevailing belief, some negative consequences can be inferred: discrimination in hiring practices and unequal treatment.

54.5% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 34 'I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners', which also indicates a prevalent and strong belief for most respondents. Institution D had the highest percentage (100%) of agreement with statement 34, while Institution B had the lowest (40.0%). It may indicate that respondents from Institution B were uncertain or had mixed feelings.

Table 23 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 32, 33, and 34)

32. L2 ('non-native') teachers often encounter discrimination in the job market/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	6	54.5	4	36.4	0	0.0	1	9.1	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	11	55.0	5	25.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	1	11.1	4	44.4	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	7	15.9	20	45.5	13	29.5	2	4.5	2	4.5	44	100.0

33. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	2	18.2	8	18.2	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	3	15.0	10	50.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	2	22.2	3	33.3	0	0.0	1	11.1	9	100.0
D	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	12	27.3	20	45.5	8	18.2	3	6.8	1	2.3	44	100.0

34. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	5	45.5	2	18.2	3	27.3	0	0.0	11	100.0

B	1	5.0	7	35.0	8	40.0	2	10.0	2	10.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1	1	11.1	1	11.1	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	7	15.9	17	38.6	11	25.0	6	13.6	3	6.8	44	100.0

Table 24 (results from the statements 35 and 36) examines respondents' views on English spread worldwide. In statement 35, 38.6% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that 'The spread of English might threaten the status of other languages', suggesting that a many respondents expressed concerns about the potential negative effects of English spread. 45.5% of the respondents from institution A and 55.5% from C agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 35, indicating they tended to have more negative views on the spread of English. However, 36.4% neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 35, and institution D had the highest percentage (75%) of responses for this category. In general, the data shows that there is a significant variation in the opinions of respondents. It could be inferred that there is a complex interplay of factors influencing these perceptions such as cultural identity, language policy, and educational curricula.

50% neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 36 'English is an imperialist language'. It may suggest a conflict between recognising the utility and necessity of English for personal and professional development and acknowledging the potential threat that this language poses to linguistic diversity and cultural identity. Institution D had the highest percentage (50%) of respondents who agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 36, followed by C. Institution C is located in Sri Lanka, where English is an official language along with Sinhala and Tamil. Therefore, it could suggest that respondents from this institution view English as a colonial legacy or a threat to their local languages and culture.

Table 24 Perceptions on the Spread of English (Statements 35 and 36)

35. The spread of English might threaten the status of other languages												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	4	36.4	2	18.2	1	9.1	3	27.3	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	7	35.0	10	50.0	3	15.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	5	55.5	1	11.1	3	33.3	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	1	2.3	17	38.6	16	36.4	7	15.9	3	6.8	44	100.0

36. English is an imperialist language												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	4	36.4	6	54.5	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	6	30.0	11	55.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	3	33.3	3	33.3	2	22.2	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	3	6.8	13	29.5	22	50.0	5	11.4	1	2.3	44	100.0

Table 25 (results from the statements 37, 38, 41, and 42) highlights respondents' comfort level with digital tools and technologies for collaboration. There was also a consensus across respondents from all institutions on the importance and effectiveness of digital technologies in fostering collaboration and promoting innovative pedagogical practices. 97.7% (strongly or mostly agree) of the respondents stated to be able to use digital tools and technologies for collaboration (statement 37). Institutions A and B had the highest percentage of agreement responses, 63.6%, and 60.0% respectively. 90.9% agreed (strongly or mostly) to be able to interact through digital technologies (statement 38), which may suggest confidence or digital literacy. 84.1% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) to be able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices (statement 41), which may also indicate confidence or digital literacy. Institution D showed the most variation in responses. 90.9% (strongly or mostly agree combined) stated to be confident in using digital tools for live collaboration (statement 42).

Table 25 Respondents' Ability to use Digital Tools and Technologies for Virtual Collaboration (Statements 37, 38, 41, and 42)

37. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others, and for creating resources and knowledge together with others												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	7	63.6	4	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	12	60.0	7	35.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	26	59.1	17	38.6	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0
38. I am able to interact through a variety of digital technologies and to understand appropriate digital communication means for a given context												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	6	54.5	4	36.4	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	10	50.0	8	40.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	22	50.0	18	40.9	4	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0
41. I am able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	3	27.3	6	54.5	2	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	10	50.0	6	30.0	4	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	19	43.2	18	40.9	7	15.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0
42. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others in a synchronous way ('live' interaction)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	4	36.4	6	54.5	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	9	45.0	10	50.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	4	44.4	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	18	40.9	22	50.0	4	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 26 (results from the statements 39 and 43) indicates that respondents had positive beliefs about the benefits of online collaboration for promoting intercultural values and the value of promoting online collaboration. For instance, 97.7% agreed (strongly and mostly) that engaging in online collaborative projects and activities helps to promote the development of intercultural values (statement 39). Institution D showed the highest

percentage of agreement (100%), indicating a positive perception of the intercultural benefits of online collaboration.

93.2% (strongly and mostly agree) showed belief in the value of promoting online collaboration among peers (statement 43). Again, Institution D showed the highest strong agreement (100%). There was little disagreement with this statement, with only 3 respondents (6.8%) indicating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Table 26 Respondents' Beliefs about the Benefits of Online Collaboration
(Statements 39 and 43)

39. I believe that engaging in online collaborative projects and activities helps to promote the development of intercultural values												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	7	35.0	12	60.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	21	47.7	22	50.0	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

43. I believe in the value of promoting the use of online collaboration among my peers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	8	40.0	10	50.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	3	33.3	6	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	20	45.5	21	47.7	3	6.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 27 (results from the statements 40, 44, and 45) illustrates a positive attitude among respondents toward online collaboration, virtual exchange, and the use of online collaborative tools. There was a consensus across respondents from all institutions about the benefits of online collaboration for pre-service English teachers and professional development. 90.9% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that online collaboration is beneficial for pre-service English teachers (statement 40). Institution D showed the highest percentage of agreement (75%), whereas Institution A had the highest percentage (18.2%) of 'neither agree nor disagree' responses. 97.7% (strongly and mostly agree) stated to believe in the value of VE/COIL for professional development (statement 44). Only one

respondent (2.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 44. 93.2% agreed (strongly and mostly) with the importance of experience with online collaborative tools (statement 45). Institution C had the highest percentage of agreement (66.7%), while Institutions A and B showed some uncertainty (neither agree nor disagree), with 9.1% and 10%, respectively.

Table 27 Acceptance of the Benefits of Online Collaboration for Pre-Service English Teachers and Professional Development (Statements 40, 44, and 45)

40. I believe it is beneficial for pre-service English teachers to experience online collaboration												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	4	36.4	5	45.5	2	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	7	35.0	12	60.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	19	43.2	21	47.7	4	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

44. I believe in the value of Virtual Exchange/Collaborative Online International Learning as a tool for my own professional development												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	10	50.0	9	45.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	25	56.8	18	40.9	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

45. I believe it is important for pre-service English teachers to have experience in using various online collaborative tools												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	10	50.0	8	40.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	23	52.3	18	40.9	3	6.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 28 (results from the statements 47 and 48) reveals a high level of confidence among respondents regarding digital communication in English. 75% (mostly and strongly disagree) of respondents stated not being worried about using technology to interact in English (statement 47). Equally, 75% (mostly and strongly disagree) of respondents stated to feel anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies (statement 48).

There was a consensus observed across all institutions, particularly A, B, and C, where most respondents disagreed (mostly or strongly) with feeling worried or anxious. On the other hand, institution D showed a distribution of responses, which may suggest a potentially higher level of anxiety, possibly linked with issues relating to the reliability of the bandwidth and connectivity in the country in which the students were based. Orsini-Jones (2023b) pointed out the reliability of technology can be cause of anxiety in VE initiatives.

Table 28 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statements 47 and 48)

47. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	1	9.1	4	36.4	4	36.4	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	1	5.0	4	20.0	10	50.0	4	20.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	66.7	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	3	75.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	2	4.5	4	9.1	5	11.4	23	52.3	10	22.7	44	100.0

48. I feel anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	54.5	5	45.5	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	3	15.0	4	20.0	8	40.0	5	25.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	11.1	4	44.4	3	33.3	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
Total	1	2.3	5	11.4	5	11.4	19	43.2	14	31.8	44	100.0

Table 29 (results from the statements 51, 52, and 53) highlights an emphasis on intercultural understanding among respondents. 97.7% (mostly and strongly disagree) of respondents reported to be interested in the values and customs of other cultures (statement 51). Institution C had the highest percentage of respondents who strongly agreed (77.8%) with this statement, followed by B and D (75% each).

Furthermore, 97.7% (strongly and mostly agree) showed interest in learning about people's beliefs and the way they see the world (statement 52), and 95.4% (strongly and mostly agree) expressed for respect the values and customs of other cultures (statement 53). It may suggest appreciation and openness to cultural diversity among respondents.

Table 29 Openness to Cultural Diversity (Statements 51, 52, and 53)

51. I am very interested in the values and customs of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	7	63.6	4	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	15	75.0	4	20.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	7	77.8	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	32	72.7	11	25.0	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

52. I am interested in learning about people's beliefs and the way they see the world												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	15	75.0	4	20.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	8	88.9	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	32	72.7	11	25.0	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

53. I respect the values and customs of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	7	63.6	4	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	17	85.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	9	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	35	79.5	7	15.9	2	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 30 (results from the statements 54, 55, and 56) illustrates respondents' ability to adapt to new people, places, and situations, as well as the ability to value and respect other cultures. Additionally, it shows efforts among respondents to understand people from other cultures by imagining their perspectives. 95.4% (strongly and mostly agree) reported to be able to adjust to new people, places, and situations (statement 58), 97.7% (strongly and mostly agree) claimed to believe that people from other cultures have valuable things to teach (statement 59), and 88.6% (strongly and mostly agree) would try to understand people from other cultures by imagining their perspectives (statement 60). Overall, most respondents showed a positive attitude toward learning from other cultures.

Table 30 Respondents' Cultural Adaptability (Statements 54, 55, and 56)

54. I am able to adjust to new people, places, and situations												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	5	45.5	6	54.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	13	65.0	6	30.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	25	56.8	17	38.6	2	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

55. I feel that people from other cultures have many valuable things to teach me												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	8	72.7	3	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	17	85.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	9	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	37	84.1	6	13.6	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

56. I sometimes try to understand people from other cultures better by imagining how things look from their perspective												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	7	63.6	3	27.3	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	10	50.0	7	35.0	3	15.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	25	56.8	14	31.8	5	11.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 31 (results from the statements 57 and 58) explores respondents' adaptability in intercultural situations and their perception of similarities between cultures. 75% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 57 'I change my non-verbal behaviour when an intercultural situation requires it'. It may suggest a willingness to adapt to non-verbal communication in intercultural settings. However, Institution A had the highest percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed (27.3%) with statement 57. In the same way, 75% (strongly and mostly) stated to often notice personality or behaviour similarities between people from different cultures (statement 58). It could indicate a tendency to recognise similarities across cultures. On the other hand, 35% of respondents from Institution B neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

Table 31 Respondents' Behaviours and Perceptions in Intercultural Situations
(Statements 57 and 58)

57. I change my non-verbal behaviour when an intercultural situation requires it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	2	18.2	5	45.5	3	27.3	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	6	30.0	9	45.0	5	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	4	44.4	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	15	34.1	18	40.9	10	22.7	1	2.3	0	0.0	44	100.0

58. I often notice personality/behaviour similarities between people who belong to completely different cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	3	27.3	5	45.5	3	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	5	25.0	8	40.0	7	35.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	15	34.1	18	40.9	11	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 32 (results from the statements 60, 61, and 62) focuses on respondents' comfort and adaptability in intercultural interactions. 34.1% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that they found it easier to categorize people based on cultural identity (statement 60), and 34.1% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The variability in opinion may suggest resistance to stereotype people. 86.4% (strongly and mostly) claimed that could imagine themselves living or interacting with people from other cultures (statement 61). It may indicate a willingness to interact with people from other cultures. Similarly, 70.4% (strongly and mostly) reported to be able to express their ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures (statement 62), which could suggest confidence in intercultural communication skills.

Table 32 Cultural Adaptation (Statements 60, 61, and 62)

60. I find it easier to 'categorize/classify' people based on their cultural identity than on their personality												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	2	18.2	6	54.5	0	0.0	3	27.3	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	6	30.0	10	50.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	44.4	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	15	34.1	15	34.1	8	18.2	1	2.3	44	100.0

61. I can imagine myself living/interacting with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	4	36.4	5	45.5	1	9.1	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	11	55.0	6	30.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	5	55.6	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	23	52.3	15	34.1	4	9.1	2	4.5	0	0.0	44	100.0

62. I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	4	36.4	4	36.4	2	18.2	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	6	30.0	7	35.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	5	55.6	1	11.1	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	14	31.8	17	38.6	9	20.5	4	9.1	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 33 (results from the statements 63 and 64) explores respondents' comfort levels and openness in intercultural interactions. It shows that respondents tended to feel more comfortable and connected with people from similar cultures, although they also showed openness to interact with people from other cultures. For instance, 65.9% (strongly and mostly) of respondents stated to feel closer to people from similar cultures because they can relate better to them (statement 63). Institution A had the highest percentage of agreement (72.7%), which may indicate a preference for relating to similar cultures.

On the other hand, 77.3% (strongly and mostly) of respondents claimed to often look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures (statement 64). Institutions D and C showed the highest percentage of agreement (75% and 66.7%, respectively), which may suggest openness for intercultural communication.

Table 33 Diversity and Interaction (Statements 63 and 64)

63. I feel closer to people from cultures similar to mine, because I can relate better to them												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	9.1	8	72.7	2	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	10	50.0	7	35.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	5	55.6	1	11.1	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	24	54.5	11	25	4	9.1	0	0.0	44	100.0

64. I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	3	27.3	6	54.5	1	9.1	1	9.1	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	6	30.0	7	35.0	6	30.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	18	40.9	16	36.4	8	18.2	2	4.5	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 34 (results from the statements 65 and 66) delves into the nuances of respondents' attitudes towards cultural diversity. Overall, respondents showed appreciation for cultural diversity, although their perception about differentiating cultures with similar customs varied across the institutions. 54.6% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 65 'I wish other cultures were similar to mine', and 36.4% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. It could be inferred that respondents who felt more connected to their own culture may be less open to cultural diversity. Institutions B and C showed uncertainty (neither agree nor disagree) in statement 65, 45% and 44.4%, respectively.

29.5% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that they have difficulty differentiating cultures with similar customs (statement 66), 25% disagreed (mostly and strongly), and 45.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In general, it could indicate factors such as institutional context, cultural background or individual experience influence the perception of different cultures.

Table 34 Respondents' Wish for Cultural Similarity (Statements 65 and 66)

65. I wish other cultures were similar to mine												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	18.2	6	54.5	1	9.1	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	0	0.0	9	45.0	7	35.0	3	15.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	2	4.5	2	4.5	16	36.4	16	36.4	8	18.2	44	100.0

66. I have difficulty differentiating cultures that have similar customs												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	4	36.4	3	27.3	2	18.2	2	18.2	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	4	20.0	10	50.0	3	15.0	2	10.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	3	33.3	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	2	4.5	11	25.0	20	45.5	7	15.9	4	9.1	44	100.0

Table 35 (results from the statements 67 and 68) explores respondents' adaptability in verbal communication across cultures. The data suggests a possible trend of openness to adjusting communication styles, but also reveals some variation in responses across institutions. For instance, 43.1% (strongly and mostly agree) of respondents claimed to modify their way of disagreeing to fit the cultural setting (statement 67), and 34.1% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Overall, it could indicate less verbal adaptability and cultural sensitivity. 52.3% (strongly and mostly agree) stated to change their verbal behaviour in intercultural interactions when necessary (statement 78). It may suggest verbal adaptability based on cultural context.

Table 35 Verbal Adaptability in Intercultural Contexts (Statements 67 and 68)

67. I modify the way I disagree with others to fit the cultural setting												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	5	45.5	4	36.4	2	18.2	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	4	20.0	8	40.0	3	15.0	3	15.0	20	100.0
C	0	0.0	5	55.6	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	3	75.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	2	4.5	17	38.6	15	34.1	7	15.9	3	6.8	44	100.0

68. I change my verbal behaviour (e.g., accent, tone) when intercultural interaction requires it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	5	45.5	4	36.4	2	18.2	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	3	15.0	8	40.0	5	25.0	3	15.0	1	5.0	20	100.0
C	2	22.2	4	44.4	1	11.1	2	22.2	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	18	40.9	12	27.3	8	18.2	1	2.3	44	100.0

Table 36 (results from the statement 69) shows a range of viewpoints on the impact of globalisation on culture. There was no clear consensus on whether globalisation is a positive or negative force for cultural diversity. 38.6% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 69 'Globalization promotes homogenization and may result in the loss of cultural identity and local values'. Meanwhile, 34.1% agreed (strongly and mostly), and 27.3% mostly disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the balanced distribution of opinions may indicate a certain level of uncertainty or ambivalence about the impact of globalization on cultural identity and local values.

Table 36 Opinions on whether Globalisation promotes Homogenisation
(Statement 69)

69. Globalization promotes homogenization and may result in the loss of cultural identity and local values												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	2	18.2	1	9.1	4	36.4	4	36.4	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	1	5.0	4	20.0	8	40.0	7	35.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	4	44.4	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	10	22.7	17	38.6	12	27.3	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 37 (results from the statements 70, 71, and 72) sheds light on the various factors that can influence intercultural communication in English. The data suggests that personal experiences, cultural background, and language proficiency may influence interactions. 52.3% (mostly and strongly disagree) of respondents stated to not get nervous and/or confused when interacting with people from other cultures (statement 70), whereas 29.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Institution C (in Sri Lanka) had the highest percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 70. 97.7% (strongly and mostly agree) of respondents claimed that speaking English is important for interacting with people from other cultures and regions (statement 71), which suggests recognition of English as the global language for intercultural communication. Furthermore, 81.8% (strongly and mostly agree) stated to feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures (statement 72). Institution E (in the UK) had the highest percentage (100%) of agreement (mostly and strongly) with statement 72. On the other hand, Institutions B (in Spain) and D (in Brazil) had the highest percentages of 'neither agree nor disagree' responses, 25% each. It could indicate lower confidence in speaking English.

Table 37 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 70, 71, and 72)

70. I get nervous and/or confused when I interact with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	18.2	4	36.4	3	27.3	11	100.0
B	0	0.0	5	25.0	6	30.0	6	30.0	3	15.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
Total	1	2.3	7	15.9	13	29.5	14	31.8	9	20.5	44	100.0

71. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	7	63.6	4	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	12	60.0	7	35.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	28	63.6	15	34.1	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	44	100.0

72. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	7	35.0	7	35.0	5	25.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	4	44.4	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	100.0
D	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	19	43.2	17	38.6	7	15.9	1	2.3	0	0.0	44	100.0

Table 38 (results from the statements 73 and 74) examines respondents' comfort levels when using English to communicate with L1 or proficient speakers and people from their own culture. For example, 54.5% (mostly and strongly disagree) claimed to not feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 or proficient speakers (statement 73), 25% strongly and mostly agreed, and 20.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Institutions C (in Sri Lanka) and D (in Brazil) had the highest percentages of agreement (strongly and mostly) with statement 73, 44.4% and 25% respectively.

Moreover, 36.4% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that they felt more comfortable when interacting in English with people from their own culture (statement 74). 34.1% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 29.6% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 74. Institutions C (in Sri Lanka) and B (in Spain) had the highest percentages of

agreement (strongly and mostly) with statement 74, 66.6% and 35% respectively. Data suggests a slight preference for interacting with people from their own culture.

Table 38 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 73 and 74)

73. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 ('native') speakers or proficient speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	18.2	4	36.4	3	27.3	11	100.0
B	3	15.0	1	5.0	5	25.0	7	35.0	4	20.0	20	100.0
C	1	11.1	3	33.3	1	11.1	2	22.2	2	22.2	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	5	11.4	6	13.6	9	20.5	13	29.5	11	25.0	44	100.0

74. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	18.2	6	54.5	3	27.3	0	0.0	11	100.0
B	2	10.0	5	25.0	7	35.0	5	25.0	1	5.0	20	100.0
C	4	44.4	2	22.2	1	11.1	1	11.1	1	11.1	9	100.0
D	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	7	15.9	9	20.5	15	34.1	9	20.5	4	9.1	44	100.0

The next section will present the findings from the post-VE survey that was conducted after the completion of VETSDELT in Cycle 1 (Stage 3a).

5.2.1.2 Post-VE Survey: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – November to December 2022

Table 39 (results from the statements 12, 13, and 14) explores respondents' views on English standardisation and ownership. 73.1% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 12 'Only American and British English should be taught as standard'. All respondents from Institutions C and D disagreed (strongly and mostly) with this statement, 100% each.

However, responses were evenly distributed for each category in statement 13 'English belongs to everyone who speaks it, and it is nobody's mother tongue'. 30.7% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly), 34.6% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 34.6%

disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 13. It suggests a diversity of opinions among respondents and different understandings of English ownership.

42.3% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces mainly the UK or the USA (statement 14). 26.9% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 30.8% agreed (strongly and mostly) with this statement. Institution D (in Brazil) had the highest percentage (66.7%) of agreement. The result suggests a belief in the historical ties of English to the UK and USA.

Table 39 Participants' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership
(Statements 12, 13, and 14)

12. Only American and British English should be taught as standard												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
B	0	0.0	1	5.9	4	23.5	8	47.1	4	23.5	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100.0
Total	0	0.0	2	7.7	5	19.2	11	42.3	8	30.8	26	100.0
13. English belongs to everyone who speaks it and it is nobody's mother tongue												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	1	5.9	2	11.8	6	35.3	4	23.5	4	23.5	17	100.0
C	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	3	11.5	5	19.2	9	34.6	5	19.2	4	15.4	26	100.0
14. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
B	0	0.0	6	35.3	5	29.4	5	29.4	1	5.9	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	3	11.5	8	30.8	7	26.9	6	23.1	2	7.7	26	100.0

Table 40 (results from the statements 15, 16, and 17) reinforces positive viewpoints toward English varieties, also identified in Table 39. 61.6% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that it is important to teach and learn various English varieties (statement 15).

Institution D had the highest percentage (66.6%) of agreement (strongly), and Institution D had 100% of agreement (mostly) with statement 15.

77% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 16 ‘Any English variation is illegitimate and should not be taught or learned’, while 73.1% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 17 ‘Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)’. The result indicates recognition of different accents, appreciation for different (local) English varieties, and awareness of English as a global language.

Table 40 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 15, 16, and 17)

15. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	6	35.2	4	23.5	4	23.5	2	11.8	1	5.9	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	2	66.6	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	8	30.8	8	30.8	5	19.2	4	15.4	1	3.8	26	100.0

16. Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
B	1	5.9	0	0.0	2	11.7	8	47.0	6	35.3	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100.0
Total	2	7.7	1	3.8	3	11.5	10	38.5	10	38.5	26	100.0

17. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	10	58.9	5	29.4	1	5.9	1	5.9	0	0.0	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	11	42.3	8	30.8	3	11.5	4	15.4	0	0.0	26	100.0

Table 41 (results from the statements 18, 19, and 20) sheds light on respondents’ perspectives about the concept of native-speakerism in ELT. The data suggests a challenge to the traditional view that ‘native speakers’ are inherently better English teachers. 76.9% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with the idea that L2 speakers of English lack

sufficient competence and are less suited to teach English than L1 speakers (statement 18).

75% of respondents from Institution C strongly disagreed with this statement.

88.5% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 19 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers are the ideal, more qualified and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native speaker') teachers'. Overall, data from statements 18 and 19 may suggest that the respondents, as L2 speakers, appreciate the variety and richness of L2 English teachers' perspectives and experiences in ELT, as well as their ability to relate to the needs and challenges of L2 learners.

42.3% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that L1 teachers represent 'Western culture' and the ideal English language model and methodology (statement 20). On the other hand, 38.4% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with the statement. It indicates divided opinions with a tendency towards disagreement. Besides, it can be inferred that the perception of native-speakerism in ELT varies across cultures.

Table 41 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 18, 19, and 20)

18. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack sufficient competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 ('native') speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	17.6	9	52.9	4	100.0
B	2	11.8	0	0.0	3	17.6	1	25.0	3	75.0	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.6	1	50.0	3	100.0
Total	2	7.7	0	0.0	4	15.4	6	23.1	14	53.8	26	100.0
19. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are the ideal, more qualified and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native speaker') teachers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.7	6	35.2	9	52.9	4	100.0
B	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	75.0	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	2	66.6	3	100.0
Total	0	0.0	1	3.8	2	7.7	8	30.8	15	57.7	26	100.0
20. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0

B	1	5.9	1	5.9	9	52.9	3	17.6	3	17.6	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.6	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	3	11.5	2	7.7	11	42.3	7	26.9	3	11.5	26	100.0

Table 42 (results from the statements 21 and 22) sheds light on a concerning trend: the perception of discrimination against L2 (non-native) English teachers in the job market. 80.8% of respondents agree (strongly and mostly) that L1 teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace (statement 21). 100% of respondents from Institution D strongly agreed with this statement. It indicates a widespread perception of discrimination against L2 teachers.

61.5% of respondents agree (strongly and mostly) with statement 22 'I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners'. It may be implied that data reinforces respondents' perception of discrimination against L2 teachers based on 'native speaker' status.

Table 42 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 21 and 22)

21. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged on the job market and/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	7	41.1	6	35.2	3	17.6	1	5.9	0	0.0	17	100.0
C	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	12	46.2	9	34.6	4	15.4	1	3.8	0	0.0	26	100.0

22. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
B	3	17.6	7	41.1	6	35.2	1	5.9	0	0.0	17	100.0
C	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	3	100.0
Total	5	19.2	11	42.3	6	23.1	1	3.8	3	11.5	26	100.0

Table 43 (results from the statement 23) examines respondents' anxiety related to using technology for English interaction. 80.8% (mostly and strongly disagree) of respondents

stated not being worried about using technology to interact in English (statement 23). It may indicate that respondents were confident or comfortable with their digital literacy.

Table 43 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statement 23)

23. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
B	0	0.0	1	5.9	3	17.6	7	41.1	6	35.3	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	3	100.0
Total	0	0.0	1	3.8	4	15.4	11	42.3	10	38.5	26	100.0

Table 44 (results from the statements 24 and 25) illustrates the importance of English for intercultural communication and respondents' confidence in communicating with people from other cultures (statement 24). 100% of respondents (strongly and mostly agree) that speaking English is important for interacting with people from other cultures and regions, indicating a recognition of English as a global language for communication across cultures. 84.6% agreed (strongly and mostly) that they felt confident communicating in English with members of other cultures (statement 25). It suggests confidence among respondents in their ability to communicate effectively with people from other cultures.

Table 44 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 24 and 25)

24. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	13	76.5	4	23.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	100.0
C	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	22	84.6	4	15.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	26	100.0

25. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	2	50.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
B	8	47.0	5	29.4	3	17.6	1	5.9	0	0.0	17	100.0
C	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0

D	2	66.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Total	13	50.0	9	34.6	3	11.5	1	3.8	0	0.0	26	100.0

Table 45 (results from the statements 26 and 27) explores respondents' comfort levels when using English to interact with L1 or proficient speakers and people from their own culture across the institutions. 57.7% of respondents (mostly and strongly disagree) claimed not to feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 or proficient speakers (statement 26), and 26.9% agreed (mostly and strongly) with the statement.

Moreover, 38.4% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 27 'I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture'. 30.8% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 30.7% agreed (strongly and mostly) with the statement. It indicates divided opinions with a tendency towards disagreement, which could suggest a willingness to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Table 45 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 26 and 27)

26. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 ('native') speakers or proficient speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
B	1	5.9	5	29.4	3	17.6	5	29.4	3	17.6	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	3	100.0
Total	1	3.8	6	23.1	4	15.4	7	26.9	8	30.8	26	100.0
27. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
A	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
B	3	17.6	3	17.6	5	29.4	4	23.5	2	11.7	17	100.0
C	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
D	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.6	0	0.0	1	33.3	3	100.0
Total	3	11.5	5	19.2	8	30.8	5	19.2	5	19.2	26	100.0

To understand how VETSDELT shaped respondents' perspectives, the next section examines the pre- and post-survey data from Cycle 1 (Stage 3a). This analysis will explore changes in their attitudes, beliefs, and overall changes.

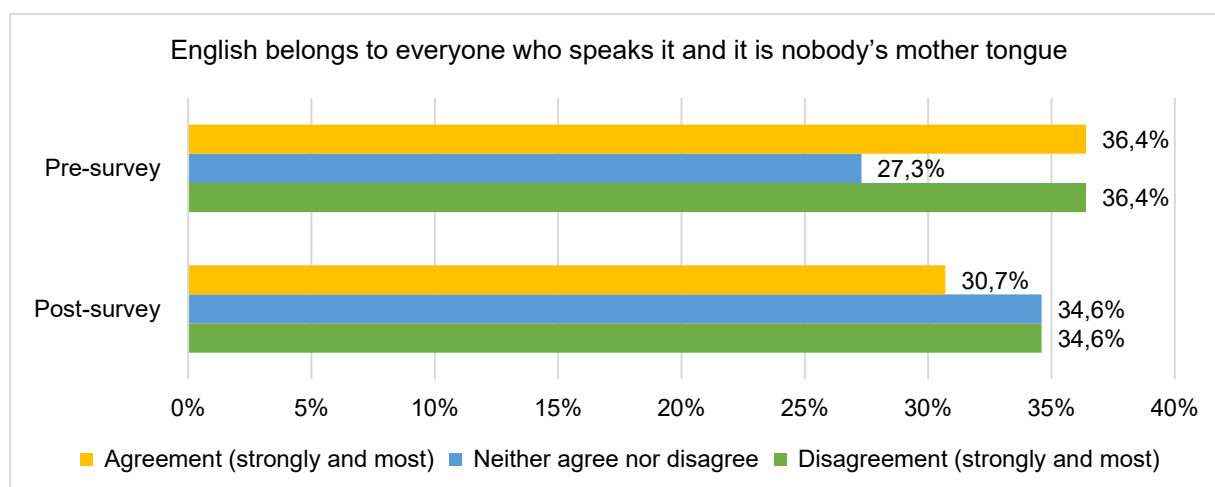
5.2.1.3 Pre- and Post-Surveys Results: Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)

The analysis of the pre- and post-surveys showed a lack of significant shift in attitudes, ideology, and beliefs among respondents after VETSDELT in Cycle 1. This can be attributed to sampling bias in the post-survey. 17 out of 26 responses came from a single institution, Institution B in Spain, what leads to a presentation of this specific context and perspectives. Therefore, the views and experiences of respondents from other institutions were underrepresented.

However, as will be presented in the results from the focus group, this sampling bias does not represent the overall impact of the VETSDELT on participants' beliefs in Cycle 1. The data triangulation suggests that there was change in beliefs among participants from other institutions. As suggested by Flick (2013), the combination of several data collection instruments was necessary to promote data triangulation and gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of VETSDELT.

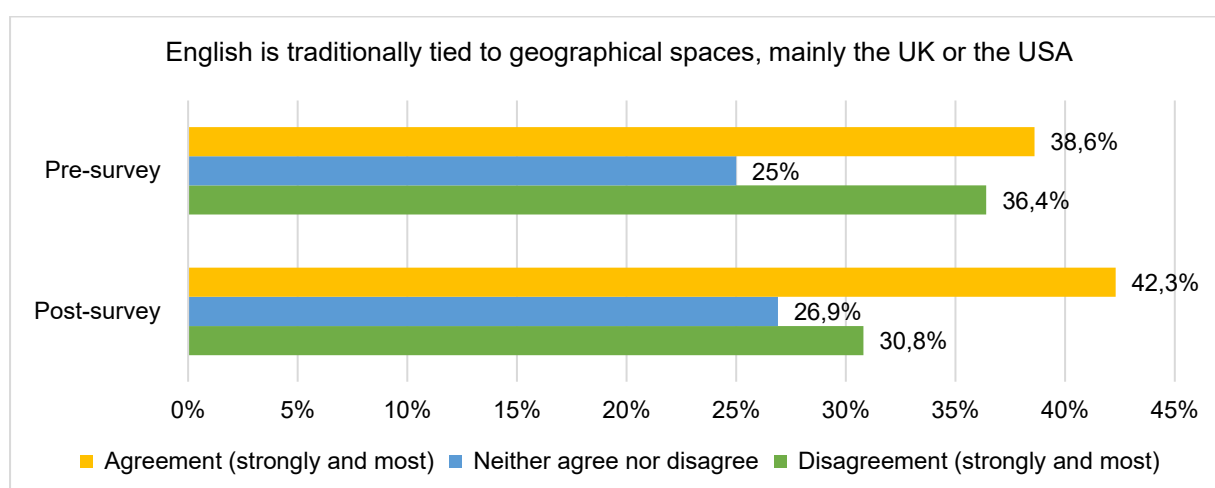
For instance, Graphs 1 and 2 show no significant change between the pre- and post-survey in participants' perspectives on the standardisation and ownership of English. The small variations observed do not indicate a significant change in participants' perspectives toward the standardisation and ownership of English. In Graph 1 a slight decrease was observed from 36.4% in the pre-survey to 34.6% in the post-survey regarding the belief that English belongs to all speakers.

Graph 1 No shift in the Perception of English as a Global Language



Similarly, Graph 2 shows slight increase from 38.6% to 42.3%, indicating that participants agreed that English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA. It reflects a likely reinforcement of the traditional view of English being linked to the Global North in ELT.

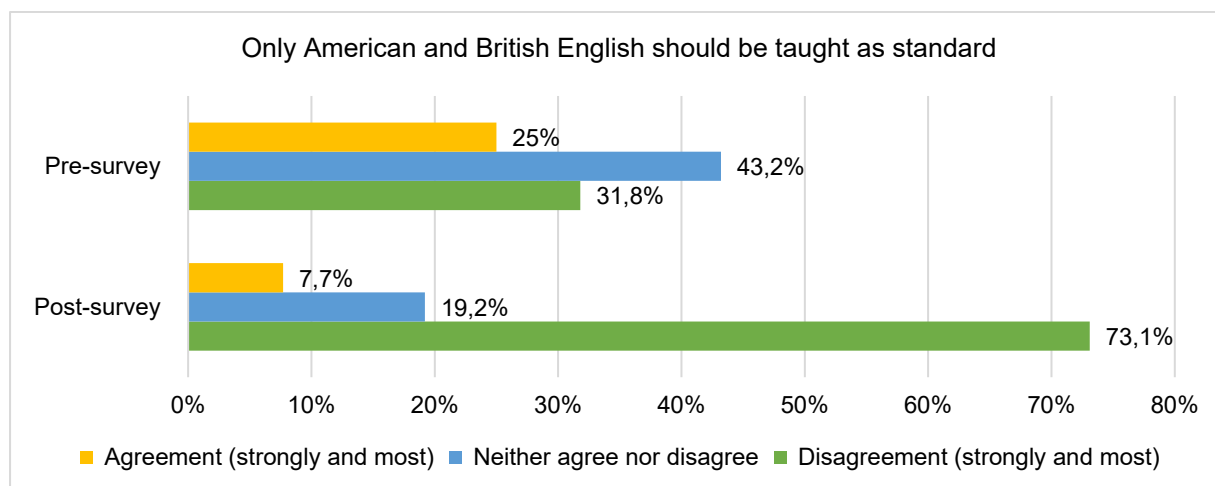
Graph 2 No Shift in the Perception of English Geographical Ties



On the other hand, Graph 3 illustrates a rejection to 'standard English'. Before engaging in VETSDELTA, 31.8% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) that only American and

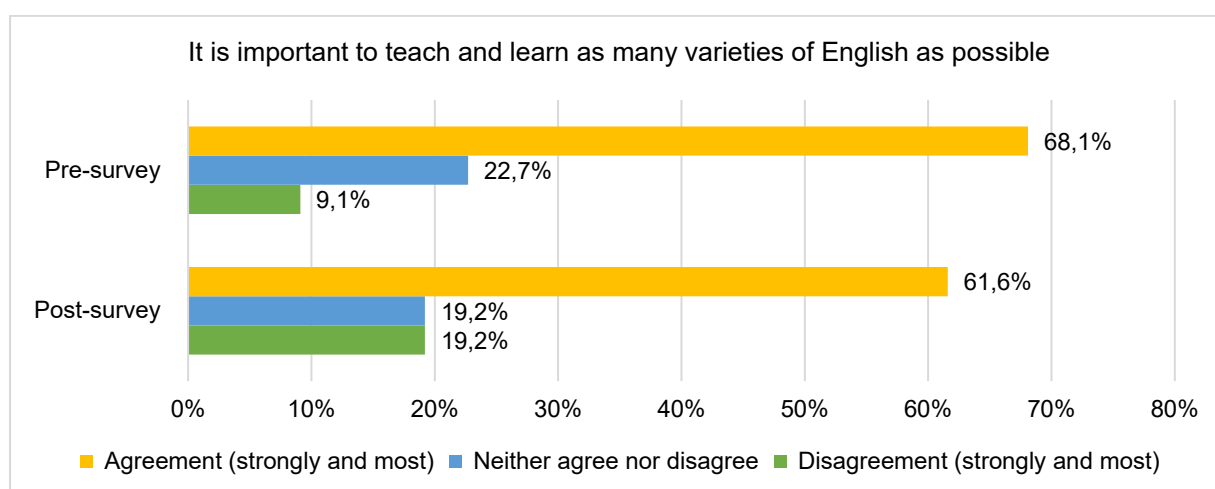
British English should be taught as standard. This number increased to 73.1%, indicating a clear shift in participants' opinion.

Graph 3 Shift in Belief of Standard English



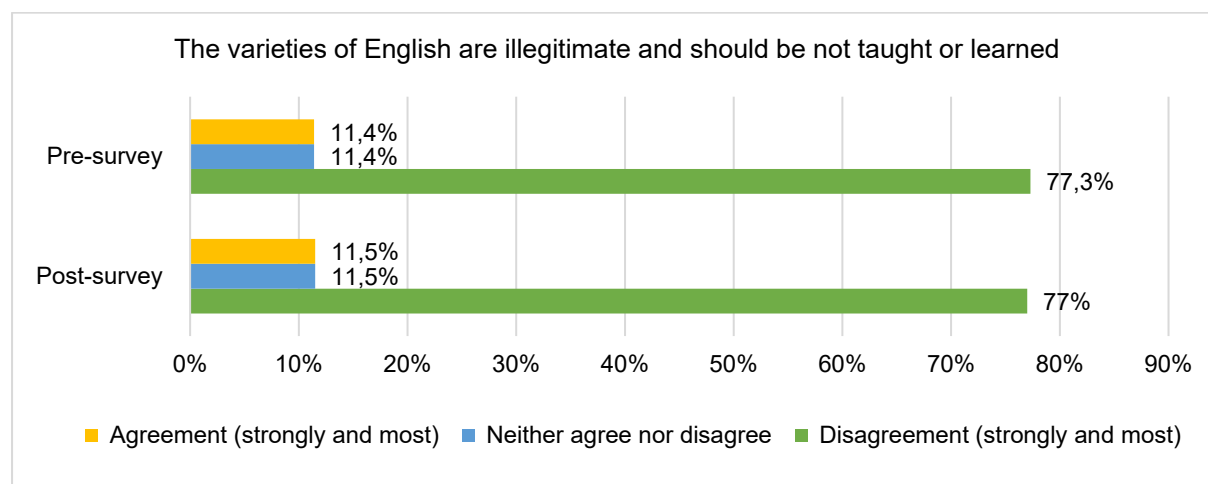
While respondents' opinions remained consistent as shown in Graphs 4, 5, and 6, there was a slight decrease in support for embracing multiple varieties of English. For instance, in Graph 4 there was an increased from 9.1% to 19.2% of respondents opposing to the importance of teaching and learning English varieties. The support for English varieties decreased from 68.1% to 61.6% of responses.

Graph 4 Rejection of English Varieties



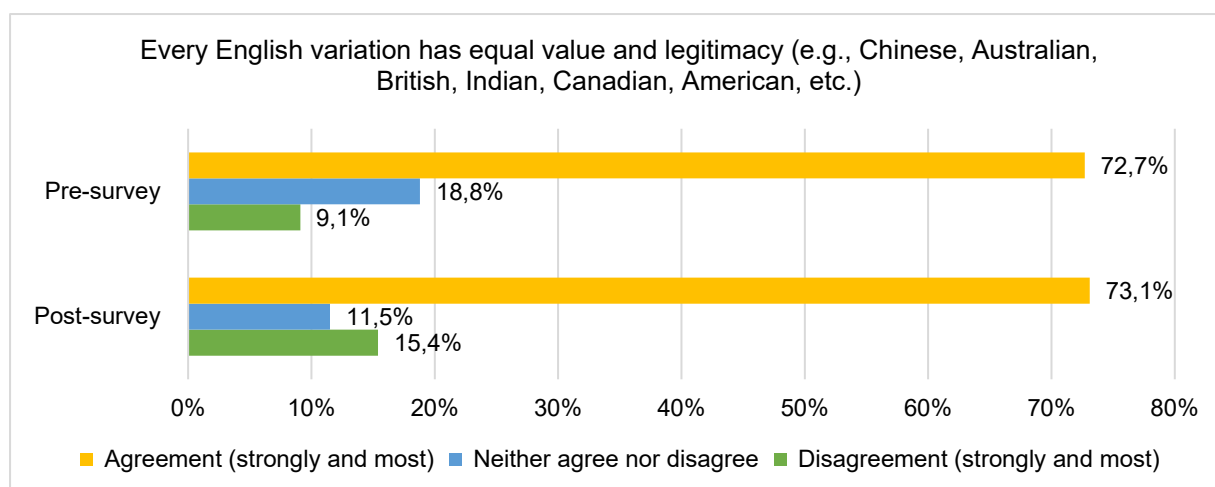
Respondents consistently opposed the notion that English varieties are illegitimate and should not be taught or learned (Graph 5). Approximately 77% of participants disagreed (strongly and mostly) with this statement in both pre- and post-surveys.

Graph 5 The Importance of Teaching and Learning English Varieties



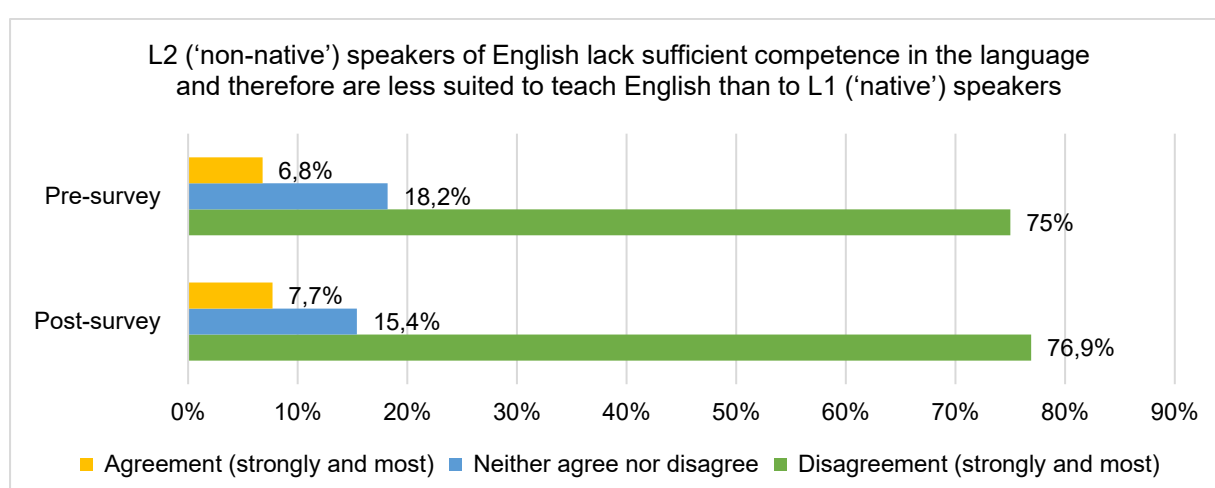
Similarly, approximately 73% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) with that ‘every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)’, as shown in Graph 6. There was also an increase in the percentage of respondents who disagreed (strongly and mostly) with the legitimacy of English varieties, from 9.1% to 15.4%.

Graph 6 Legitimacy of English Varieties



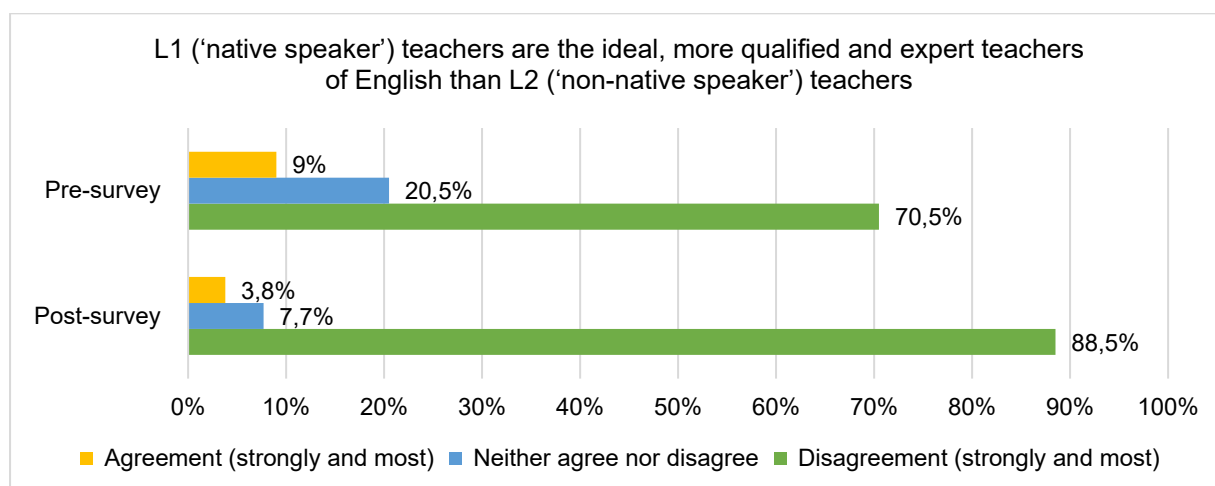
The data presented in Graphs 7, 8, and 9 reveals that respondents' views on native-speakerism in ELT remained relatively stable. In Graph 7, for example, the percentage of respondents who disagreed (strongly and mostly) that L2 English speakers lack sufficient competence in the language increased slightly from 75% to 76.9%, while the percentage of those who agreed increased from 6.8% to 7.7%.

Graph 7 Rejection of the Idea of L2 Speaker Incompetence



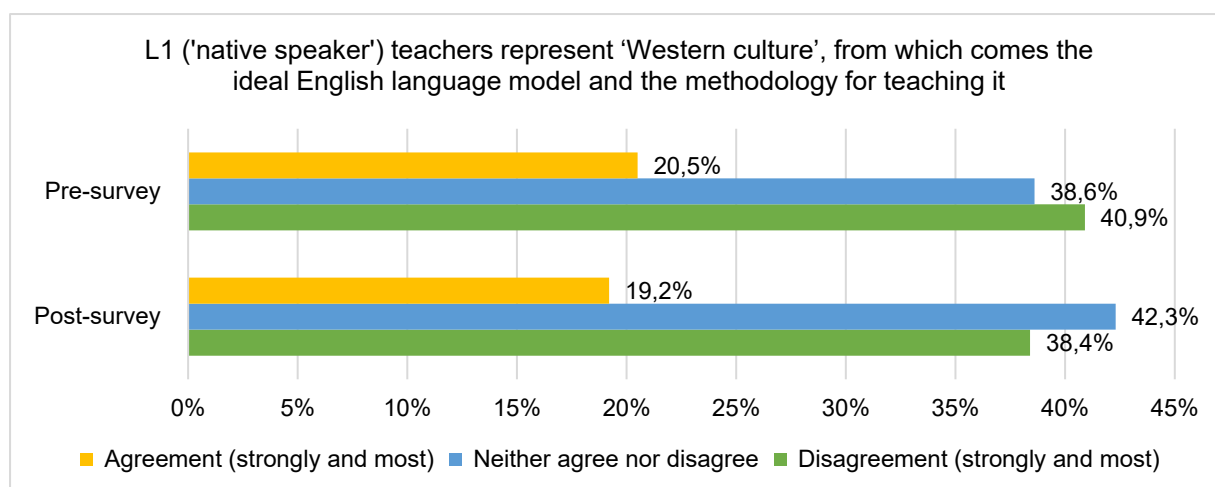
However, there was a significant increase in the percentage of responses disagreeing that L1 teachers are the ideal English teachers compared to L2 teachers, from 70.5% to 88.5% (Graph 8). This suggests a recognition of the contribution of all qualified English language teachers to ELT, despite their cultural background, as proposed by Holliday (2015).

Graph 8 Rejection of Native-Speakerism Ideology



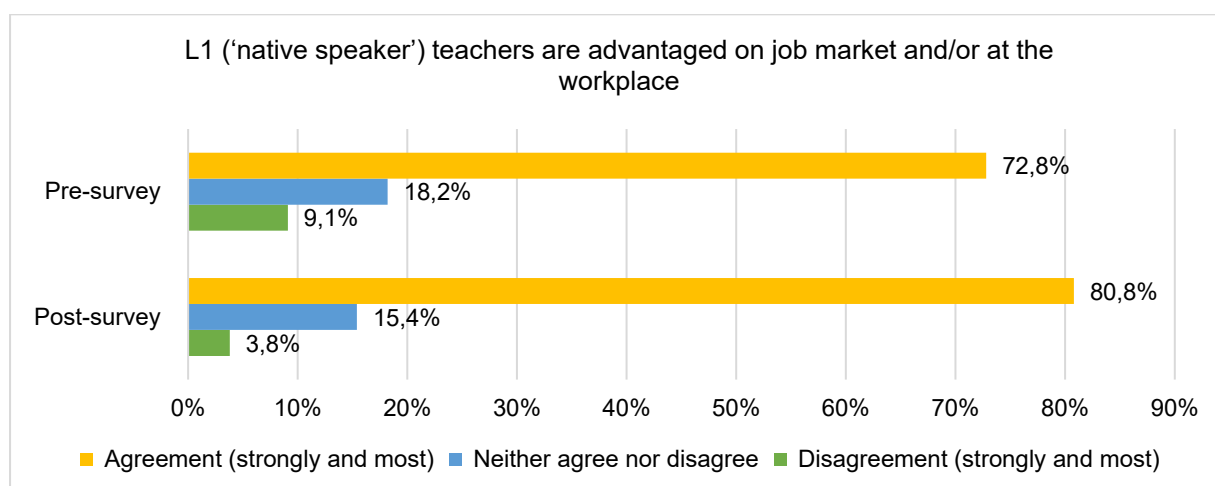
The data Graph 9 shows a slight shift in attitudes toward native-speakerism. While most respondents still disagree with the statement that L1 teachers represent the ideal English language model (from 40.9% to 38.4%), there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed (from 38.6% to 42.3%). This may suggest more awareness of the consequences of native-speakerism and less inclination to associate L1 teachers with 'Western culture' and the ideal model.

Graph 9 Opposition to Native-Speakerism Ideology



The data in Graphs 10 and 11 suggest a slight shift in attitudes toward the perceived advantages and prestige of L1 English teachers. As shown in Graphs 10, most respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that L1 teachers are advantaged in the job market and at the workplace (from 72.8% to 80.8%).

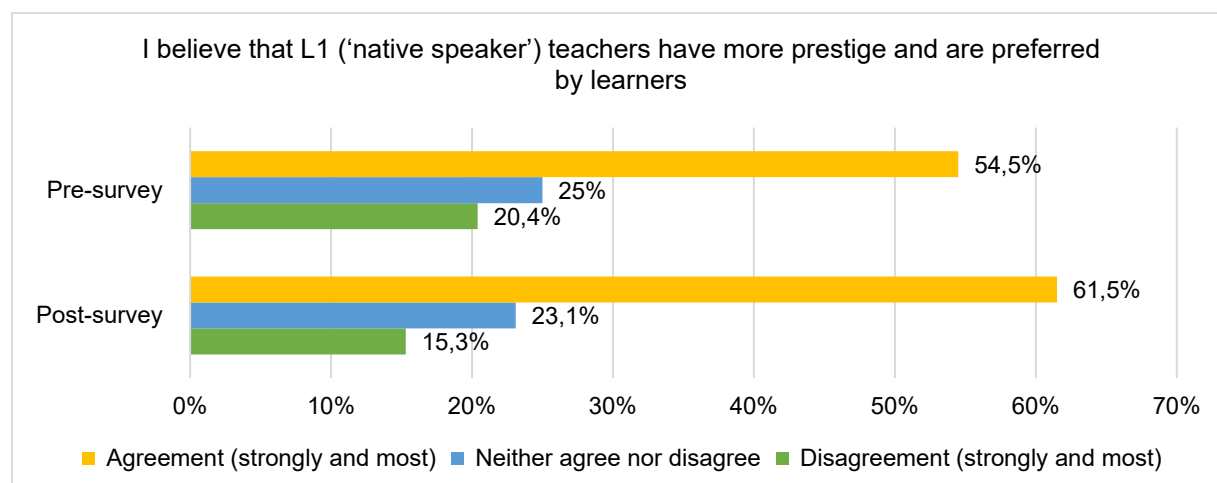
Graph 10 Advantage and Prestige of L1 English Teachers



Graph 11 indicates a growing belief that L1 teachers are perceived as having more prestige and are preferred by learners, increasing from 54.5% to 61.5%. This suggests that

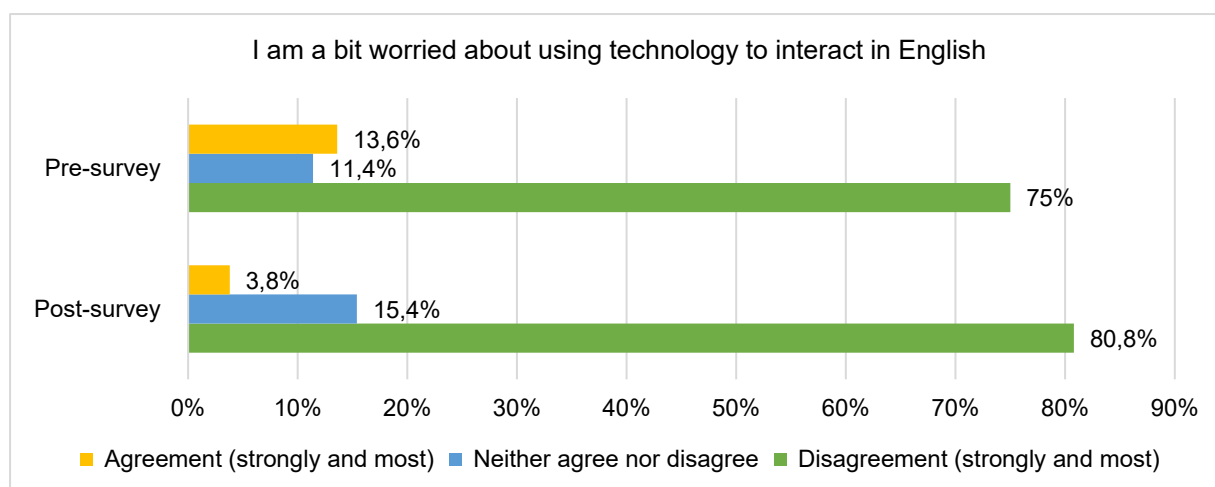
respondents may still hold onto the notion that L1 teachers possess an authentic understanding of the language, perhaps due to the cultural and linguistic familiarity associated with native speakers.

Graph 11 Learner Preference for L1 English Teacher



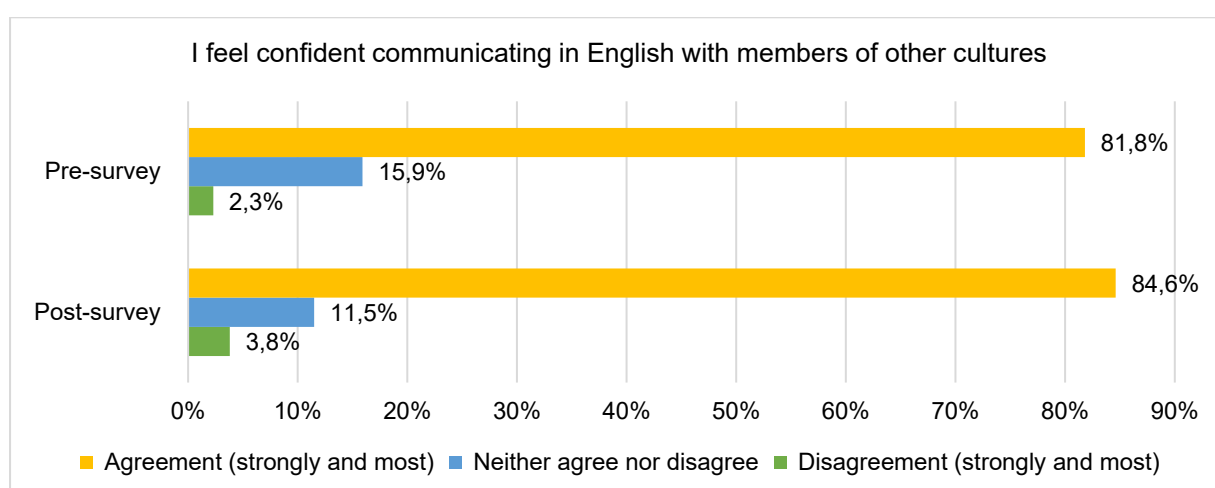
The data presented in Graph 12 indicates a decrease in anxiety among respondents regarding the use of technology for English interaction. Specifically, 80.8% of respondents reported feeling less anxious about this after participating in VETSDELT. This suggests that over time respondents became more comfortable with their English proficiency and the digital tools employed used. Exposure to various English varieties and hands-on experience with technology likely contributed to this positive change. As Fondo and Jacobetty (2020) argue, scaffolding online interactions and familiarising students with digital tools can reduce anxiety in VE settings.

Graph 12 Anxiety related to Technology and English



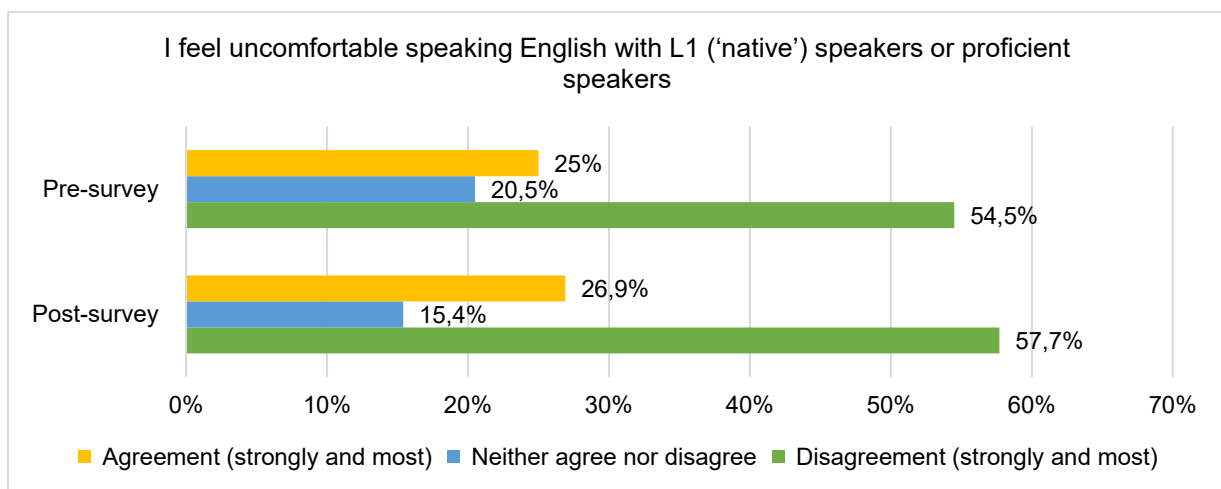
Graphs 13, 14, and 15 shows a positive impact of an VETSDELT on respondents' confidence in communicating in English with speakers from other cultures, despite slight overall variation. Overall, Graph 13 suggest that VETSDELT helped to improve respondents' confidence in communicating in English with speakers from other cultures, an increase from 81.4% to 84.6%. While the overall variation is slight, the increase in the percentage of respondents who agree with the statement is a positive indicator.

Graph 13 Confidence in Intercultural Communication through English



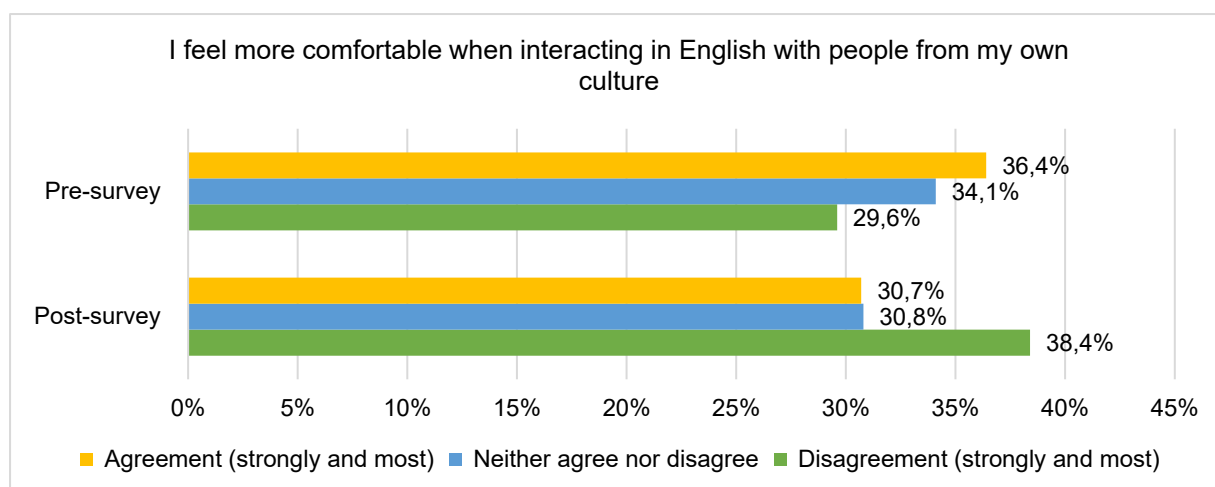
Despite a slight increase of 3.2%, VETSDELTA seems to have positively impacted respondents' comfort levels when speaking English with native or proficient speakers (Graph 14). 57.7% of post-survey participants disagreed (strongly or most) with the statement 'I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 'native' speakers or proficient speakers', compared to 54.5% in the pre-survey.

Graph 14 Confidence in speaking English with L1/Proficient Speakers



Overall, Graph 15 suggests a slight increase in comfort levels among respondents in speaking English with people from their own culture after the survey. While there were slight variations in the percentages, the results for all three categories are relatively similar, both before and after the survey. This suggests that there was no significant shift in attitudes or comfort levels regarding interacting in English with people from one's own culture.

Graph 15 Comfort Level in speaking English with People from the same Culture



5.2.1.4 Pre-VE Survey: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – March to April 2023

The total number of respondents in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b) was 65 and all gave their informed consent to participate in this project. Most respondents (19) were from institution F, followed by institutions F (18), H (16), E (7), and G (5). Most of them were female, 56 out of 65 (86.2%), followed by 7 (10.8%) males, 1 (1.5%) non-binary, and 1 (1.5%) who did not specify their gender. Regarding their age, 60 respondents (92.3%) were in the 18-30 age group, and 5 were in the 31 or above group (see Table 46).

Table 46 Demographic Data of Respondents who completed the Pre-VE Project Survey in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b)

Institution	Age		Gender			Level of proficiency		Have you ever taught before?		Length of teaching experience (year)		Student (ST), practicing teacher (PT), or teacher trainer (TT)			Total
	>30	<31	M	F	N/A	>B1	<B2	Yes	No	>3	<4	ST	PT	TT	
E	5	2	0	7	0	0	7	5	2	3	2	7	0	0	7
F	18	1	3	16	0	0	19	8	11	7	1	18	0	1	19
G	4	1	0	4	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	4	0	1	5
H	16	0	2	13	1	13	3	6	10	4	2	15	1	0	16
I	17	1	2	16	0	0	18	14	4	11	3	17	1	0	18

49 respondents (75.3%) self-rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate (B2), while only 16 (24.7%) rated themselves as lower intermediate (B1), according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020). All respondents from institutions E, F and I rated their proficiency level in English as higher intermediate to advanced. Institution H had the highest proportion of respondents who rated their English proficiency as lower intermediate (B1), 13 out of 16 or 81.2%.

Most respondents (35) had some teaching experience, and only 6 reported not teaching English before. Amongst the 35 respondents with teaching experience, 27 (77.1%) reported having 3 years or less of experience, and 8 (22.9%) reported having 4 years or more of experience. Institution I had the highest proportion of respondents with more than 3 years of teaching experience (11 out of 18), and institution F had the lowest proportion of respondents with prior teaching experience (8 out of 19). Regarding their teaching careers, 61 respondents (93.8%) were pre-service teachers (students), 2 were practicing teachers, and 2 were teacher trainers.

Table 47 (respondents' cultural and linguistic diversity in Cycle 2) shows the diversity of languages and cultures among respondents in Cycle 2 by nationality, first languages L1s, and L2 or ALs. Respondents came from 11 different nationalities and spoke 12 L1s and 17 L2s. Those from institution E were the most culturally and linguistically diverse, as they came from six different countries and spoke seven different L1s and L2s. Respondents from institution H were the least culturally and linguistically diverse, as they all came from Brazil and spoke only Brazilian Portuguese as their L1 and English as L2, followed by respondents from institution G, as they all came from China and spoke only Chinese as their L1 and English and German as L2.

Table 47 Respondents' Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b)

Institution	Nationalities	L1(s)	L2 (s)
E	Bangladeshi	Bangla	English
	Malaysian	English	Hausa
	Nigerian (2)	Idoma	Hindi
	South Korean	Korean	Igbo
	Thai	Malay	Urdu
	Vietnamese	Thai	Yoruba
F		Vietnamese	English
			French
			German
G	Turkish	Turkish	Russian
	Turkmen	Turkmen	Turkish
H	Chinese	Chinese	English
I	Brazilian	Brazilian Portuguese	German
I			English
			Chinese
			English
			French
	Chinese	Chinese	Japanese
	Romanian	Romanian	Thai

Table 48 (results from the statements 22, 23, and 26) delves into a critical debate in ELT: the standardization and ownership of English. The data reveals a preference for a more inclusive view of the language. 55% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 22 'Only American and British English should be taught as standard', suggesting that they had a more inclusive and diverse view of English as a global language.

Respondents from institution H (87.5%) showed opposition to the idea of limiting standard English to American and British varieties. Institution E had the highest percentage (42.9%) of agreement with statement 22. Institution F showed a relatively even distribution across the categories, while Institution G showed a balanced distribution across all categories, with each one representing 20% of the respondents.

There was no consensus among the respondents in statement 23 'English belongs to everyone who speaks it, and it is nobody's mother tongue'. Overall, the results indicate different attitudes and beliefs about the ownership and identity of English, depending on the cultural and educational backgrounds. The institutions with the highest percentage of agreement, I (50%) and G (40%), are in China, where English is not an official language but

is widely used for communication and education. It can be inferred that the respondents from Institutions I and G were more likely to see English as a global language that does not belong to any particular group of speakers. On the other hand, 57.2% of institution E respondents, who were the most diverse group, disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 23. It may suggest that respondents from institution E were more likely to see English as a dominant and exclusive language that belongs to certain groups of 'native speakers'. 62.5% of respondents from Institution H neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 23.

50.7% (strongly and mostly) of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 26 'English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA'. It may suggest these respondents associated English with specific regions or cultures. Institutions E (71.4%), G (60%), I (55.5%), and H (50.1%) showed the highest percentage of agreement with statement 26. Institution F showed the highest proportion of respondents (47.4%) who expressed disagreement and strong disagreement with the statement.

Table 48 Neutrality of English Standardisation (Statements 22, 23, and 26)

22. Only American and British English should be taught as standard												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	3	42.9	1	14.3	1	14.3	2	28.6	7	100.0
F	0	0.0	5	26.3	6	31.6	8	42.1	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
H	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3	14	87.5	16	100.0
I	1	5.6	5	27.8	4	22.2	6	33.3	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	3	4.6	14	21.5	12	18.5	17	26.2	19	29.2	65	100.0
23. English belongs to everyone who speaks it and it is nobody's mother tongue												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	3	42.9	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	3	15.8	6	31.6	5	26.3	4	21.1	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
H	1	6.3	2	12.5	10	62.5	2	12.5	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	4	22.2	5	27.8	5	27.8	2	11.1	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	7	10.8	14	21.5	22	33.8	13	20.0	9	13.8	65	100.0
26. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%

E	0	0.0	5	71.4	0	0.0	1	14.3	1	14.3	5	100.0
F	1	5.3	6	31.6	1	5.3	9	47.4	2	10.5	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	3	18.8	5	31.3	5	31.3	2	12.5	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	4	22.2	6	33.3	4	22.2	3	16.7	1	5.6	18	100.0
Total	9	13.8	24	36.9	10	15.4	17	26.2	5	7.7	65	100.0

Table 49 (results from the statements 24 and 25) explores the importance of accent and the value of studying in an English-speaking country. 67.7% of the respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 24 'It is important to speak English with an excellent accent', with the highest percentage from institution H (93.8%). It suggests that respondents did not consider accent as a crucial factor in ELT, or they were aware of different English varieties. The data from institutions G and I show diverse opinions among the respondents from both institutions, as the responses were evenly distributed across the categories.

Similarly, 60% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 25 'It is better to learn English in an English-speaking country'. Institutions G and I showed the highest percentage agreement (strongly and mostly) with the statement, with 77.7% each, followed by E with 71.5%, and F with 63.2%. On the other hand, 62.5% from institution H neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 25.

Table 49 Views on the Importance of Accent (Statements 24 and 25)

24. It is important to speak English with an excellent accent												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	1	14.2	3	42.9	2	28.6	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	2	10.5	1	5.3	7	36.8	8	42.1	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3	5	31.3	10	62.5	16	100.0
I	5	27.8	2	11.1	2	11.1	7	38.9	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	7	10.8	6	9.2	8	12.3	23	35.4	21	32.3	65	100.0
25. It is better to learn English in an English-speaking country												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	3	42.9	0	0.0	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	6	31.6	6	31.6	3	15.8	3	15.8	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	8	44.4	6	33.3	3	16.7	1	5.6	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	2	12.5	1	6.3	7	43.8	3	18.8	3	18.8	16	100.0
I	8	44.4	6	33.3	3	16.7	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	19	29.2	20	30.8	23	20.0	9	13.8	4	6.2	65	100.0

Table 50 (results from the statements 27, 28, and 29) shows a positive attitude toward incorporating English varieties into language teaching and learning. 69.2% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 27 'It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible'. There was variation among the institutions, with some showing higher levels of agreement and others showing higher levels of disagreement. For instance, institution H (in Brazil) had the highest percentage of 'strongly agree' responses (81.3%), whereas G (in China) showed the highest percentages of 'mostly disagree' responses (60%) and 'neither agree nor disagree' responses (40%).

76.9% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 28 'Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Australian, British, Hinglish, Canadian, Spanglish, American, Chinglish, etc.)'. Institution H showed the highest percentage (81.3%) of 'strongly agree' responses for statement 28, followed by Institution I (50%). In the same way, 63.1% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 29 'The varieties of English (e.g., Spanglish, Frenglish, Chinglish, Hinglish) are illegitimate and should be not taught or learned'. Again, Institution H had the highest percentage (75%) of 'strongly disagree' responses, which may indicate acceptance and recognition of English varieties in ELT.

Table 50 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 27, 28, and 29)

27. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	1	14.3	0	0.0	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	4	21.1	8	42.1	7	36.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	13	81.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	5	27.8	7	38.9	2	11.1	4	22.2	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	26	40.0	19	29.2	11	16.9	9	13.8	0	0.0	65	100.0

28. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Australian, British, Hinglish, Canadian, Spanglish, American, Chinglish, etc.)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	3	42.9	1	14.3	1	14.3	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	7	36.8	6	31.6	3	15.8	3	15.8	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	13	81.3	2	12.5	0	0.0	1	6.3	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	6	33.3	1	5.6	2	11.1	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	32	49.2	18	27.7	6	9.2	9	13.8	0	0.0	65	100.0

29. The varieties of English (e.g., Spanglish, Frenglish, Chinglish, Hinglish) are illegitimate and should be not taught or learned												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	2	28.6	1	14.3	3	42.9	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	0	0.0	3	15.8	5	26.3	7	36.8	4	21.1	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3	3	18.8	12	75.0	16	100.0
I	1	5.6	2	11.1	5	17.8	4	22.2	6	33.3	18	100.0
Total	1	1.5	9	13.8	14	21.5	18	27.7	23	35.4	65	100.0

Table 51 (results from the statements 30, 31, 32, and 33) highlights the multifaceted nature of attitudes toward native-speakerism in ELT (Holliday, 2006; 2015). For instance, the perception regarding statement 30 ‘The distinction between English teachers as L1 (‘native speakers’) and L2 (‘non-native’) speakers is hierarchical’ varied across all institutions. 42.9% of respondents from Institution E mostly agreed with statement 30, whereas 43.8% of respondents from Institution H strongly disagreed with it. It suggests that the perception of hierarchy in ELT may be influenced by the context or culture.

78.5% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 31 ‘L2 (‘non-native’) speakers of English lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 (‘native’) speakers’, and 69.3% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 32 ‘L1 (‘native speaker’) teachers are ideal, more qualified, and expert teachers of English than L2 (‘non-native’) teachers’. It shows that most respondents believed that L2 speakers can be competent and legitimate English teachers.

On the other hand, responses varied in statement 33 ‘L1 (‘native speaker’) teachers represent ‘Western culture’, from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it’. Therefore, respondents’ perceptions varied regarding the role of L1 teachers as representatives of Western culture and the ideal English teacher.

Table 51 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 30, 31, 32, and 33)

30. The distinction between English teachers as L1 ('native speakers') and L2 ('non-native') speakers is hierarchical												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	3	42.9	1	14.3	2	28.6	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	5	26.3	7	36.8	2	10.5	4	21.1	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
H	1	6.3	0	0.0	3	18.8	5	31.3	7	43.8	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	5	27.8	5	27.8	4	22.2	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	4	6.8	15	23.1	16	24.6	15	23.1	15	23.1	65	100.0

31. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 ('native') speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	2	28.6	0	0.0	2	28.6	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	0	0.0	1	5.3	2	10.5	5	26.3	11	57.9	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	18.8	13	81.3	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	4	22.2	1	5.6	7	38.9	4	22.2	18	100.0
Total	4	6.2	7	10.8	3	4.6	21	32.3	30	46.2	65	100.0

32. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are ideal, more qualified, and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native') teachers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	1	14.3	0	0.0	2	28.6	2	28.6	7	100.0
F	0	0.0	2	10.5	4	21.1	5	26.3	8	42.1	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3	1	6.3	14	87.5	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	5	27.8	3	16.7	4	22.2	4	22.2	18	100.0
Total	4	6.2	8	12.3	8	12.3	17	26.2	28	43.1	65	100.0

33. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	2	28.6	0	0.0	4	57.1	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	3	15.8	7	36.8	5	26.3	3	15.8	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	1	6.3	0	0.0	2	12.5	2	12.5	11	68.8	16	100.0
I	1	5.6	8	44.4	3	16.7	3	16.7	3	16.7	18	100.0
Total	3	4.6	16	24.6	13	20.0	15	23.1	18	27.7	65	100.0

Table 52 (results from the statements 34, 35, 36, and 37) highlights a widespread perception of discrimination against L2 (non-native) English teachers in the ELT job market. For example, 83.1% (strongly and mostly agree) of the respondents agreed with statement 34 'L2 ('non-native') teachers often encounter discrimination on the job market/or at the workplace', and 93.8% (strongly and mostly agree) agreed with statement 35 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace'.

English proficiency is seen as beneficial for job prospects by 90.8% (strongly and mostly agree) of the respondents who agreed with statement 36 'If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get better job positions'. Institution G showed the highest level of agreement (80%) with statement 36. Similarly, 67.7% (strongly and mostly agree) agreed with statement 37 'I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners'. Consequently, it may influence hiring and reinforce bias against L2 English teachers.

Table 52 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 34, 35, 36, and 37)

34. L2 ('non-native') teachers often encounter discrimination on the job market/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	10	52.6	7	36.8	2	10.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	9	56.3	6	37.5	0	0.0	1	6.3	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	1	5.6	10	55.6	5	27.8	2	11.1	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	24	36.9	30	46.2	8	12.3	3	4.6	0	0.0	65	100.0
35. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	9	47.4	7	36.8	1	5.3	0	0.0	2	10.5	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	10	62.5	6	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	6	33.3	11	61.1	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	29	44.6	32	49.2	2	3.1	0	0.0	2	3.1	65	100.0
36. If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get better job positions												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	3	42.9	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	10	52.6	8	42.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	8	50.0	5	31.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	10	55.6	8	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	34	52.3	25	38.5	5	7.7	0	0.0	1	1.5	65	100.0
37. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	6	31.6	9	47.4	1	5.3	2	10.5	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	2	12.5	3	18.8	7	43.8	3	18.8	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	4	22.2	10	55.6	3	16.7	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0

Total	17	26.2	27	41.5	11	16.9	7	10.8	3	4.6	65	100.0

Table 53 (results from the statements 38, 39, and 40) reveals a nuanced perspective on the spread of English and its role worldwide. 38.5% (strongly and mostly agree) of the respondents and 32.3% (neither agree nor disagree) believed that 'The spread of English might threaten the status of other languages', which may suggest moderate concern and uncertainty. 58.4% (strongly and mostly agree) viewed 'English as an imperialist language', with the highest percentages of agreement from Institutions H (56.3%) and F (52.6%). However, 90.8% agreed (strongly and mostly agree) with statement 40 'People in my country think that it is important to speak English'. It indicates a consensus on the importance of speaking English and its value/role in respondent' countries/contexts.

Table 53 Perceptions of the Spread of English (Statements 38, 39, and 40)

38. The spread of English might threaten the status of other languages												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	2	10.5	8	42.1	5	26.3	3	15.8	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
H	3	18.8	6	37.6	6	37.5	1	6.3	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	1	5.6	6	33.3	6	33.3	2	11.1	3	16.7	18	100.0
Total	8	12.3	17	26.2	21	32.3	11	16.9	8	12.3	65	100.0
39. English is an imperialist language												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	14.3	2	28.6	1	14.3	2	28.6	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	10	52.6	5	26.3	2	10.5	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
H	9	56.3	7	43.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	4	22.2	7	38.9	3	16.7	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	14	21.5	24	36.9	15	23.1	8	12.3	4	6.2	65	100.0
40. People in my country think that it is important to speak English												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	6	85.7	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	7	36.8	8	42.1	1	5.3	2	10.5	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	7	38.9	9	50.0	2	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	34	52.3	25	38.5	3	4.6	2	3.1	1	1.5	65	100.0

Table 54 (results from the statements 41, 42, 45, and 46) highlights respondents' confidence and comfort with using digital tools for collaboration and interaction. 84.6% (strongly agree and mostly agree) reported to be confident to use digital tools and technologies for virtual collaboration (statement 41). Institutions E (71.4%) and H (75%) showed the highest levels of agreement, while G (40%) showed the highest levels of disagreement. Also, 84.6% agreed (strongly and mostly) to be able to interact through a variety of digital technologies (statement 42). There was a high degree of agreement across the institutions in statement 42.

87.7% (strongly agree and mostly agree) of respondents stated to be able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices (statement 45). Institution H (81.3%) showed the highest percentage of agreement, while Institution G had notable disagreement (40.0%) with statement 45 (I am able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices). 89.2% (strongly agree and mostly agree) reported confidence in using digital tools for live collaboration (statement 46). Institutions H (81.3%) and F (57.9%) showed the highest percentages of agreement.

Table 54 Respondents' Ability to Use Digital Tools and Technologies for Virtual Collaboration (Statements 41, 42, 45, and 46)

41. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others, and for creating resources and knowledge together with others												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	5	71.4	1	14.3	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	13	68.4	3	15.8	1	5.3	2	10.5	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	12	75.0	2	12.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	8	44.4	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	39	60.0	16	24.6	6	9.2	4	6.2	0	0.0	65	100.0
42. I am able to interact through a variety of digital technologies and to understand appropriate digital communication means for a given context												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	11	57.9	6	31.6	0	0.0	2	10.5	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	12	75.0	3	18.8	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	10	55.6	6	33.3	2	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0

Total	37	56.9	18	27.7	6	9.2	4	6.2	0	0.0	65	100.0

45. I am able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	11	57.9	6	31.6	1	5.3	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	13	81.3	2	12.5	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	8	44.4	0	0.0	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	36	55.4	21	32.3	4	6.2	4	6.2	0	0.0	65	100.0

46. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others in a synchronous way ('live' interaction)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	4	57.1	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	11	57.9	6	31.6	1	5.3	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	13	81.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	9	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	35	53.8	23	35.4	4	6.2	3	4.6	0	0.0	65	100.0

The data in Table 55 (results from the statements 43 and 47) reveals endorsement of VE/COIL projects. For instance, 96.9% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that engaging in online collaborative projects helps promote intercultural values (statement 43). Institutions H (87.5%) and E (85.7%) had the highest percentages of agreement with statement 43. Similarly, 96.9% (strongly and mostly agree) of respondents believed in the value of promoting online collaboration among peers (statement 47). Institution H showed the highest percentage of agreement (87.5%), followed by G (60%), and F (57.9%).

Table 55 Respondents' Beliefs about the Benefits of Online Collaboration
(Statements 43 and 47)

43. I believe that engaging in online collaborative projects and activities helps to promote the development of intercultural values												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	6	85.7	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	13	68.4	4	21.1	1	5.3	0	0.0	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	11	61.1	7	38.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	47	72.3	16	24.6	1	1.5	0	0.0	1	1.5	65	100.0

47. I believe in the value of promoting the use of online collaboration among my peers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%

					nor disagree							
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	11	57.9	6	31.6	1	5.3	0	0.0	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	10	55.6	8	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	41	63.1	22	33.8	1	1.5	0	0.0	1	1.5	65	100.0

Table 56 (results from the statements 44, 48, and 49) highlights that online collaboration is beneficial for pre-service English teachers and professional development. There was also recognition of the value of VE/COIL and the importance of experience with online collaborative tools. 98.5% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) that online collaboration is beneficial for pre-service English teachers (statement 44). Only 1 respondent (1.5%) from Institution F mostly disagreed with the statement.

96.9% agreed (strongly or mostly) with the value of virtual exchange for professional development (statement 48). Institutions H (93.8%) and F (73.7%) had the highest percentages of agreement with statement 48. In the same way, 98.5% (strongly agree or mostly agree) of respondents believed in the importance of experience with online collaborative tools (statement 49). Again, Institutions H (87.5%) and F (78.9%) showed the highest percentages of agreement with statement 49.

Table 56 Acceptance of the Benefits of Online Collaboration for Pre-Service English Teachers and Professional Development (Statements 44, 48, and 49)

44. I believe it is beneficial for pre-service English teachers to experience online collaboration												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	5	71.4	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	13	68.4	5	26.3	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	9	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	44	67.7	20	30.8	0	0.0	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

48. I believe in the value of Virtual Exchange/Collaborative Online International Learning as a tool for my own professional development												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	5	71.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	14	73.7	4	21.1	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0

H	15	93.8	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	11	61.1	6	33.3	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	45	69.2	18	27.7	1	1.5	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

49. I believe it is important for pre-service English teachers to have experience in using various online collaborative tools

Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	15	78.9	3	15.8	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	9	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	44	67.7	20	30.8	0	0.0	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

Table 57 (results from the statements 51 and 52) reveals diverse viewpoints regarding anxiety when using technology to communicate in English. While some respondents expressed concern, others felt confident. For example, 43.1% (strongly agree and mostly agree) of respondents stated to be worried about using technology to interact in English (statement 51). On the other hand, 47.7% strongly or mostly disagreed with statement 51. Institution E (in the UK) showed the highest level (57.1%, 'mostly agree') of anxiety compared to other institutions, considering the number of respondents.

There were also varied responses for statement 52 'I feel anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies'. 41.6% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) that they felt anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies, while 43.1% disagreed (strongly or mostly) with this statement. Institution H (in Brazil) showed the highest percentage of agreement (31.3%), which indicates more anxiety compared to the other institutions.

Table 57 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statements 51 and 52)

51. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	4	57.1	0	0.0	1	14.3	2	28.6	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	3	15.8	2	10.5	6	31.6	6	31.6	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
H	4	25.0	4	25.0	2	12.5	4	25.0	2	12.5	16	100.0
I	0	0.0	9	50.0	2	11.1	4	22.2	3	16.7	18	100.0
Total	7	10.8	21	32.3	6	9.2	16	24.6	15	23.1	65	100.0

52. I feel anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	2	28.6	2	28.6	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	4	21.1	3	15.8	6	31.6	4	21.1	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	5	31.3	4	25.0	2	12.5	3	18.8	2	12.5	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	6	33.3	4	22.2	3	16.7	3	16.7	18	100.0
Total	10	15.4	17	26.2	10	15.4	17	26.2	11	16.9	65	100.0

Table 58 (results from the statements 55, 56, and 57) demonstrates a prevalent openness and positive attitude towards cultural diversity among respondents. For instance, 100% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) with this statement 55 'I am very interested in the values and customs of other cultures'. Institutions F and H showed the highest level of agreement with this statement, 94.7% and 93.8%, respectively.

98.5% (strongly agree and mostly agree) showed interest in learning about people's beliefs and the way they see the world (statement 56), and 100% (strongly agree and mostly agree) expressed respect for the values and customs of other cultures (statement 56).

Therefore, it indicates that most respondents were open to other cultures.

Table 58 Openness to Cultural Diversity (Statements 55, 56, and 57)

55. I am very interested in the values and customs of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	18	94.7	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	15	93.8	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	14	77.8	4	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	54	83.1	11	16.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100.0
56. I am interested in learning about people's beliefs and the way they see the world												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	17	89.5	2	10.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	15	83.3	2	11.1	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	54	83.1	10	15.4	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100.0
57. I respect the values and customs of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	5	71.4	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	16	84.2	3	15.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	10	62.5	6	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	14	77.8	4	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	49	75.4	16	24.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100.0

Table 59 (results from the statements 58, 59, and 60) illustrates respondents' ability to adapt to new people, places, and situations, as well as the ability to value and respect other cultures. Additionally, it shows efforts among respondents to understand people from other cultures by imagining their perspectives. 84.7% (strongly agree and mostly agree) reported to be able to adjust to new people, places, and situations (statement 58), 98.5% (strongly agree and mostly agree) claimed to believe that people from other cultures have valuable things to teach (statement 59), and 98.5% (strongly agree and mostly agree) would try to understand people from other cultures by imagining their perspectives (statement 60). Therefore, most respondents were adaptable to new situations and open to learning from people from other cultures.

Table 59 Respondents' Cultural Adaptability (Statements 58, 59, and 60)

58. I am able to adjust to new people, places, and situations												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	10	52.6	6	31.6	3	15.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	7	43.8	4	25.0	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	7	38.9	1	5.6	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	30	46.2	25	38.5	9	13.8	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

59. I feel that people from other cultures have many valuable things to teach me												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	5	71.4	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	19	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	15	93.8	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	13	72.2	4	22.2	0	0.0	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	56	86.2	8	12.3	0	0.0	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

60. I sometimes try to understand people from other cultures better by imagining how things look from their perspective												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	17	89.5	2	10.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	13	81.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	11	61.1	6	33.3	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	49	75.4	15	23.1	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100.0

Table 60 (results from the statements 61 and 62) indicates adaptability in intercultural situations and the perception of similarities between people from different cultures among respondents. 78.5% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) with statement 61 'I change my non-verbal behaviour when an intercultural situation requires it'. It may suggest a willingness to adapt to non-verbal communication in intercultural settings. However, Institution A had the highest percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed (28.6%) with statement 61. In the same way, 76.9% (strongly or mostly agree) stated to often notice personality or behaviour similarities between people from different cultures (statement 62). It could indicate a tendency to recognise similarities across cultures. On the other hand, 35% of respondents from Institution A neither agreed nor disagreed (42.9%) with this statement, which may suggest uncertainty or neutrality.

Table 60 Respondents' Behaviours and Perceptions in Intercultural Situations
(Statements 61 and 62)

61. I change my non-verbal behaviour when an intercultural situation requires it												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	3	42.9	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	9	47.4	4	21.1	5	26.3	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	6	37.5	7	43.8	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	10	55.6	6	33.3	2	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	30	46.2	21	32.3	13	20.0	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

62. I often notice personality/behaviour similarities between people who belong to completely different cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	28.6	2	28.6	3	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	11	57.9	5	26.3	2	10.5	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	5	31.3	5	31.3	5	31.3	0	0.0	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	10	55.6	5	27.8	3	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	29	44.6	21	32.3	13	20.0	1	1.5	1	1.5	65	100.0

Table 61 (results from the statements 64, 65, and 66) reveals a variation in perceptions regarding comfort and adaptability in intercultural interactions. 40% of respondents agreed (strongly or mostly) that they find it easier to categorize people based on cultural identity (statement 64), and 33.8% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The variability in opinion may suggest either resistance to categorising people based on cultural identity (stereotyping) or avoidance of generalisation.

87.6% (strongly or mostly agree) claimed that could imagine themselves living or interacting with people from other cultures (statement 64). It may indicate a willingness to interact with people from other cultures. Similarly, 73.8% (strongly or mostly agree) reported to be able to express their ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures (statement 66), which could suggest confidence in intercultural communication skills.

Table 61 Cultural Adaptation (Statements 64, 65, and 66)

64. I find it easier to 'categorize/classify' people based on their cultural identity than on their personality												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	4	57.1	1	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	0	0.0	1	5.3	8	42.1	7	36.8	3	15.8	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	2	12.5	6	37.5	5	31.3	2	12.5	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	4	22.2	5	27.8	8	44.4	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	6	9.2	20	30.8	22	33.8	13	20.0	4	6.2	65	100.0

65. I can imagine myself living/interacting with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	12	63.2	6	31.6	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	12	75.0	4	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	7	38.9	8	44.4	2	11.1	1	5.6	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	35	53.8	22	33.8	7	10.8	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

66. I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	8	42.1	4	21.1	5	26.3	2	10.5	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	5	31.3	7	43.8	2	12.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	8	44.4	7	38.9	1	5.6	2	11.1	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	24	36.9	24	36.9	9	13.8	8	12.3	0	0.0	65	100.0

Table 62 (results from the statements 67 and 68) highlights a potential tension between respondents' comfort level with people from similar cultures and their openness to interacting with those from different backgrounds. For instance, 69.2% (strongly or mostly agree) of respondents stated to feel closer to people from similar cultures because they can relate better to them (statement 67). Institution E (in the UK) had the highest percentage of agreement (71.4%), which may indicate a preference for relating to similar cultures.

On the other hand, 81.6% (strongly or mostly agree) of respondents claimed to often look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures (statement 68). Institution F (in Turkey) showed the highest percentage of agreement (63.2%), which may suggest openness for intercultural communication.

Table 62 Diversity and Interaction (Statements 67 and 68)

67. I feel closer to people from cultures similar to mine, because I can relate better to them												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	5	71.4	1	14.3	1	14.3	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	4	21.1	9	47.4	3	15.8	3	15.8	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	4	80.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	6	37.5	4	25.0	6	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	4	22.2	9	50.0	3	16.7	2	11.1	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	14	21.5	31	47.7	14	21.5	6	9.2	0	0.0	65	100.0

68. I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	12	63.2	4	21.1	3	15.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	1	20.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	7	43.8	5	31.3	4	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	7	38.9	9	50.0	2	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	30	46.2	23	35.4	11	16.9	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100.0

Table 63 (results from the statements 67 and 68) reveals some interesting nuances regarding respondents' attitudes towards cultural diversity. Overall, respondents showed appreciation for cultural diversity, although their perception about differentiating cultures with similar customs varied across the institutions.

58.5% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 69 'I wish other cultures were similar to mine'. So, it could be inferred that respondents who felt more connected to their own culture may be less open to cultural diversity. Institutions G and H showed the highest percentage of disagreement (60% and 50%, respectively) with statement 69. It may suggest they are more open to cultural diversity than respondents from other institutions.

37% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that they have difficulty differentiating cultures with similar customs (statement 70), while 35.4% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with this statement. In general, it could indicate that institutional context and cultural background influence the perception of different cultures.

Table 63 Respondents' Wish for Cultural Similarity (Statements 67 and 68)

69. I wish other cultures were similar to mine													
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%	
E	1	14.3	2	28.6	1	14.3	1	14.3	2	28.6	7	100.0	
F	0	0.0	2	10.5	3	15.8	6	31.6	8	42.1	19	100.0	
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	5	100.0	
H	1	6.3	0	0.0	4	25.0	3	18.8	8	50.0	16	100.0	
I	5	27.8	5	27.8	3	16.7	3	16.7	2	11.1	18	100.0	
Total	7	10.8	9	13.8	11	16.9	15	23.1	23	35.4	65	100.0	

70. I have difficulty differentiating cultures that have similar customs													
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%	
E	0	0.0	3	42.9	2	28.6	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0	
F	0	0.0	2	10.5	7	36.8	8	42.1	2	10.5	19	100.0	
G	1	20.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	
H	0	0.0	6	37.5	3	18.8	3	18.8	4	25.0	16	100.0	
I	3	16.7	6	33.3	5	27.8	4	22.2	0	0.0	18	100.0	
Total	4	6.2	20	30.8	18	27.7	17	26.2	6	9.2	65	100.0	

Table 64 (results from the statements 71 and 72) highlights a positive trend of adaptability in verbal behaviour among respondents when navigating intercultural contexts. 52.3% (strongly agree and mostly agree) of respondents claimed to modify their way of disagreeing to fit the cultural setting (statement 71), which may indicate cultural sensitivity and adaptability.

Institution I had the highest percentage of respondents who agreed (strongly and mostly) with the statement. On the other hand, Institutions F and H showed the highest percentages of 'neither agree nor disagree', which could indicate less verbal adaptability in intercultural settings. 63% (strongly agree and mostly agree) stated to change their verbal behaviour in intercultural interactions when necessary (statement 72). It may suggest verbal adaptability based on cultural context.

Table 64 Verbal Adaptability in Intercultural Contexts (Statements 71 and 72)

71. I modify the way I disagree with others to fit the cultural setting													
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%	
E	1	14.3	4	57.1	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0	
F	2	10.5	4	21.1	8	42.1	4	21.1	1	5.3	19	100.0	
G	2	40.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	
H	1	6.3	5	31.3	5	31.3	2	12.5	3	18.8	16	100.0	
I	5	27.8	8	44.4	5	27.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0	
Total	11	16.9	23	35.4	21	32.3	6	9.2	4	6.2	65	100.0	

72. I change my verbal behaviour (e.g., accent, tone) when intercultural interaction requires it													
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%	
E	0	0.0	5	71.4	1	14.3	1	14.3	0	0.0	7	100.0	
F	7	36.8	5	26.3	3	15.8	4	21.1	0	0.0	19	100.0	
G	3	60.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	
H	4	25.0	3	18.8	4	25.0	5	31.1	0	0.0	16	100.0	
I	8	44.4	6	33.3	1	5.6	3	16.7	0	0.0	18	100.0	
Total	22	33.8	19	29.2	10	15.4	14	21.5	0	0.0	65	100.0	

Table 65 (results from the statement 73) illustrates the variability in responses among respondents on the relationship between globalization and homogenisation. 52.3% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that globalization promotes homogenization and may result in the loss of cultural identity and local values (statement 73). It may suggest concern about the effects of globalization on cultural identity.

On the other hand, 26.1% disagreed (strongly and mostly), and 21.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the balanced distribution of opinions may indicate a certain degree of uncertainty or ambivalence about the impact of globalisation on cultural identity and local values.

Table 65 Opinions on whether Globalisation promotes Homogenisation
(Statement 73)

73. Globalization promotes homogenization and may result in the loss of cultural identity and local values												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	1	14.3	1	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	6	31.6	5	26.3	5	26.3	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
H	0	0.0	7	43.8	6	37.5	1	6.3	2	12.5	16	100.0
I	3	16.7	10	55.6	2	11.1	2	11.1	1	5.6	18	100.0
Total	8	12.3	26	40.0	14	21.5	11	16.9	6	9.2	65	100.0

Table 66 (results from the statements 74, 75, and 76) highlights the multifaceted nature of intercultural communication in English. It also shows a consensus on the importance of speaking English for intercultural interaction. 52.4% (strongly and mostly agree) stated to get nervous and/or confused when interacting with people from other cultures (statement 74), whereas 35.4% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with the statement. Institution H (in Brazil) showed the highest percentage of agreement with statement 74 (43.8%).

97% (strongly and mostly agree) of respondents claimed that speaking English is important for interacting with people from other cultures and regions (statement 75), which suggests recognition of English as a global language for intercultural communication. Moreover, 64.6% (strongly and mostly agree) stated to feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures (statement 76). Institution E (in the UK) had the highest percentage (85.8%) of agreement with statement 76. On the other hand, Institution G (in China) had 60% of 'mostly disagree responses', and Institution H (in Brazil) had 31.3% of 'neither agree nor disagree' responses. It may indicate lower confidence in speaking English.

Table 66 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (Statements 75, 75, and 76)

74. I get nervous and/or confused when I interact with people from other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	14.3	1	14.3	2	28.6	2	28.6	1	14.3	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	4	21.1	3	15.8	5	26.3	5	26.3	19	100.0
G	2	40.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	7	43.8	4	25.0	1	6.3	4	25.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	5	27.8	6	33.3	2	11.1	4	22.2	1	5.6	18	100.0
Total	17	26.2	17	26.2	8	12.3	16	24.6	7	10.8	65	100.0

75. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	5	71.4	2	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	18	94.7	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	100.0
I	9	50.0	8	44.4	1	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	46	70.8	17	26.2	2	3.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100.0

76. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	7	36.8	7	36.8	3	15.8	2	10.5	0	0.0	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	3	18.8	5	31.3	5	31.3	1	6.4	2	12.5	16	100.0
I	6	33.3	7	38.9	3	16.7	2	11.1	0	0.0	18	100.0
Total	19	29.2	23	35.4	13	20.0	8	12.3	2	3.1	65	100.0

Table 67 (results from the statements 77 and 78) points out the discomfort reported by some respondents when using English to interact with 'native' or proficient speakers, even though English is considered important for intercultural communication (as seen in Table 66). For example, 47.7% (mostly and strongly agree) claimed to feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 or proficient speakers (statement 77), and 36.9% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with the statement. Institutions F (in Turkey) and E (in the UK) had the highest percentages of agreement (strongly and mostly) with statement 77, 57.9% and 57.2% respectively.

Moreover, 63.1% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that they felt more comfortable when interacting in English with people from their own culture (statement 78). 23.1% disagreed (strongly and mostly) with this statement. Institutions E (in the UK) and G

(in China) had the highest percentages of agreement (strongly and mostly combined) with statement 78, 85.7% and 80% respectively. Data suggest a strong preference for interacting with people from their own culture.

Table 67 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (77 and 78)

77. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 ('native') speakers or proficient speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	14.3	3	42.9	1	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	2	10.5	9	47.4	2	10.5	3	15.8	3	15.8	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	3	18.8	4	25.0	3	18.8	5	31.3	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	2	11.1	5	27.8	3	16.7	6	33.3	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	8	12.3	23	35.4	10	15.4	18	27.7	6	9.2	65	100.0

78. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	4	57.1	2	28.6	0	0.0	1	14.3	0	0.0	7	100.0
F	1	5.3	8	42.1	5	26.3	4	21.1	1	5.3	19	100.0
G	0	0.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
H	5	31.3	7	43.8	0	0.0	3	18.8	1	6.3	16	100.0
I	3	16.7	7	38.9	4	22.2	2	11.1	2	11.1	18	100.0
Total	13	20.0	28	43.1	9	13.8	11	16.9	4	6.2	65	100.0

The next section will present the findings from the post-VE survey that was conducted after the completion of VETSDELT in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b).

5.2.1.5 Post-VE Survey: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – March to April 2023

Table 68 (results from the statements 12, 13, and 14) shows respondents' perspectives on the ownership and standardization of English, revealing a strong rejection of a single 'correct' form and a view of English as a global language. 76% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 12 'Only American and British English should be taught as standard'. All respondents from Institutions G and I disagreed (strongly and mostly) with this statement, 100% each. The data suggest rejection of this notion.

Furthermore, 73% agreed (strongly and mostly) that English belongs to everyone who speaks it, and it is nobody's mother tongue (statement 13). 71.1% of respondents from Institution F (in Turkey) agreed (strongly and mostly) with the statement. It indicates a belief in English as a global language used in a variety of contexts.

40% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 14 'English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA'. 36% agreed (strongly and mostly), and 24% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. It indicates divided opinions with a tendency towards disagreement with the statement.

Table 68 Participants' Views on English Standardisation and Ownership
(Statements 12, 13, and 14)

12. Only American and British English should be taught as standard												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	1	7.1	1	7.1	2	14.2	1	7.1	9	64.2	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.6	1	33.3	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0	4	100.0
Total	1	4.0	2	8.0	3	12.0	4	16.0	15	60.0	25	100.0
13. English belongs to everyone who speaks it and it is nobody's mother tongue												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	4	28.5	6	42.6	4	28.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	66.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	6	25.0	12	48.0	5	20.0	2	8.0	0	0.0	25	100.0
14. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	0	0.0	2	14.2	5	35.7	3	21.4	4	28.5	14	100.0
G	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
I	1	25.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
Total	4	16.0	5	20.0	6	24.0	4	16.0	6	24.0	25	100.0

Table 69 (results from the statements 15, 16, and 17) reveals a positive view of English varieties among respondents. 76% of respondents agreed (strongly and mostly) that it is

important to teach and learn various English varieties (statement 15). All Institutions showed moderate support for the statement, with over 50% of ‘strongly and mostly agree’ responses. It may suggest support for teaching and learning English varieties.

92% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 16 ‘Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned’, and 80% agreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 17 ‘Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)’. It could indicate recognition of different accents, appreciation for different (local) English varieties, and awareness of English as a global language.

Table 69 Positive View towards English Varieties (Statements 15, 16, and 17)

15. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	6	42.8	4	28.5	3	21.4	0	0.0	1	7.1	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	2	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	8	36.0	10	40.0	4	16.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	25	100.0
16. Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	6	42.8	7	50.0	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	0	0.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	8	32.0	15	60.0	25	100.0
17. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	8	57.1	3	21.4	1	7.1	1	7.1	1	7.1	14	100.0
G	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	15	60.0	5	20.0	3	12.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	25	100.0

Table 70 (results from the statements 18, 19, and 20) illustrates respondents' opinions of the impact of native-speakerism in ELT (Holliday, 2006; 2015). It indicates that L2 English speakers are competent and suited to teach English and that L1 speakers are not necessarily more qualified teachers. 92% of respondents disagreed (mostly and strongly) with the idea that L2 speakers of English lack sufficient competence and are less suited to teach English than L1 speakers (statement 18). All Institutions showed moderate support for the statement, with over 75% of 'strongly and mostly disagree' responses.

Similarly, 92% disagreed (mostly and strongly) with statement 19 'L1 ('native speaker') teachers are the ideal, more qualified and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native speaker') teachers', and 68% disagreed (mostly and strongly) that L1 teachers represent 'Western culture' and the ideal English language model and methodology (statement 20).

Overall, data from statements 18, 19, and 20 may suggest that the respondents, as L2 speakers, believed that L2 English speakers can be just as qualified and expert in teaching English as L1 speakers. Moreover, it also indicates a shift from the dominance of native-speakerism ideology among respondents.

Table 70 Native-Speakerism in ELT (Statements 18, 19, and 20)

18. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack sufficient competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than L1 ('native') speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	2	14.2	11	78.5	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	0	0.0	2	8.0	0	0.0	5	20.0	18	72.0	25	100.0
19. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are the ideal, more qualified and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native speaker') teachers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	28.5	10	71.4	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.6	1	33.3	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100.0

I	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	0	0.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	6	24.0	17	68.0	25	100.0

20. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it

Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
F	0	0.0	1	7.1	1	7.1	7	50.0	5	35.7	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	1	33.3	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	0	0.0	3	12.0	5	20.0	7	28.0	10	40.0	25	100.0

Table 71 (results from the statements 21 and 22) presents respondents' perception of the discrimination faced by L2 English teachers and the prevalence of native-speakerism in the job market. 80% of respondents agree (strongly and mostly) that L1 teachers are advantaged in the job market and/or at the workplace (statement 21). All Institutions showed moderate support for the statement, which may indicate a widespread perception of discrimination against L2 teachers.

60% of respondents agree (strongly and mostly) with statement 22 'I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners'. It may be implied that data reinforces respondents' perception of discrimination against L2 teachers based on 'native speaker' status in different contexts.

Table 71 Perceptions of Discrimination in the Job Market (Statements 21 and 22)

21. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged on the job market and/or at the workplace												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	6	42.8	7	50.0	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	14	100.0
G	2	66.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
Total	11	44.0	9	36.0	1	4.0	3	12.0	1	4.0	25	100.0

22. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	3	21.4	5	35.7	3	21.4	3	21.4	0	0.0	14	100.0

G	1	33.3	2	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	6	24.0	9	36.0	3	12.0	7	28.0	0	0.0	25	100.0

Table 72 (results from the statement 23) shows respondents' anxiety levels related to using technology for English interaction. It suggests that respondents were comfortable or confident. 76% (mostly and strongly disagree) stated not being worried about using technology to interact in English (statement 23). It may indicate that respondents were confident or comfortable with their digital skills/digital literacy.

Table 72 Anxiety related to Technology and English (Statement 23)

23. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
F	1	7.1	1	7.1	1	7.1	4	28.5	7	50.0	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
Total	1	4.0	2	8.0	3	12.0	7	28.0	12	48.0	25	100.0

Table 73 (results from the statements 24 and 25) highlights the perceived importance of English in intercultural communication but also reveals some variation in respondents' confidence levels. 100% of respondents (strongly and mostly agree) that speaking English is important for interacting with people from other cultures and regions (statement 24), indicating a recognition of English as a global language for communication across cultures.

80% agreed (strongly and mostly) that they felt confident communicating in English with members of other cultures (statement 25). It suggests confidence among respondents in their ability to communicate effectively with people from other cultures. However, Institution G (in China) had 33% of 'mostly disagree' and 'neither agree nor disagree' responses (each category), and Institution H (in Brazil) had 50.0% of 'neither agree nor disagree' responses. It may indicate lower confidence in speaking English.

Table 73 Respondents' Feelings when communicating in English with People from Other Cultures (24 and 25)

24. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	13	92.8	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	14	100.0
G	2	66.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	22	88.0	3	12.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	25	100.0

25. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	7	50.0	5	35.7	1	7.1	1	7.1	0	0.0	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	13	52.0	7	28.0	3	12.0	2	8.0	0	0.0	25	100.0

Table 74 (results from the statements 26 and 27) presents interesting findings regarding respondents' comfort levels when interacting in English with 'native'/proficient speakers and people from their own cultures. 60% of respondents (mostly and strongly disagree) claimed not to feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 or proficient speakers (statement 26), 20% agreed (mostly and strongly), and 20% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Moreover, 52% agreed (strongly and mostly) with statement 27 'I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture', and 28% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. It indicates divided opinions with a tendency towards agreement, which could suggest a willingness to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. It can be inferred that respondents who feel uncomfortable with L1 speakers might prefer interacting with people from their own culture.

Table 74 Respondents' Feelings when speaking English with L1 or Proficient Speakers (Statements 26 and 27)

26. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 ('native') speakers or proficient speakers												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
F	1	7.1	1	7.1	3	21.4	3	21.4	6	42.8	14	100.0
G	0	0.0	1	33.3	2	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
Total	2	8.0	3	12.0	5	20.0	6	24.0	9	36.0	25	100.0

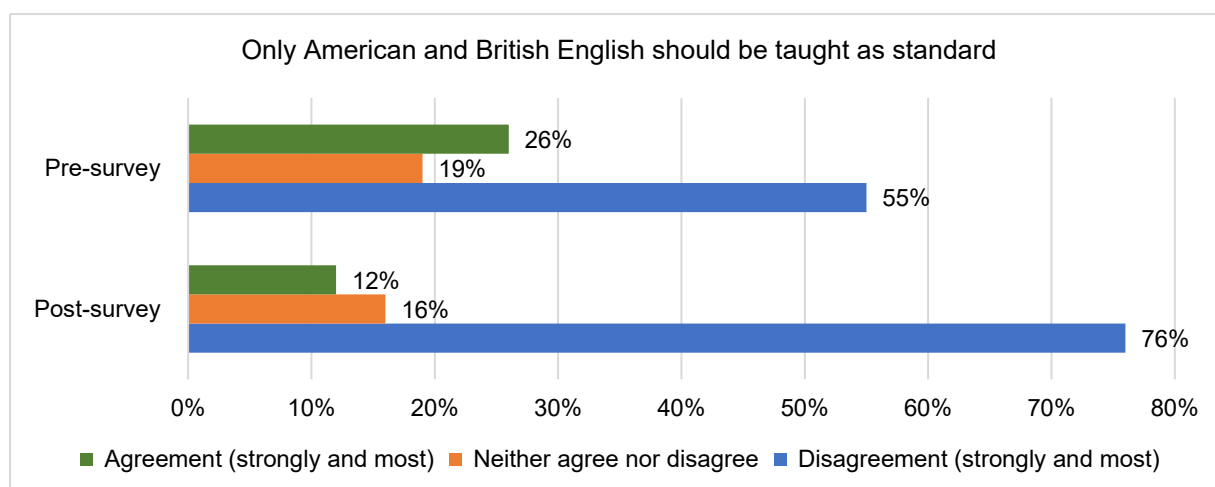
27. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture												
Institution	Strongly agree	%	Mostly agree	%	Neither agree nor disagree	%	Mostly disagree	%	Strongly disagree	%	Total	%
E	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
F	4	28.5	2	14.2	5	35.7	2	14.2	1	7.1	14	100.0
G	1	33.3	2	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
H	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
I	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	7	28.0	6	24.0	7	28.0	4	16.0	1	4.0	25	100.0

To understand how VETSDELT shaped respondents' perspectives, the next section examines the pre- and post-survey data from Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b). This analysis will explore changes in their attitudes, beliefs, and overall changes.

5.2.1.6 Pre- and Post-Surveys Results: Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

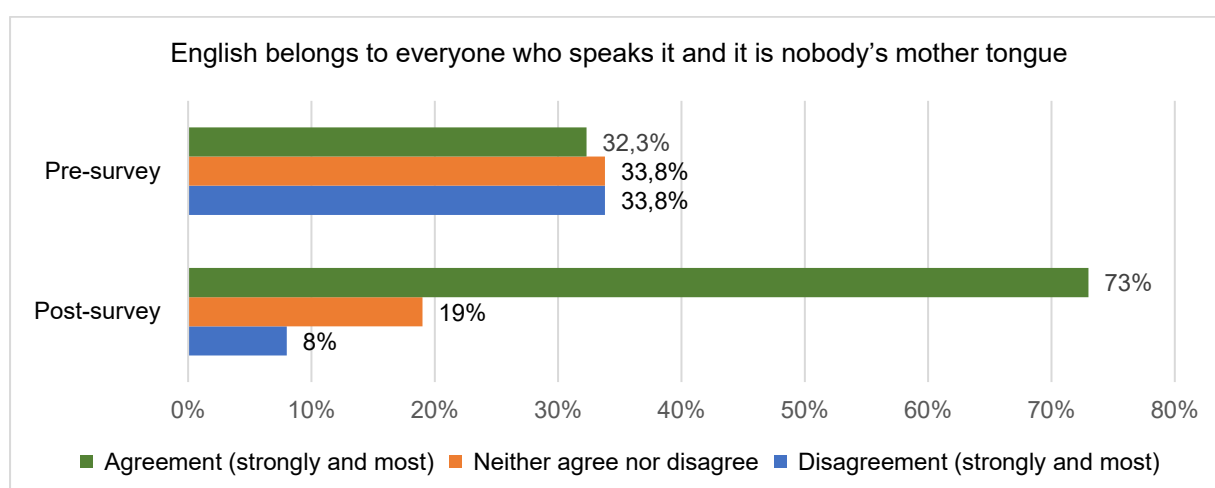
Results from pre- and post-surveys show a significant shift in attitudes and beliefs among respondents after VETSDELT. For instance, Graphs 16, 17, and 18 illustrate a shift in opinion toward the standardisation and ownership of English. Graph 16 shows that fewer respondents believed that only American and British English are standard forms, a shift from 55% of responses to 76% of disagreement. The result indicates recognition of different accents, appreciation for different (local) English varieties, and awareness of English as a global language/lingua franca. It might also suggest acceptance and appropriation of their English.

Graph 16 Shift in Opinion of Standard English



Respondents also showed a more inclusive view of English ownership as shown in Graph 17. Before VETSDELT 32.3% of respondents believed English belongs to all speakers. After the project, this number raised to 73% of responses. It indicates a growing awareness of the role of English as a global language, and a sense of ownership of the language as L2 English speakers.

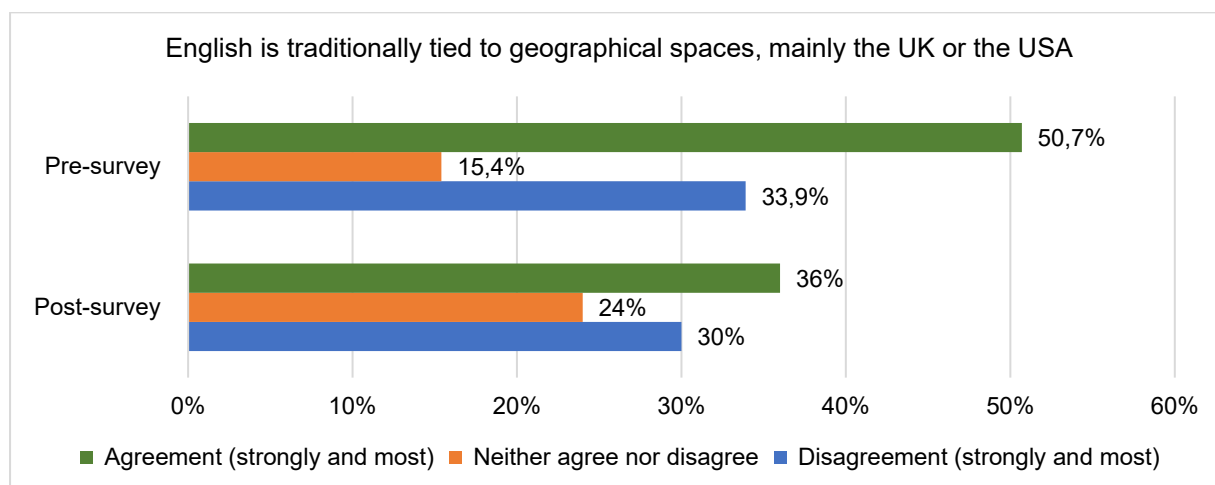
Graph 17 Perception of English as a Global Language



Furthermore, fewer respondents agreed that English is traditionally tied to the UK or the USA, from 50.7% of responses to 36% (Graph 18 below). It also indicates a changing in the

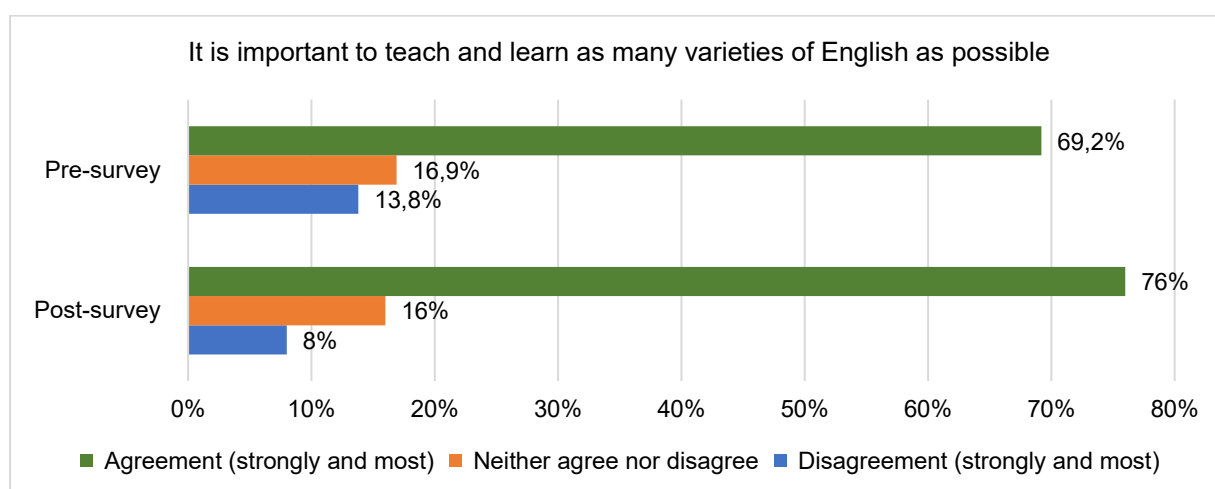
perception of the geographical boundaries traditionally associated with English, especially its association with countries from the Global North.

Graph 18 Perception of Geographical Boundaries



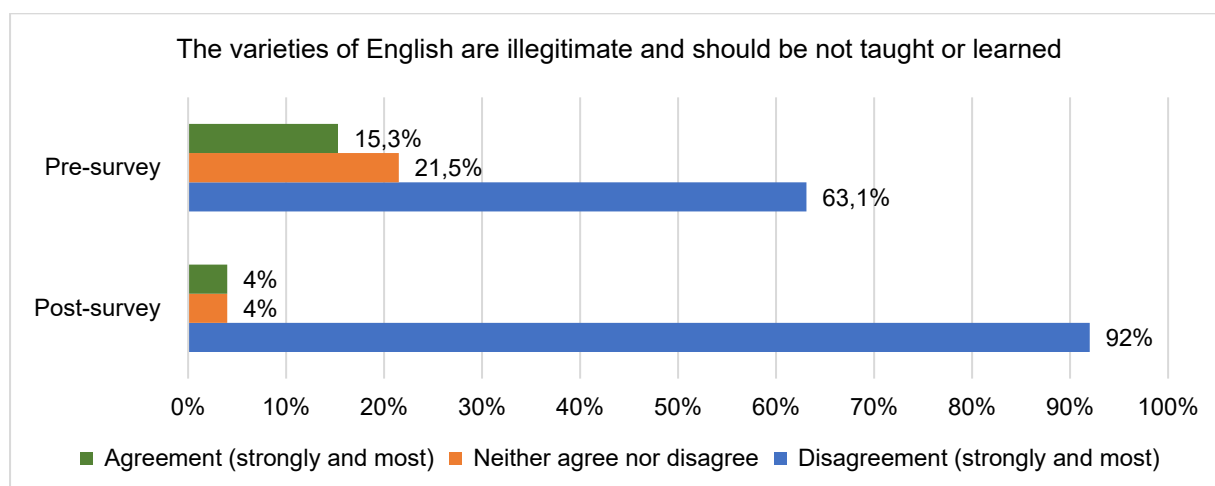
Graphs 19, 20, and 21 indicate a positive shift in attitudes toward the importance and acceptance of English varieties. In Graph 19, 76% of respondents believed in the importance of teaching and learning as many varieties of English as possible before VETSDELT. Before the project, it was 69.2% of respondents.

Graph 19 Acceptance of English Varieties



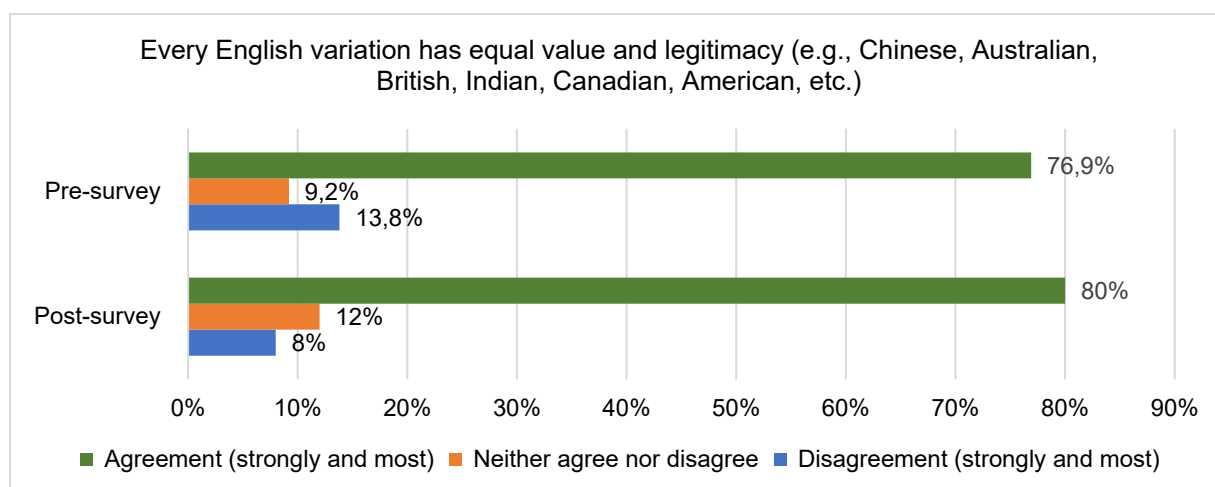
Before engaging in VETSDELT, 63.1% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) that the varieties of English are illegitimate (Graph 20). There was a raise of 28.9%, with a total of 92% of respondents after VETSDELT. Most respondents recognised the importance of teaching and learning the varieties of English.

Graph 20 Importance of Teaching and Learning English Varieties



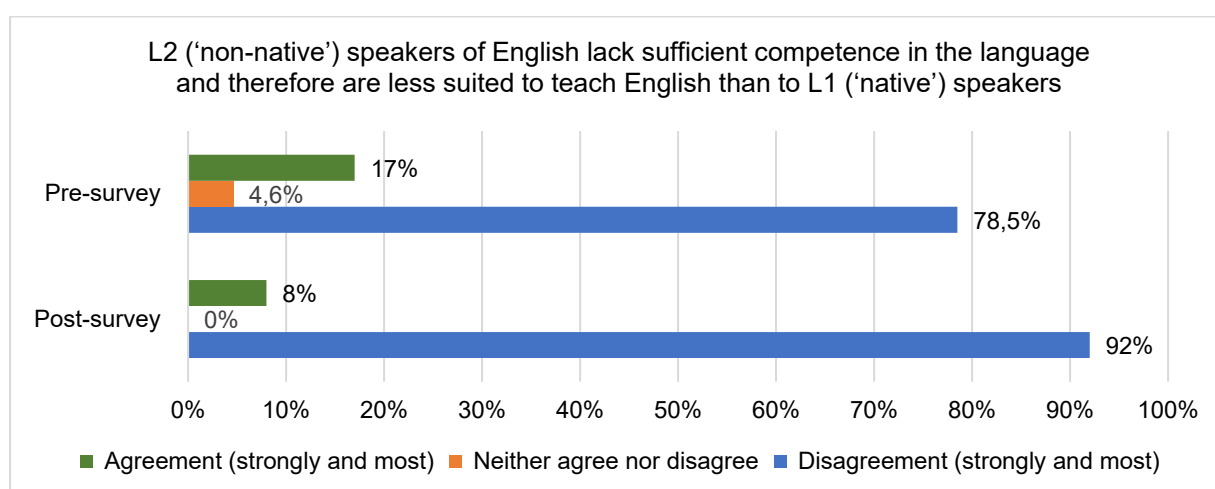
Graph 21 suggests that VETDELT was effective in promoting a more inclusive and equitable view of English language variation. After the project, 80% of respondents agreed that every English variation has equal value and legitimacy. By exposing participants to diverse English varieties and fostering intercultural understanding, VETSDELT likely helped to challenge stereotypes and promote the recognition of all English varieties as legitimate forms of the language.

Graph 21 Legitimacy of English Varieties



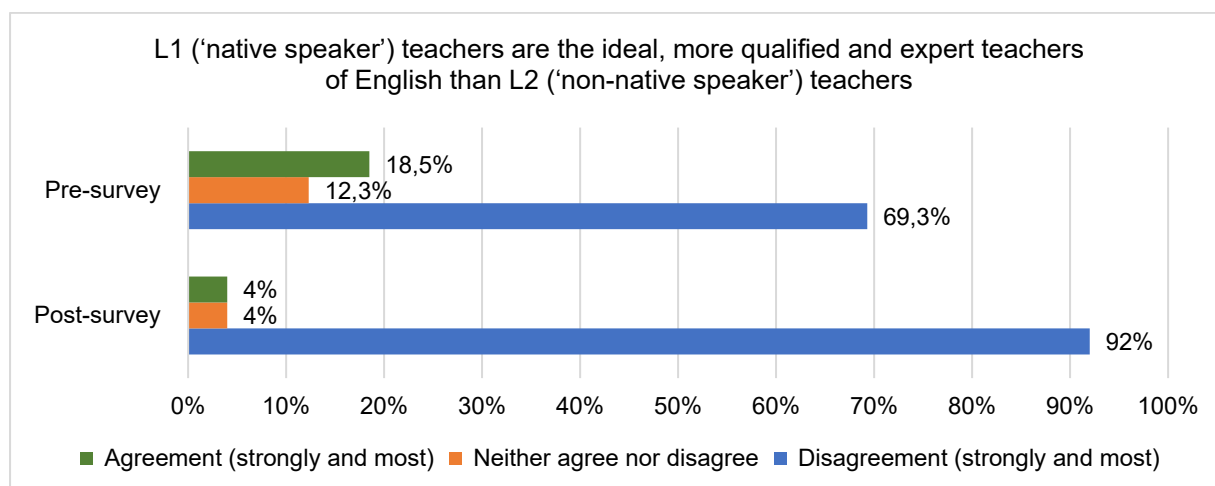
Graphs 22, 23, and 24 suggests opposition to the native-speakerism ideology in ELT. After VETSDELTA, 92% of respondents rejected idea the L2 speakers of English lack sufficient competence to teach English (Graph 22 below). The opportunities for collective reflection with other L2 English teachers helped participants to challenge stereotypes associated with deficiency and lack of competence and led them to recognise the value of diverse teaching perspectives, including their own.

Graph 22 Rejection of the Idea of L2 Speaker Incompetence



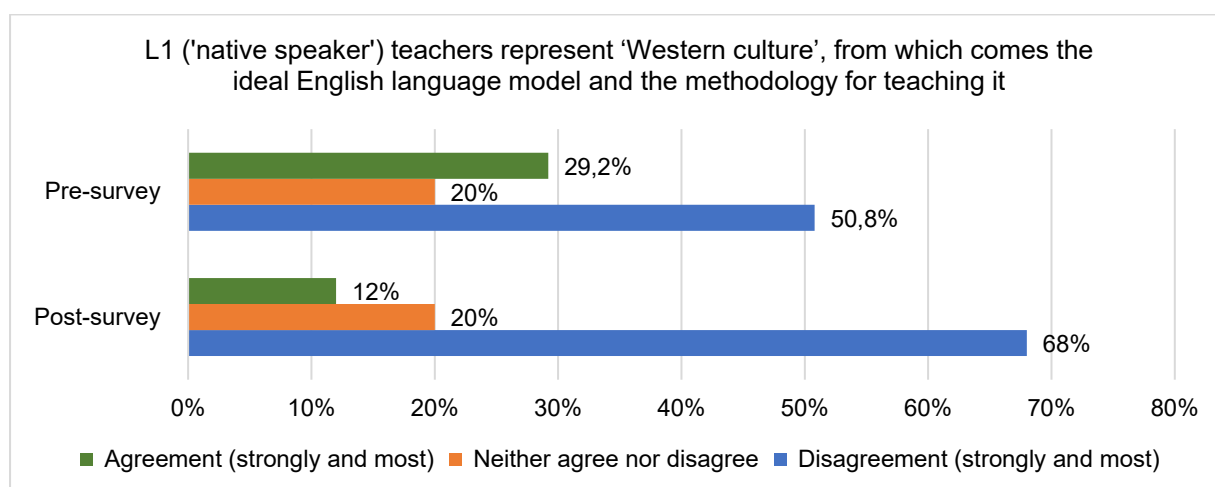
There was also a consensus against the idea that L1 speakers are inherently more qualified English teachers, as shown in Graph 23. Before VETSDELT, 69.3% of respondents opposed to this idea, and 92% of respondents after the project.

Graph 23 Rejection of Native-Speakerism Ideology



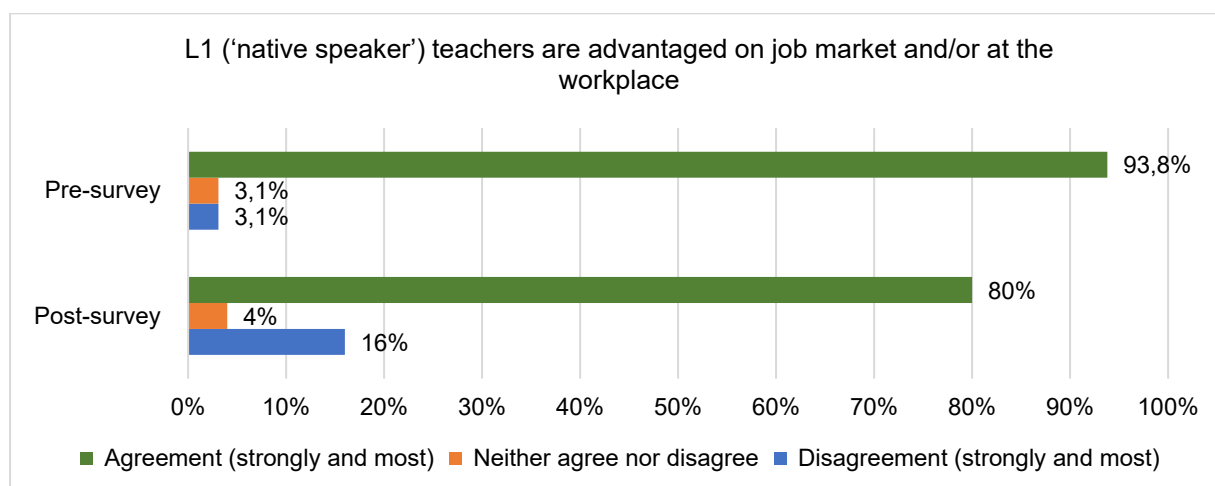
68% of respondents disagreed (strongly and mostly) with the concept of native-speakerism (Graph 24). The result highlights the importance of all teachers of English, despite their cultural background, or cultural belief as proposed by Holliday (2015).

Graph 24 Opposition to Native-Speakerism Ideology



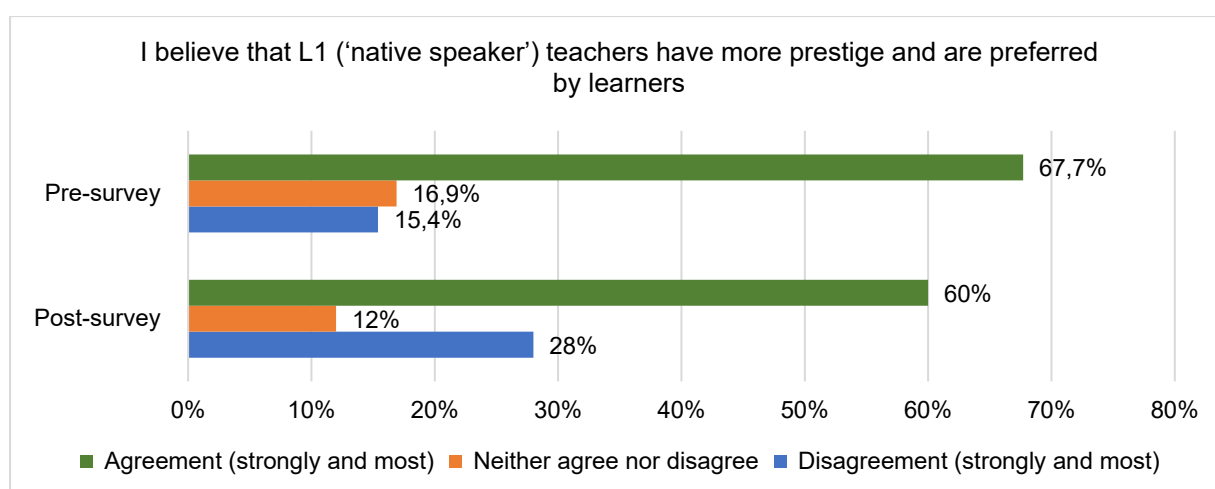
Graphs 25 and 26 suggest shifts in attitudes toward the perceived advantages and prestige of L1 English teachers. Before VETSDELT, 93.8% believed that L1 English teachers have advantage in the job market. This number decreased to 80% of responses after VETSDELT (see Graph 25 below).

Graph 25 Advantage and Prestige of L1 English Teachers



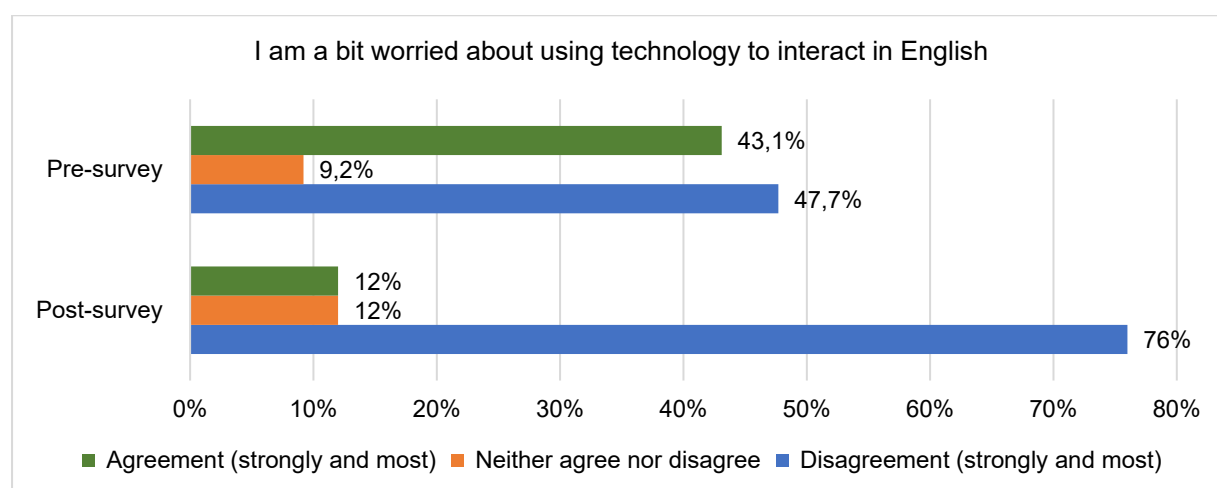
Similarly, 67.7% of respondents believed that L1 English teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners (Graph 26) before engaging in VETSDELT. However, this number was 60% after the project.

Graph 26 Learner Preference for L1 English Teacher



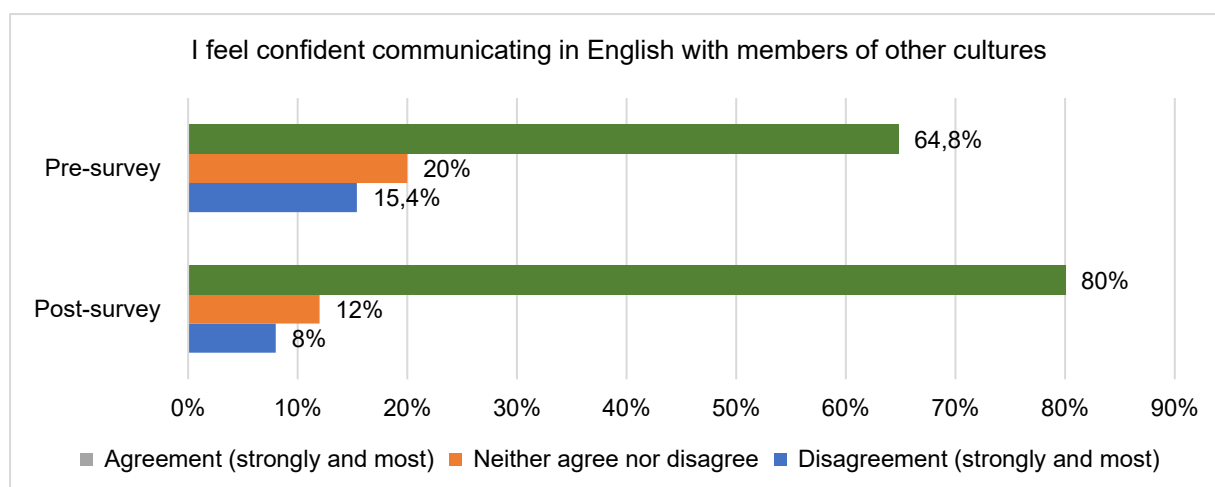
The data in Graph 27 shows a reduction in anxiety level. It is possible that respondents became less anxious about using technology to interact in English in VETSDELT over time. It may indicate that respondents got comfortable both with their English proficiency after exposure to different English varieties and the digital tools used. Lee and Song (2019) observed that students often experience some level of anxiety at the beginning of a VE, which may decrease once they become familiar with their peers and cultural backgrounds. Students with less experience in VE projects report greater initial L2 anxiety than those with more experience (Marull & Reese, 2022).

Graph 27 Anxiety related to Technology and English



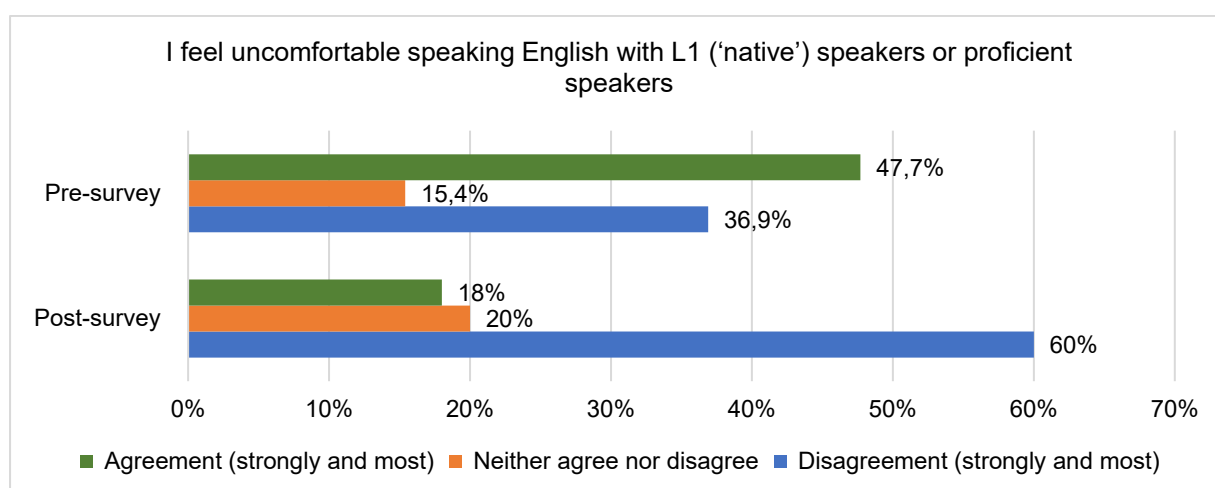
Graphs 28, 29, and 30 shows a positive impact of an VETSDELT on respondents' confidence in communicating in English with speakers from other cultures. Before VETSDELT, 64.8% of respondents were confident to speak in English with people from other cultures. After VETSDELT, 80% claimed to feel confident (Graph 28). It may indicate adaptability to intercultural communication.

Graph 28 Confidence in Intercultural communication through English



Additionally, 60% of respondents reported feeling comfortable speaking English with native or proficient English speakers after VETSDELT (Graph 29). This suggests a possible appropriation and acceptance of their own English variety. Prior to participating in VETSDELT, only 36.9% of respondents expressed comfort in speaking English with native or proficient speakers.

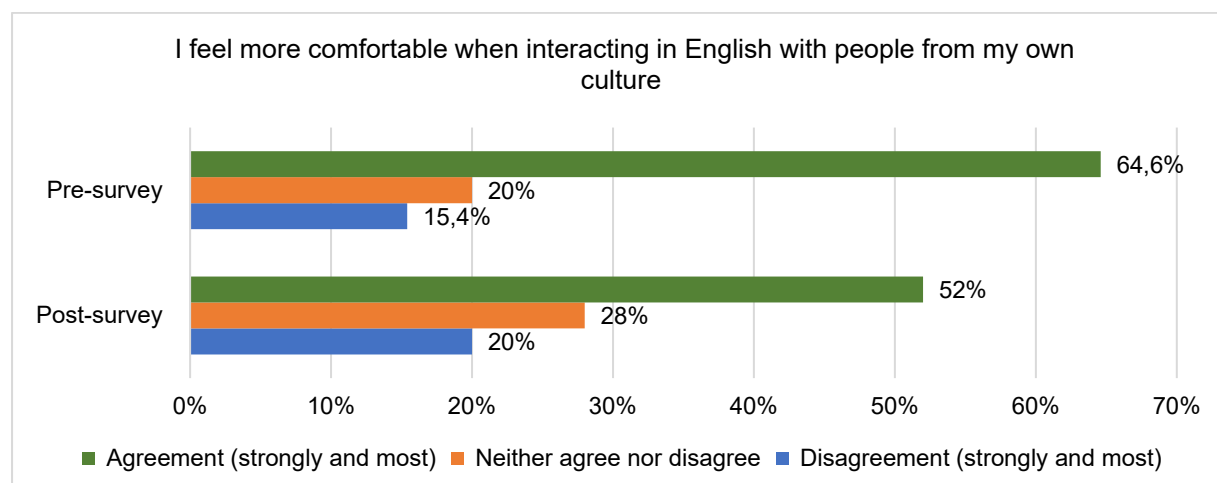
Graph 29 Confidence in speaking English with L1/Proficient Speakers



The data presented in Graph 30 corroborates the findings in Graphs 28 and 29. Before engaging in VETSDELT, 64.6% of respondents indicated feeling more comfortable

communicating in English with people from their own cultural background. Following the project. This suggests a growing awareness of cultural diversity and an increased confidence in engaging in intercultural contexts.

Graph 30 Comfort Level in speaking English with People from the same Culture



In both AR cycles in Stage 3 (a & b) of the study, FC, open-ended questions, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms were utilised to gather data. The qualitative data from these instruments are presented and analysed from the next sections of this chapter.

5.2.2 Thematic Analysis

In addition to the pre- and post-surveys Likert-scale statements, qualitative data were also gathered through open-ended questions in the post-surveys, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms. Qualitative data will support gaining a deeper understating of participants' experience and the impact of VETSDELT on their beliefs. All qualitative data (open-ended questions in the post-surveys, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms) were analysed through the lens of thematic analysis following the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The data were manually coded and categorised using Microsoft Word.

The thematic analysis revealed several key themes from the data in both cycles of the AR. The themes were categorised into four main groups: English varieties, language beliefs, and native-speakerism ideology. Subthemes within these themes were further explored to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the data in the discussion chapter. Tables 75 and 76 provide an overview of the thematic analysis carried out. The excerpts related to the codes (themes and subthemes) will be presented in the discussion chapter. Table 75 below presents the nine themes and its subthemes that emerged in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a).

Table 75 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)

Group	Theme	Subthemes
English varieties	The importance of English varieties	- Raising intercultural awareness - Developing intercultural communicative competence in a globalised world
	The challenges and barriers to teach English varieties	- Lack of teaching resources, such as textbooks - Subconscious preference for 'standard' English (teachers' and learners') - Teachers are trained to teach 'standard' English
	Strategies to raise awareness of English varieties	- Exposure to English varieties - Focus on communication over accuracy - The need for changes in curriculum and teaching materials/resources - Call for deconstructing the notion of a single 'correct' English - The value of recognising local Englishes through the integration of VE/COIL projects
	Different accents	- Integration of digital resources to highlight English varieties - Importance of raising learners' awareness that English is used in multilingual/cultural contexts
	Authentic materials	- ELT materials are native speaker-oriented - Need for ELT materials to reflect real-world communication - Calls for ELT materials to reflect the global nature of English - Curriculum changes
Language beliefs	English-related beliefs	- The idea (and dominance) of 'standard' English in ELT - The cultural hierarchy in English teaching and learning - The superiority of 'native' English teacher - Nateness as the single model - Influence of colonial matrix of power
Native-speakerism ideology	The effects of native-speakerism	- L1 speakers are inherently better teachers than L2 speakers - Discrimination faced by L2 speakers in the job market - The tension between teaching 'standard' English and English varieties - Selection based on qualification - coloniality and power dynamics

	Advantages held by 'native' speakers	- More job opportunities - Value for the symbolic representation a particular culture, or association with 'whiteness'
	Challenging stereotypes	- Fluency and teaching ability are L1 speakers' prerogatives only - Accent is regarded as poor language performance, or associated with the notion of deficiency

The same themes emerged in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b), except for the theme 'the challenges and barriers to teach English varieties' as shown in Table 76. This could suggest that participants in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) were either familiar with some methodologies to teach English varieties or had been exposed to some methodologies to teach English varieties. On the other hand, it could indicate that participants were not as aware of the challenges and barriers to teach English varieties.

Table 76 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

Group	Theme	Subthemes
English varieties	The importance and acceptance of English varieties	- Embracing English varieties (local Englishes) - Importance of intercultural communication competence
	Strategies to raise awareness of English varieties	- Exposure and appreciation for English varieties - Acknowledging local Englishes in the teaching and learning of the language - Focus on communication over accuracy
	Different accents	- Acceptance and inclusion of accents in the teaching and learning of English - Focus on communication instead of correctness
	Authentic materials	- Inclusion of local Englishes in the teaching materials - Decolonisation of traditional textbooks and teaching materials
Language beliefs	English-related beliefs	- Culture shapes English teachers' beliefs - Beliefs shape English teachers' practice and the choice of teaching methods - Beliefs evolve over time - Influence of colonial matrix of power
Native-speakerism ideology	The effects of native-speakerism	- Discrimination faced by L2 teachers in the job market - L2 English teachers' self-confidence is affected - Payment gap - Selection based on qualification - Coloniality and power dynamics
	Advantages held by 'native' speakers	- L1 speakers are inherently better teachers than L2 speakers
	Challenging stereotypes	- The 'native speaker' brand is synonym for teaching effectiveness - Call for deconstructing the notion of a single 'correct' English

Due to the amount of qualitative data collected through these instruments (open-ended questions in the post-surveys, Padlet wall posts, and Microsoft Forms), the following sections present the selection of excerpts (i.e. quotes and excerpts) relevant to answering the four RQs.

5.2.2.1 The Effects of Native-Speakerism

Quotes from Padlet posts illustrating the implications of native-speakerism transcends geographical boundaries and therefore L2 English teachers face the same challenges.

Being a non-native is “difficult” for everybody regardless of their origins. In general, schools and parents prefer “native” teachers. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 4, Group 4)

Unfortunately, “native speakerism” affects all non-native speakers in the same degree. Once you are classified as a non-native speaker, it affects the way you are perceived, and this has a way of influencing the hiring context within the ELT context. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 6)

‘Native-speakerism’ affects all the ‘non-native speakers’ equally, in the same way. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 4)

5.2.2.2 Job Opportunities and Payment Gap

Quotes from post-surveys and Padlet posts that illustrate that L1 teachers are advantaged on the job market.

It is challenging to find job when you’re not a native speaker. (E.g.: in China and even in the UK). (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 4, Group 3)

Native speakers are preferred to get jobs over non-native speakers. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 4, Group 1)

Schools mostly prefer native speakers. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 2)

Native speakers find better job more easily. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 7)

Many schools look for native teachers, there are even job announces asking for native CVS only. (Participant B7, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Even when they [L2 teachers] do secure employment, they may face discrimination in terms of salary, job opportunities, and professional development. (Participant I6, Cycle 2, post-survey)

5.2.2.3 Value for the Symbolic Representation of 'Native' Speakers

Quotes from post-surveys and Padlet posts that illustrate that most participants believed that L1 teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners.

Parents also tend to think L1 teachers are better for their children. (Participant A13, Cycle 1, post-survey)

The other day I was talking to a woman who lives in England, and she was telling me that her children have the level of English and the pronunciation because their teacher is a native speaker, and she prefers it to be that way. (Participant B3, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Some parents ask for native English teachers. (Participant I10, Cycle 2, post-survey)

There is a preference of native speakers by learners, parents and employers. (Participant G3, Cycle 2, post-survey)

Parents are more willing to accept native English-speaking teachers and pay more for them. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 7)

5.2.2.4 Discrimination faced by L2 Teachers

Quotes from post-surveys and Padlet posts that illustrate discrimination against L2 English teachers in diverse forms such as racism, xenophobia, payment gap, and undervaluation.

I experienced it [discrimination] myself when I was being interviewed for a job, and my colleague, a Canadian, told me that they hired her instead of Brazilians because she is a native speaker. Also, because of the accent. (Participant D1, Cycle 1, post-survey)

[discrimination often] by colour, ethnicity [ethnicity], social position and among other issues. (Participant H16, Cycle 2, post-survey)

Race affects because in Turkey if you look like a foreigner or western-looking, they can find jobs. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 3)

Teachers who do not 'look' like native English speakers because of their race, colour, name or accent are also discriminated against. (Participant G5, Cycle 1, post-survey)

There is a preference for people who look like a native, who has a western visual and features. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 5)

Salary is also another problem. (Participant A7, Cycle 1, post-survey)

There is a payment gap between native and nonnative speaker English teacher (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 3)

5.2.2.5 Selection based on Qualification

Quotes from post-surveys and Padlet posts illustrate that English teachers should be selected by qualifications and experience and highlights the contribution of all qualified English language teachers to ELT.

The teachers should be selected on their qualifications and relevant experiences.

(Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 4, Group 1)

In language schools, they prefer to hire native speaker even if they don't have teaching qualification. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 4, Group 3)

The preference for learning English with native speakers, even if the non-native speakers have qualification. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 4)

They do not care our degrees and skills of teaching they usually focus on whether we are native or not. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 2)

Native speakers are preferred to qualified teachers. (Participant B7, Cycle 1, post-survey)

L2 teachers may also face linguistic and cultural biases from colleagues, students, and parents, who may perceive them as less competent or less qualified than L1 teachers. (Participant I6, Cycle 2, post-survey)

5.2.2.6 Colonial Matrix of Power

Quotes from Padlet posts that illustrate the influence of the colonial matrix of power (Quijano, 2007) on participants' beliefs.

Non-native speaker countries has [have] the "culture" of thinking that everything that comes from other countries, mainly native speaker countries, are better. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 6)

[...] the 'western culture' affects our countries and culture. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 3, Group 4)

Whilst we are accommodating of the varieties of English language, we should not forget that where there is no rule, anarchy prevails. We shouldn't lose English rules such as grammar rules otherwise there can be a kind of chaos. (Padlet post by Participant E7, Cycle 1, Session 1, Group 5)

5.2.2.7 Coloniality and Power Dynamics

Quotes from post-surveys and Padlet posts that illustrate the intricate relationship between coloniality, language, and power dynamics.

In Malaysia it's a common belief that if you speak English fluently then you can get a good job and a good social position, so speaking is valued the most. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 2, Group 2)

A country [India] with 22 official languages but follow[s] British variety. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 2, Group 1)

In Brazil, we tend to have more contact with the American English due to the economic power of the USA. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 2, Group 5)

In Spain, people are not aware of the amount of English existing in the world, this information is quite new for them (global Englishes, World Englishes) but they are trying to raise the awareness of that. (Padlet post, Cycle 1, Session 2, Group 5)

In Turkey, only BE or AE are considered as standard accent. (Padlet post, Cycle 2, Session 4, Group 6)

5.2.2.8 The Impact of VETSDEL on Participants in Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a)

Quotes from post-surveys that illustrate the beliefs of participants were shaped or changed by VETSDEL in Cycle 1.

It has made me reflect on many aspects but I had very clear what English was in general. (Participant B18, Cycle 1, post-survey)

It has been really interesting to know opinions from people with different backgrounds. I gained awareness about different issues I never thought about. (Participant B17, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Yes, it has. It helped me to see things in a different way. (Participant B5, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Definitely. It has broadened my mind and helped me feel understood when it comes to non-native teacher problems. (Participant B7, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Absolutely, I have discovered a lot of new things through it, and it has made me think about issues I had never thought about before. (Participant B11, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Definitely yes [changed]. As I mentioned above, English variety also should be valued. (Participant A7, Cycle 1, post-survey)

Yes, it has changed. I have more confidence in L2 English teachers. (Participant A8, Cycle 1, post-survey)

5.2.2.9 The Impact of VETSDEL on Participants in Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b)

Quotes from post-surveys that illustrate the positive impact of VETSDEL on beliefs of participants in Cycle 2.

Yes. This project affects by beliefs about English and teaching of English.

(Participant F4, Cycle 2, post-survey)

Yes. When I was young, I believed that if my accent is like a native British or American, then I can say that my English is good. VETSDELTA changed my opinion.

(Participant I10, Cycle 2, post-survey)

The answer for this is a yes. As I have mentioned before, I did believe in native-speakerism, and I have to admit that I haven't known about the term "global Englishes" before and I had no idea of "varieties of English". When I come to the VE project, it is actually an eye-opener. (Participant E3, Cycle 2, post-survey)

5.2.2.10 Initial Feeling of Stress/Expectation

Quotes from post-surveys that illustrate a feeling of stress/expectation among participants in the first session in both cycles of the study.

During the first week I feel [felt] weird, but then it was good. (Participant B20, Cycle 1, post-survey)

At first, I didn't feel very confident about speaking on camera, but as the session progressed, the embarrassment went away. (Participant B22, Cycle 1, post-survey)

I was anxious at first, but I liked it afterwards. I heard different local Englishes and communicated with ELT teachers from many countries. I learned from their experience also. (Participant F10, Cycle 2, post-survey)

At first, I was a little bit hesitant to talk but with other participants we supported each other to speak more and then everything was pretty good. (Participant F15, Cycle 2, post-survey)

5.2.2.11 Microsoft Form Feedback on Session 1

Quotes from Microsoft Forms that illustrate that participants felt comfortable and at ease in the first session in both cycles of the study.

Really comfortable with the classmates. (Cycle 1)

Good and comfortable. (Cycle 1)

Really good, it is an amazing experience! (Cycle 1)

Anxious, but it was fun. (Cycle 2)

I was a little nervous, but it was nice to speak and to hear different accents. (Cycle 2)

I'm a shy person. So, I didn't spoke too much. (Cycle 2)

5.2.2.12 The Influence of the *Locus of Enunciation* on Anxiety

Quotes from post-surveys illustrating that the *locus of enunciation* had influence on anxiety levels.

I felt a little nervous, because my colleagues are more fluent than I am in speech.

However, I reminded myself that this is part of communication and that it's okay to make a mistake or forget a word. Technologies helped me when this happened, like Google Translator. (Participant H9, Cycle 2, post-survey)

Lost and insecure, because I believe that the understanding of reasoning was at a high level in my case. (Participant H16, Cycle 2, post-survey)

5.2.3 Focus Group

This section presents the results of four FG meetings carried out across both cycles of the study (Stages 3a and 3b): FG1 on 8 December 8 of 2022 for 66 minutes, FG2 on 14 December of 2022 for 58 minutes, FG3 on 12 April of 2023 for 77 minutes, and FG4 on 19 May of 2023 for 49 minutes.

5.2.3.1 Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a): Focus Group 1 – 8 December 2022

The FG1 meeting took place on 8 December 8 of 2022, with three Spanish mediators. The meeting lasted for 66 minutes. Participant B1 joined the meeting 24 minutes from the beginning. My UK supervisor was also present.

While VETSDELT may not have significantly interrupted Participant B17's previous beliefs about English and ELT, the intercultural dialogue helped him raise awareness and gain new perspectives about those issues. As proposed by Helm (2018), VETSDELT exposed (future) English teachers to different ways of knowing and being to establish relationships and review perspectives. Moreover, it is imperative to highlight that the Third Space is a place of contrast, rearticulation, negotiation rather than a space of resolution (Orsini-Jones & Lee, 2018). This reflects the potential of VE to integrate (identify and interrogate) new information into existing belief systems (Finardi, Hildeblando Júnior & Guimarães, 2020), even if it does not completely transform (interrupt) deep-seated beliefs/coloniality.

Well, for me, it hasn't changed that much, but it is true that it helped me to raise some awareness about the issues. I didn't know that much. It was interesting to know the opinion. So, somehow, yeah, it helped. (Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

Participant B17 acknowledged that his *locus of enunciation* might have affected the views of other participants, highlighting the subjective nature of intercultural exchange.

However, identity is pivotal for successful learning and interaction as it links the subject to the social (and cultural) world (Block, 2014). Besides, as put forward by Kramsch and Thorne (2002), the Internet is not a culturally neutral environment since people bring their cultural background to online environments, which influences communication styles, expectations, and interpretations. Furthermore, cultural differences do not disappear in online interactions; instead, Bhabha (1994) argues that they are transformed, interrogated and hybridised by the cultural Other.

[...] being a man and a white man [...] so it might, you know, affected some others' opinions. (Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

VETSDELT provided an insightful opportunity to explore the concept of English ownership. Participant A13 argued that English might be a global language rather than an entity exclusive to 'native speakers'. Kirkpatrick (2007) claims that the traditional notion of 'native speaker' is no longer valid in a globalised world, wherein English is the lingua franca. This challenges the assumption that English belongs exclusively to L1 speakers (Patel et al., 2023).

And I never thought about the ownership of the language. I mean, I had thought about the native speaker model, which should not be imitated by students or future teachers, but never thought about the ownership of the language. Like, is it English only for native speakers, or is it a global language for everybody? So, in this sense, yes, it has changed. I mean, I don't have the right answer. I don't know if English is only for Anglo-Saxon people or is for everybody. And I think that's interesting to, you know, change perspective. (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

VETSDELT significantly contributed to the development of intercultural awareness, critical thinking, and global perspective. Some studies (e.g., Leask & Gree, 2020; Guimarães & Finardi, 2021) have demonstrated that learning from and with partners from different sociocultural backgrounds fosters intercultural communicative competence, enhances

empathy (cultural sensitivity), challenges stereotypes, and promotes global citizenship (O'Dowd, 2020).

[...] knowing people from different countries, different backgrounds. It's amazing. So that's the purpose of communicating, learning from others, and if we can use English as a means [...] that was wonderful. (Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

Yeah, I think it was interesting to have people from such different countries, because even students from [city in England] [...] they were not from the same cultural background. So, I think it was very interesting to see the perspective of people from Sri Lanka, Spain, Vietnam, Pakistan, you know, many different countries that do not share like a common language or culture. So yeah, in this sense, I think it was very [...] it was very interesting to see all these perspectives. (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

Participant A13 expressed a complex relationship with English as a non-native speaker. This might be related to her language ideologies, which can foster some types of identification and dis-identification between certain groups of people (Kroskrity, 2010) – depending on the *locus of enunciation*. It could also be a result of the uniqueness position of English (Selvi & Yazan, 2021), spoken as a L2/foreign/international language by billions of speakers worldwide (Jenkins, 2000). While Participant A13 displayed a feeling of ownership over English, she acknowledged that her perspective might differ from that of a L1 English speaker. This suggests that she views language ownership as a personal connection rather than having citizenship of a nation-state (Pennycook, 1994).

I feel somehow also own the language, but if I was an Anglo-Saxon speaker of English, I would feel weird about that. I mean, like non-native challenge me that the language is not mine. I mean, it's my language (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1).

Participant B17 and Participant A13 advocate for a neutral form of English for communication purposes and due to the impossibility to teach and learn all English varieties.

Participant B17 acknowledged the evolving nature of English as a reason for a common/neutral English. The incorporation of different accents and dialects into ELT (curriculum) can provide students with a more authentic and realistic English learning experience. As discussed by Galloway and Rose (2015), language standardisation occurs through sources of authority, or policies manifested in the curriculum and the educational system.

That is what should be like a standard English. No matter what's the standard, but in terms of communicating with people, we need something more neutral because it would be, you know, impractical to teach every variety of English to anyone, even learning [...] as language is evolving. (Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

I agree with Participant B17 in the sense that I think it's very difficult or maybe even impossible to teach all the varieties in an English class. I mean, I think as a teacher, I couldn't do that. But what I think we can do as teachers is maybe not to teach the variety itself, but for example, in a listening activity, instead of using recordings only from American English or British English, we can expose our students to, I don't know, a recording from Scottish people or Jamaican people, Indian people talking English, because that's real life. (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

Holliday (2006, 2015) argues that the belief in the superiority of 'native speakers' can lead to discriminatory hiring practices against L2 teachers. This reinforces the construction and reproduction of unequal power relations between L1 and L2 English teachers in ELT. As a result, L2 speakers' teaching competence/abilities are called into question. The following excerpts show how native-speakerism can perpetuate discriminatory practices, often resulting in a preference for 'native teachers'. Participant B1's personal experience at a language school illustrates how this bias can operate in practice in this context.

I'm very aware that even when people post jobs, like, or seeking jobs, and all of the, or many of them, you know, they're looking for native speakers, because they

somehow, they think that they could be better teachers, but I think just because, you know, of pronunciation, of their pronunciation. (Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

I started thinking about job opportunities because we discussed that in the project [...] the feeling that emerged from students was that native speakers had more job opportunities because they're just natives. [...] I think if you want to work in a private school, they probably would prefer a native speaker, or if you're a non-native speaker, they will tell you not to say to your students that you're not a native. (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

I started in a language school in [city in Spain]. At that time, it was very trendy to have native speakers as teachers, particularly back, you know, beginning of the 21st century and the end of the 20th century. I joined this language school and there was [...] one of the teachers left. I think she was from Northern Ireland. I can't remember. And I had the opportunity to be promoted. So the thing is, they had to pretend that I was a native speaker. I think I mentioned it. They changed my surname. But sometimes it was like, I don't know, you felt powerless because, you know, you couldn't be promoted unless you were a native speaker. (Participant B1, FG1, Cycle 1)

While teacher education curricula in Spain are increasingly incorporating VE to develop teacher competencies, Elsheikh (2016) argues for a closer examination of these programmes. Sadeghpour (2020) emphasises the need for ELT programmes to reflect the evolving structural and cultural aspects of English in their curricula.

Here in Spain, the curriculum is just developing competencies to become teachers, and the self-perception of those students who are going to be teachers is that they develop their competencies during the virtual exchanges in a great sense [...] in some topics more than others, but in a great sense. (Participant B1, FG1, Cycle 1)

A common misconception is that only 'native speakers' are qualified to teach a language and therefore the L2 teacher will never reach the same level of linguistic competence. This leads to biases in hiring practices as discussed previously. However, effective language teaching requires training, teaching experience, pedagogical skills, continuous professional development etc. which are not assets exclusive to 'native speakers'.

[...] being native doesn't mean that you are able to teach, that's one thing.

(Participant B17, FG1, Cycle 1)

And regarding being a better teacher, if you're a native, I think that's just a prejudice.

You could be a native and be a good teacher, but it's not something related to being native, you can also be a good teacher, even if it's your second language.

(Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

And also, at the same time, it was also the money. And they [...] the wages they got were higher and they had no training at all. (Participant B1, FG1, Cycle 1)

A common challenge in VE projects is the time needed for participants to overcome their initial discomfort and feel comfortable enough to engage openly. Therefore, it takes time to establish a safe and supportive environment where participants can freely share their perspectives. In other words, it takes time for the Third Space to be a safe Space (Bhabha, 1994).

I think after four sessions, they started to know each other and to share their, yeah, their feelings or thoughts. So yeah, I know that we don't have much time to do this kind of project, but maybe adding one or two weeks more would help, you know, because yeah, I felt that at the end, students were willing to communicate more than at the beginning. (Participant A13, FG1, Cycle 1)

5.2.3.2 Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a): Focus Group 2 – 14 December 2022

The FG2 meeting took place on 14 December of 2022, with six participants. The meeting lasted for 58 minutes. VETSDELTA seems to have had impact on the participants' beliefs about English and ELT. The collective reflection in FG2 revealed that VETSDELTA challenged preconceived notions, broadened horizons, and empowered teachers to foster a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to ELT. This shows the potential of VE as a Third Space in the decolonial exercise of Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt colonial legacies (Souza, 2019a).

I have never experienced this knowledge before. But now I think, you know, it has changed my mind, especially, you know, the beliefs, the attitudes, and some concepts about the varieties of English. It makes me feel more confident, make more confident when I study English, study my master's degree, and my future job, when I work as a teacher. I know that, yeah, I deserve to be, you know, I deserve to be an English teacher, even when I am not a native speaker. (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

For me personally, it helped me broaden my mind. Like, I personally didn't know about, like, I hadn't thought about what about the English in China or what about, like, how they speak English in Singapore or in India. And as a teacher, I think it also helps, because now I believe, I know I have the power to bring that, those ideas and that knowledge to the students and, like, help them broaden their minds as well. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

I believe that this session [VETSDELTA] has genuinely affected like my previous beliefs and everything because we were having a discussion at [Professor's] class as well. During that time I had [before VETSDELTA], I was in favor of native speakers that they would know better. But after interacting with different people here [during VETSDELTA], I genuinely believe that there are different kind of English, and everybody has a different pattern to teach English. So it does not necessarily [mean]

that a native speaker would possibly know much more than us, or we would know less than them. So yeah, this has kind of affected my belief in this way. (Participant A6, FG2, Cycle 1)

Yeah, if I talk about myself to be honest, I wasn't aware of these things like global English, World English, ELF, you know, English as medium of instruction, all these things [...] I just came to know through this course. I came to know about particularly when I attended these sessions about English varieties, different varieties. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

VETSDELT will also have an impact on the participants' (future) teaching practices. The project inspired some of them to incorporate VE into their teaching as a strategy to expose their students to English varieties, as well as enhance their cultural understanding and language skills.

I guess it will definitely affect my teaching. (Participant C3, FG2, Cycle 1)

We got a lot of new knowledge that we can put into practice in our teaching. For example, we [...] for me, now I am not really focused on the standard language since I know it's okay that my accent from Spain or I can use my materials from Brazil, wherever. So, yeah, that changed my mind. (Participant B8, FG2, Cycle 1)

Maybe in future when I go back to India, I can also, you know, organize a virtual exchange or something like that for my students. I would really like to adopt it [VE/COIL] in my further teaching. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

It [VETSDELT] has affected my own teaching practice in a way [...] whenever in future I try to teach English or I try to teach any subject, I will let my student also be part of virtual exchange to let them know that there is a differentiation between the languages. But that does not mean that we are wrong or we are learning something wrong. To build a bridge, I would surely use this as a source of knowledge for my children. This session [VETSDELT] has really, you know, built our confidence,

knowing that even being a non-native speaker, we can be a good English teacher.

(Participant A6, FG2, Cycle 1)

The Third Space afforded by VETSDELTA also opened space for participants to identify and interrogate the ideology of standard English and a held belief of native-oriented pronunciation. As reported by some of them, only the varieties of countries from the Global is regarded as correct, or 'standard'.

I always had in mind, like, the Australian variety, the US variety right [...] but not like anything farther than that. So, that's what the course [VETSDELTA] helped me to know. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

Well, actually, I knew about this, the rightness of English before. I thought I should follow standard pronunciation [...] I should follow British pronunciation. I should follow American pronunciation. Now I think we should embrace our own pronunciation [...] I should not follow a particular pronunciation, so as long as we pronounce phonemes well, so that is what we should do. (Participant C3, FG2, Cycle 1)

Language standardisation occurs through sources of authority such as policies, the educational system, and curriculum (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Hence, teacher education plays an important role in shaping teachers' beliefs and forming dominant ideologies (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013). Andreotti (2011) argues that education is the starting point for the decolonisation of curricula and teachers, suggesting that rethinking the sources of authority can help dismantle colonial legacies. Furthermore, cultural ties (coloniality) and geographical proximity also influence the adoption of certain standards. For example, the British colonisation in India and Brazil's geographical proximity to the United States have impacted English standards adopted in these countries.

Yeah, even in India because teachers follow this pattern to only British English rather than the American or other English [variety]. (Participant A6, FG2, Cycle 1)

In India [...] if native speaker is there, so they are considered superior as compared to the ones who don't speak, like, you know, whose first language is not English.

(Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

I was talking in the groups [breakout rooms] with people from Brazil and they were talking about, like, the American variety because they were closer to the United States, so they would always have that as the model. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

To me the standard English is everywhere in a textbook, in movies, in songs [...].

(Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

Participants showed a critical view towards English ownership. Some of them argued that the number of L2 English speakers outnumber that of L1 English speakers (Larsen-Freeman et al., 2015; Baker et al., 2025); as a consequence, most interactions in English take place in multicultural settings (British Council, 2023; Baker et al., 2025). Therefore, English should also reflect the diversity of local varieties worldwide.

I have the belief that English particularly [does] not belong to those speakers who comes from English native speaking countries like in [the] UK, America, Australia, South Africa, and Canada. [...] English is a global language, and it belongs to all.

(Participant C3, FG2, Cycle 1)

I also came to know about that the non-native speakers of English outnumber the native speakers of English. So, it's not the thing that, you know, native speakers own this English and the sole ownership about. [...] English as a global language, world Englishes. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

I'm so surprised is that the majority of English speakers coming [comes] from the non-native speakers. So, that means English, somehow it reflects the culture and, you know, the varieties of English also. So, I think English should reflect the cultural identities. (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

Participants recognised the native-speakerism ideology is still a widespread misconception not only in ELT (Holliday, 2006; 2015) but also in both learners' and parents' imaginaries. Despite knowing that in many cases the 'native teacher' is underqualified and therefore may not be the best teacher, the 'nativeness' brand and the 'standard' accent are more valued than L2 English-speaking teachers' qualifications.

Native speakers are considered the ideal ones to teach English. But this native speakerism, this concept has been originated in the West. But even its adoption and its resistance has [...] we can see it's widespread all over the non-native [countries that English is not a first language] cultures itself. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

I think that the L1 teacher, you know, they dominate all the English classroom settings. So many students and many parents, they have a preference for the native speaker because they look for the standard English and they consider them as a role model (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

And it really is a huge misconception that we consider native teachers as the first person to teach English rather than the non-native one. (Participant A6)

The concept of native-speakerism has been transformed into a certificate of quality, genuineness, and authenticity that is obtained through the country of one's birth (Rajagopalan, 2005). Consequently, teachers labelled as 'native' and their supposed 'standard English' assets are seen as marketable commodities, thereby being reduced to a list of saleable attributes in ELT (Holliday, 2015).

They are just native speakers. And maybe just because they are native speaker, they get the job. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

Whenever, you know, people are trying to recruit some person for a job, they would always have a belief that a native speaker would have a good fluency and good command over a language, and they would rather choose a native speaker over a non-native speaker. (Participant A6, FG2, Cycle 1)

The preference for 'native speakers' in ELT often leads to employment discrimination, salary disparities and undervaluation of L2 teachers' competence. This bias not only limits professional opportunities for L2 teachers but also perpetuates the misconception that 'native speakers' are inherently better teachers. Participants' experiences illustrate how native-speakerism plays out in different contexts: wage gap, segregation/marginalisation, manifestation of racism, and 'native-only' advertisements.

I just would like to narrate the incident from my own life during the lockdown. You know, I applied on an online website. I would not like to mention the name of the website. And there, you know, because I'm an English teacher and back there in India [...] was Maths teacher too. So they told me that they would prefer native speaker to teach English, but we can hire you to teach Maths. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

I was working in an academy [language school] and I couldn't give private lessons because I wasn't native. And so they hired me for like being a receptionist. And in case, someone couldn't go to class or had to miss some class, then I could give the class. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

I don't know in other places, but in my place [Vietnam], native speakers, even when they have a teaching qualification or not, they still receive a higher salary compared to the locals. (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

I've never been discriminated, but it's true that they give me the lowest levels to teach. I was in an academy [language school] and the native speakers get the highest. (Participant B8, FG2, Cycle 1)

On the other hand, participants highlighted the importance of qualification and teaching experience over having a state-nation citizenship, being a 'native speaker' (Pennycook, 1994).

I think we should always choose qualification over tendency to know how the person speaks, because qualification would matter most when it comes to teaching a student, rather than a person speaking a language in general. (Participant A6, FG2, Cycle 1)

But I think L2 teachers should receive an equal academic position if they are qualified and competent with proper qualification and experience. (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

And while I was there for a little bit [working in language school] and the native teachers [...] I became friends with some of them. And they hadn't taught ever. They just came from London, Ireland, and they came here like [...] holiday or they were studying here. So they got like an extra job, but they didn't have any teaching experience. And for me, it was very frustrating because I wanted to teach, but they couldn't. They couldn't let me teach. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

As L2 English teachers, participants advocate for their cultural contribution to ELT, as highlighted by Holliday (2015). This suggests that L2 teachers' learning backgrounds can be a positive asset in addressing the challenges faced by English learners.

I guess it is better to be a non-L2 teacher to teach specifically TESOL, because L2 teacher knows their problems [...] L2 learners' problems. (Participant C3, FG2, Cycle 1)

The teachers that are specialized in English as a foreign language, for example, knows how to teach the subject for the students in order to them to acquire better the English. (Participant B8, FG2, Cycle 1)

Participants identified some affordances (van Lier, 2000) that facilitated their intercultural learning experience in VETSDELT. The Breakout room feature seems to have motivated participants to engage in group discussion and helped them to gain confidence to

share their perspectives. The presence of mediators to facilitate and encourage discussion in the BoRs was also seen as positive.

I really appreciate the role of mediators, especially in the breakout rooms, because sometimes when we were not able to open up our ideas and all these things, so mediators were keep pushing us and giving us some hints how you can just say something, you know. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

[...] the fact that you're using breakout rooms and those are very useful. (Participant C3, FG2, Cycle 1)

But anyhow, it was good session because maybe it's the first time they are feeling shy not to open up. But when you are assigning them in the small groups in breakout rooms, it gives us the confidence to speak. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

Similarly, the positive feedback suggests that flipped learning (pre-reading) was beneficial. Pre-reading seems to have helped participants to come to synchronous live sessions prepared to engage with content in the BoRs discussion.

I like that you have to read an article before the session and then you discuss the article. (Participant B8, FG2, Cycle 1)

It was well organized and especially the articles that you gave us beforehand to read. (Participant A12, FG2, Cycle 1)

It was also good to have some papers to read beforehand because you already had like some ideas that you could later discuss. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

To me, I think one of the most enjoyable aspects is the article that you gave me before the meeting. Because I think I learned a great deal from them. (Participant A7, FG2, Cycle 1)

Additionally, the introductory mini lecture at the beginning of the synchronous session was pointed out as an affordance. The mini lecture summarised the bullet points and provided foundation for the BoR discussion.

It is really good that you introduce, you always introduce a little bit the thing [intro and presentation of topic] before the groups [breakout rooms]. (Participant B8, FG2, Cycle 1)

I really liked the short presentation [intro and presentation of topic] before the questions because that way you could remember what you have read and everything. (Participant B7, FG2, Cycle 1)

Finally, participants found Padlet a useful tool for posting the BoR reflections and fostering engagement (see Figure 6). They could see and comment on each other's group posts. Assigning specific roles (scribe and spokesperson) was also positive for group dynamics and organisation in the BoRs.

And especially the Padlet where, you know, you have assigned one scribe and one mediator, one spokesperson. And these tools that you have used, they are quite wonderful: Padlet, Zoom, breakout rooms, and the Microsoft Forms. (Participant A12)

Figure 6 Group Posts on Padlet from Session 1 on 7 November 2022



5.2.3.3 Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b): Focus Group 3 – 12 April 2023

The FG3 meeting took place on 12 April of 2023 with ten participants for 77 minutes.

Participants addressed how participating in VETSDELT contributed to Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt (Souza & Duboc, 2021; Finardi & Salomão, 2024) previous beliefs. For instance, Participant E5 argued having shifted her perspective toward the British 'standard English', despite growing up in a country such as Nigeria where British English is the language of instruction and often considered 'standard'. Similarly, Participant G3 emphasised how VETDELST empowered her to embrace her Chinese English after believing in the superiority of 'standard English' for more than 15 years. The quotes highlight the transformative impact of VETDELST in the process of identifying, interrogating, and interrupting ingrained beliefs.

I would say that VETLSDELT has affected my previous beliefs about English generally. I'm from a second language speaking country that is Nigeria and we [...] the language of instruction in schools is basically English language and we were

brought up even from childhood to believe that there is a certain way to speak, there's a certain way to put words together and we were also brought up to believe that the best way to go about it was to follow the standard of the native speaker, which what they showed us was like the British speaker. So, in a way, this course has opened my eyes to see the realities of it, that it's not basically about like how you speak or how like you put words together. [...] So, this experience has, for me [...] I would say it has really been mind-blowing and I also like had like the opportunity of speaking to speakers from other places as well, listening to different accents.

(Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Personally, they [VETSDEL T] changed a lot of my beliefs about the teaching, English language, since I've been teaching for many years, more than 15 years. [...] It changed my beliefs about the world English. [...] And for me, it's changed some beliefs about teaching in the near future. I guess it will change a lot of my teaching ways, like [...] I'm going to, you know, to encourage my students to be more confident to accept our Chinese English. (Participant G3, FG3, Cycle 2)

It's changed my beliefs than before, actually. [...] First of all, I was thinking like that my accent is worse. And for example, other people around the world, Indian, Scottish, English accent, they are better. The very best accents must be English, American accent and something like that. But when I attend this program [VETSDEL T], attend this project, I really changed my mind. There are no wrong English accent or no English culture or something like that. (Participant F7, FG3, Cycle 2)

Before this programme [VETSDEL T], of course, I've heard of accents and different Englishes. I've heard of this. But once we entered this programme and we started to get really in there, get into the detail, I realized that English is not only one thing. [...] I think this was one of the best virtual exchange experiences that I've had (Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)

VETSDELT will likely impact participants' (future) teaching practices. The quotes shows that the project inspired them to adopt more inclusive and culturally sensitive pedagogical approaches. Besides, VE was seen as a potential teaching approach to expose their students to English varieties, thereby enhancing cultural understanding and language appreciation.

And one thing which inspired me was about some teaching methods and ideas, how to encourage students to listen and accept different varieties of English and to be more open to listen to other listeners and not to hold those stereotypes in terms of native speakers. So, I think this was really an eye-opener for me. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

So, that has like opened my eyes to seeing like new perspectives as to how teaching of English language can be. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

So, one day I could use that [context learned] to teach my students as well. (Participant E4, FG3, Cycle 2)

As for my teaching strategies, I will have my, for example, like these virtual exchange programmes. I will make sure to encourage my students to join them as well in order to learn different cultures, different, different world Englishes. So, they expand their minds and they don't grow up like the discriminative people. (Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)

Participants showed awareness and appreciation for English varieties, suggesting that the exposure to different Englishes, and accents, had a positive impact on their beliefs of 'correct' or 'standard' English.

I would say I've gotten better being that I've been exposed to other like [...] accents as well. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

It also taught me that not speaking in the, let's say, British or American English way is true and the others are wrong. No, that's not true. It taught me that in English can come in every, let's say, variety. (Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)

For me, I find it very interesting that there are a lot of varieties of English that I can learn from since I joined here. (Participant E4, FG3, Cycle 2)

Participants showed a critical view of 'standard English' and English ownership. The quotes show an understanding of English as a Global Language and its evolving nature. This suggests that English varieties should be recognised, and a shift in the hierarchical relationship between 'native' and 'non-native' speakers.

*There is no one English. English expands and absorbs everywhere it goes.
(Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)*

I think we should consider about all varieties of English. We shouldn't think that there is only one English because there are lots of it. (Participant F7, FG3, Cycle 2)

I mean, there's no one model [standard English] that we're looking up to. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

I've realized now that it's not [...] I too own the language and so I have like the authority to use it. [...] there's this thing, just like I mentioned earlier, about like the native speaker being a model for all of us. But I've just realized, especially like through this project, that I too am a model. It doesn't like really matter if I'm a native speaker or not. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Participants could recognise the interconnectedness of global issues in ELT through global perspectives and critically analyse how these issues transcend national boundaries. This holistic approach to ELT not only prepares teachers for (future) professional demands but also fosters a sense of global community and empathy.

But to me, the most important thing that this project affected was realizing that in my country I wasn't alone. Because whenever we had the meetings, people from China, people from Brazil, people from other countries, they all shared the same problems that we had in our country. So, that made me open my eyes about the problems that are global. (Participant F16, FG3, Cycle 2)

I mean, they have the same problem and same opinions about global Englishes. So, it's not just only one country or only one person feeling in a particular way. So, it's the same with everyone. So, I could relate to other people from other countries and that taught me a lot. (Participant E1, FG3, Cycle 2)

I think it was really interesting to focus on the ideas and on the [...] you know, the new perspectives I could hear from others. I didn't focus that much on the accent, or I didn't focus that much whether they are speaking correct English or what kind of accent they are having, because I was truly interested to learn something from my colleagues. To learn, to get other angles and to learn something from them. So, it was like an eye-opener. The fact that most of us shared some same ideas and we see things and problems from the same perspective, it was really interesting. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

Native-speakerism systemically minimises professional qualification and skills. The ELT industry tends to foster this ideology by selling the 'native speaker' brand over qualification and training (Holliday, 2015). The following quotes reinforce this view.

[...] in today's world, unfortunately, especially in my country [Turkey], unfortunately, we look for native teachers. We don't look for their qualification. (Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)

[...] a good teacher needs more qualifications, because they need not only English language knowledge, also need pedagogical knowledge. (Participant G4, FG3, Cycle 2)

So, because somebody, like, is okay from England or from America, you give him the job without even testing to see whether the person is good. And then there's somebody out there that's competent enough, but just simply because the person is a non-native speaker. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Native-speakerism builds on the idea of the superiority of the 'native speaker' to marginalise L2 teachers, seen as the 'the other', the foreigner, the outsider who does not belong to the Kachruvian inner circle (Kachru, 2005), or the 'native community'. This implies a dichotomy between 'we/native speakers', idealised Self, and 'they/non-native speaker', the problematic Other. Through a native-speakerist lens, the authentic 'native teacher' is not biased by non-Western cultures or teaching methods.

[...] it doesn't mean when you're a native speaker, and let's say, you're a teacher. (Participant E4, FG3, Cycle 2)

A native speaker doesn't mean that they are more competent than non-native speakers because it doesn't define your English level [teaching skills]. (Participant F16, FG3, Cycle 2)

Native speakers are not necessarily, you know, the jack of all trades. Doesn't mean that they know everything about the language just because they are natives. And in terms of teaching, I think the word teacher equals pedagogical skills. [...] That's why if you [...] if there is a native speaker, but they don't necessarily go into this process of pedagogical learning, they might not necessarily have the skills to be good teachers. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

The attachment to native-speakerism is a colonial legacy in the Global South which perpetuates inequalities and hierarchisation. For instance, in countries such as Turkey, Malaysia and India there is still a strong preference for the 'native teacher' by language/international schools. As reported by the following excerpts, native-speakerism can

increase the burden of local teachers, reduce their self-confidence, and undermine their professional legitimacy.

In my country [Turkey], there are lots of advertisements. Like, there are lots of native teachers, native English teachers in our school. So, “You need to come here and take some lessons from us because we have native speakers”. We have native English teachers”. That is why you can learn English very fast”. For example, in two months. (Participant F7, FG3, Cycle 2)

In Malaysia, we have two types of schools, actually. One is a government schools and another one is international school. I just say the international schools are a bit better. I have to say, you know. So if you were to work in that kind of school, if let's say it's between me, an English teacher, a Malay English teacher, and a native speaker who is just because she's native, I think you will know who will get the job more. Usually teachers like me, they tend to send us to a more, I have to say, a government school or a rural school because they want the best of the best. So, in order to get the best of the best, especially in English, then they will hire mostly native speakers. (Participant E4, FG3, Cycle 2)

I think it's the same in my country [India], because when I was doing my IELTS exam, I mean, they will make sure that your examiner is native speaker. So, I mean, non-native speakers might not be hired there. (Participant E1, FG3, Cycle 2)

Overall, there was no feeling of anxiety among the participants. As pointed out by Participant E5, Participant F16, and Participant E1, the first session may have caused some level of expectation, or stress, on some participants. Additionally, they also reported no technology-related anxiety (Orsini-Jones, 2023b), mainly due to online learning and teaching experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[...] there were no anxiety triggers, at least for me. (Participant F6, FG1, Cycle 2)

I totally support that. No anxiety at all because everyone was friendly and patient. And we all had our chance to express ourselves and to communicate with others. So, and in terms of technology [...] digital [...] using the digital technologies, I don't think it was a problem because in the past three years, at least in China, we had been doing a lot of online teaching and online learning. So, we all somehow got used to that. I really enjoyed the project and I didn't have any negative or anxious experience. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

I feel like the past three years, especially starting from the COVID year, has kind of drawn attention to the use of technologies when it comes to different purposes and different uses. So I feel the anxieties all went away then. [...] I mean, the first day I was really quiet, but like when we went into it, I could see that. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

To be honest, I didn't feel any anxiety because this is my comfort zone. This is where I am most of the time. I love spending time online. I play games, I talk with people on an online setting. So, I don't have any anxiety, but I could see that most people had anxiety because like Participant E5 said, at first, a couple of sessions, only a couple of people were speaking. (Participant F16, FG3, Cycle 2)

Actually, [the] first time [session] I was also very nervous. I couldn't remember. Then I think it was easier for me. Now I'm quite confident. I mean, I'm not nervous anymore. (Participant E1, FG3, Cycle 2)

However, Participant F16, Participant I8 and Participant E5 observed that some participants showed high levels of anxiety, very likely the Brazilian participants. The next section will explore potential reasons that may have contributed to their high level of anxiety such as Internet connection, technology access, individual personality traits, among others during the study. Data showed that Brazilians were a very anxious group.

[...] the other thing that I already said before, because of its technology [...] because not everyone has the same opportunities about the technology. Some people had some issues with Internet. Some people had some issues with computers etc.

(Participant F16, FG3, Cycle 2)

I could notice that some of the participants felt intimidated and maybe anxious to speak. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

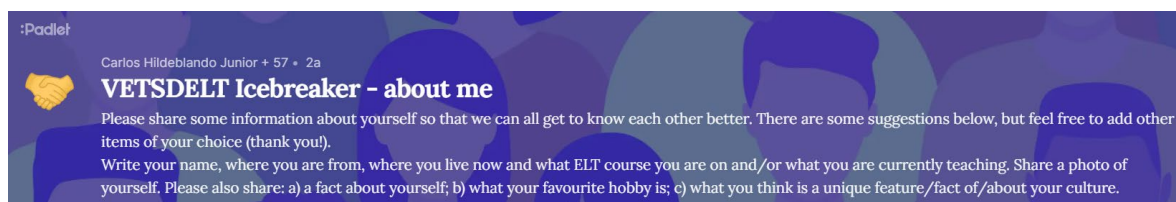
The only thing I would like to add is just [...] if I want to rate this programme, I would say it was a 99%. Now, I feel like the 1% is for the people that had anxieties, which is not, I would not say it's on the part of the planners. [...] I feel like people got anxieties because they just felt every other person is a native speaker and every other person is good at speaking. [...] Because I feel so bad for an experience as rich as this, somebody will miss it because he has anxieties or something. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Participant E5 identified the potential of some affordances (van Lier, 2000) to mitigate participants' anxiety in future VE projects. First, she suggests that the icebreaker Padlet (Figure 7) used for introduction, before the start of VETSDELT, should be further explored. She mentions that Padlet could be a means for participants to acknowledge their *loci of enunciation* and explicit positionality, *where they speak from*. Thus, the dynamics of the first session (Lee & Song, 2019) observed should focus on exploring the information shared by participants. This would probably reduce anxiety, she argues.

There was this wonderful thing that we did when the project was about to start. We were asked to go on Padlets to put things about ourselves and all that. I feel like going forward, maybe something like that could be reviewed. Like, maybe the first session should have like something that has to do with like [...] it might not necessarily be an introduction because some people will not still want to speak, but we could have something like, "Okay, out of all these profiles that have been put

together on the Padlet, can you make a friend, like meet a friend, exchange numbers?”. And that when the other learners are saying that “I’m not the only one here, like I’m not the only one that is a non-native speaker”. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Figure 7 Instructions for Introduction on the Icebreaker Padlet



Second, the BoR feature was also identified as a potential anxiety mitigator, or to scaffold online interactions (Fondo & Jacobetty, 2020). Participants should be allocated in BoRs dynamically to get to know and interact with one another and therefore build trust. The first icebreaker session would also include a task for participants to share what they learned about their peers in the main room, as suggested by Participant E5. At the end of the session, a Microsoft Form could be used to collect feedback on how participants felt.

So, if we could inculcate something like that to get everybody to warm up [...] it could be even you [Carlos] just like you put us into the breakout rooms. It could be possible to put people into breakout rooms and then all they need to do like maybe for one or two minutes is to interact with each other, get to know each other and then we could do a task that says, “Okay, what can you say about this person?”. That helps other learners to do away with their anxieties and is like a warmup to get into it. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

Participants identified some affordances (van Lier, 2000) that VETSDOLT afforded as a Third Space, such as BoRs, Padlet, Socrative, and Microsoft Form. These Web 2.0 tools offered opportunities to foster an inclusive online learning space. They also helped building a

sense of community and enhancing experiential learning. Moreover, the roles of mediator, scribe and speaker were also seen as positive for the co-construction of knowledge.

You guys [the team] didn't lack anything. And you guys used Web 2.0 tools like Padlet, Socrative. It was [...] I think it was amazing. Forms, feedback forms, that's the thing that I liked the most, because that means you care about our experiences as well. (Participant F6, FG3, Cycle 2)

The breakout rooms were awesome. I like the fact that there was always somebody to, like, mediate the rooms. That was something that was good. (Participant E5, FG3, Cycle 2)

I really love the breakout room, how we assigned the participants or who's [was] going to be the speakers, who's [was] going to be the one who takes notes [scribe] when the participants sharing an idea and who's [was] going to be the one who's like posted on the Padlets. (Participant E2, FG3, Cycle 2)

Finally, the allocation of participants to different BoRs each session was another affordance identified. This rotation enabled participants to be exposed to different viewpoints and ways of knowing, being and relating in the world. This approach also fostered community building, teamwork, and networking opportunities.

Also, I like that when we had to go into the breakout rooms, sometimes we were mixed together with other participants, so maybe every week we got to meet new people. This was a good thing because you could listen to more speakers and more ideas. (Participant I8, FG3, Cycle 2)

I really enjoyed having different people on each week. It was really fun to interact with different people all around the world. It was really a nice experience for me. I really enjoyed it truly. (Participant F16, FG3, Cycle 2)

The next section will delve into potential factors that may have contributed to their high level of anxiety among Brazilian participants. Overall, the data suggests that Brazilians were a very anxious group.

5.2.3.4 Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b): Focus Group 4 – 19 May 2023

The FG4 meeting took place on 19 May of 2023 with twelve Brazilian participants for 49 minutes. Both the Brazilian partner and my UK supervisor were also present. The Brazilian participants reported experiencing anxiety during the project. Thus, the focus of the FG4 was to understand underlying factors that contributed to their anxiety. In order to mitigate their anxiety in the FG4 meeting, participants were allowed to switch between English and Portuguese.

The lack of confidence to communicate in English with ‘native’/proficient speakers and poor language performance (making grammatical mistakes, comparing one’s pronunciation, and being judged by their peers negatively based on accent) may have contributed to aggravation of anxiety, as suggest by Ma (2022) and Silveira (2020). This might result in feelings of incompetence and lack of ability to present oneself in a way compatible with self-image. Self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in the self-regulation of affective states. The perceived inability to successfully perform a desired outcome significantly increase anxiety levels (Ma, 2022).

I’m saying that I really expected meeting with North Americans. (Participant H11, FG4, Cycle 2)

I think it’s always amazing to speak in English with a person whose native language isn’t English (Participant H7, FG4, Cycle 2)

I wasn’t expecting to talk to people that English wasn’t the native language (Participant H14, FG4, Cycle 2)

Anxiety was also associated with the fear of speaking in front of an audience. Silveira (2020) characterises L2 anxiety as a situation-specific form of anxiety that negatively affects language performance. This feeling may have been triggered by context complexity, especially when talking about a topic for the first time, and a lower language proficiency (MacIntyre, 2017), as expressed by the Brazilian partner. As argued by Orsini-Jones, Cerveró-Carrascosa and Zou (2020) and Wimpenny et al. (2022), COIL/VE space takes students out of their comfort zone of a traditional curriculum. Moreover, engaging in online intercultural communication through a L2 can pose affective challenges for students and elicit language anxiety (Fondo & Jacobetty, 2020).

When I was chosen to be the one that would make a summary of everything in one minute [speaker], I didn't thought I would be able to [...] but I didn't think I would be able to, but I did. I like this part too. (Participant H2, FG4, Cycle 2)

The topics [...] the topics were difficult. I wasn't in my comfort zone. So I just observed, listened, and tried to understand. (Participant H16, FG4, Cycle 2)

What I found the challenge [...] a challenge was to discuss the subject in English. (Participant H12, FG4, Cycle 2)

I wish I had time to work on the theory, on your texts, and to prepare their readings together with them during my classes, so that I feel that they would have more content to go to the sessions, and they would feel more comfortable when using the language, and at the same time discussing theory. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

Individual personality traits (Abdullah et al., 2022) such as low self-esteem (Ma, 2022), shyness, introversion (Vural, 2019), perfectionism (Silveira, 2020), social anxiety seemed to have influenced language anxiety. Vural (2019) and Abdullah et al. (2022) argue there is a correlation between personality and speaking anxiety. Besides, self-perception and beliefs also play a significant role in influencing language anxiety (Bialayesh et al., 2017; Silveira, 2020). Therefore, individual personality traits can have a negative impact on one's

confidence and language performance, as suggest by Manchado-Nieto and Fielden-Burns (2024). Brazilian participants' anxiety level was so high that prevented them from participating in some sessions, even the FG4.

I am a shy person, so I don't talk very much. (Participant H4, FG4, Cycle 2)

The experience is very nice, but when we talk [in] English, I'm very anxious. I don't like [to] speak [in] English very much. (Participant H8, FG4, Cycle 2)

[...] perfectionism and getting to know different people and getting in contact with them makes me a little bit anxious. Exposing myself to this. (Participant H7, FG4, Cycle 2)

I agree with the girls. I pass for the same challenges as they said [social anxiety]. (Participant H12, FG4, Cycle 2)

I am more a pragmatic person. [...] I guess the main challenge was handling with my anxiety. (Participant H17, FG4, Cycle 2)

They are shy [...] they have their struggles. This is really, really a challenge for them. [...] Some of them skipped some sessions, and also today, because of this [anxiety]. [...] Some of the absent students this morning, they are really good at English, but I think they have this anxiety issue (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

Self-demand (Ma, 2022) was also reported as a trigger of anxiety, which may have led the Brazilian group to experience high levels of anxiety/stress. The participation in a VE project carried out by a British University, from the Global North, probably intensified these feelings. As a result, the Brazilian partner felt the need to constantly push the group. Their socioeconomic backgrounds might have triggered anxiety in the Brazilian group, as students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often have negative self-perception of their language proficiency and performance (Ali et al., 2021).

And I was anxious about it because I know what was my function there [mediator]. So I worked with myself at home after and before the sessions about it. So I made the step by step how I can make this mediation better. It was more about my role at the room. (Participant H9, FG4, Cycle 2)

[...] the hardest part is like the communication part [English] because especially in the morning, I get very anxious and I always was like, “Oh, I’m saying this wrong [...] they are not going to understand me”. (Participant H14, FG4, Cycle 2)

So, it was really a struggle. I was screaming at them all the time, and I would say, “Come on, let’s do it. We have to do it. Let’s go. Let’s go. Let’s go. It’s important for Carlos, it’s important for the experience. Let’s do it”, you know. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

English proficiency may also have impacted communication anxiety (MacIntyre, 2017). The FG4 revealed a trace of coloniality in participants’ self-perception, a complex of ‘the bad English’. Regarding the Brazilian context, it could be related to a belief that English and learned taught in state schools/universities is not of a sufficiently high standard and students do not necessarily see themselves as English speakers (Lagares, 2013). This belief is reinforced by issues of class inequality and privileges in Brazil (Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2005).

It was very difficult because [...] and I don’t know [...] a native English native [...] and I try to understand about English and native English or non-native [...] but I try [tried]. (Participant H16, FG4, Cycle 2)

English was a little tricky sometimes, because as everybody [...] I forgot some words, and the others was better than me at this point, but it was really good. (Participant H9, FG4, Cycle 2)

I’ll speak in Portuguese because I get nervous. (Participant H10, FG4, Cycle 2)

I think they [students] are like B1 going to B2. [...] But the ones who are more B1 are the ones who are probably most anxious. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

Few digital skills, low literacy levels, and digital divide may also have contributed to anxiety or stress episodes (Johnson et al., 2019; Lee & Park, 2020; Elanthiraiyan & Priyanath, 2023). According to Hapsari (2021), unfamiliarity and lack of access to the internet and NICTs can be sources of anxiety. A combination of these factors may have limited participants from experiencing the Third Space and identifying the affordances provided by VETDSELT. Furthermore, Hauck (2023) suggests that inequalities in access, lack of institutional support, experience with technology and sociopolitical challenges can constraint more equitable and inclusive learning outcomes in VE.

My biggest problem was not English itself, was the technology. I learned how to use Zoom by computer during the meetings. I also I don't have a computer myself, so I don't know really much about how to use it. I do everything by my phone, but I liked the experience. [...] I was really anxious because my connection was falling down (Participant H2, FG4, Cycle 2)

We are not really used to use some platforms like Padlet or Zoom, you know. I'm not confident to use Padlet. (Participant H12, FG4, Cycle 2)

And this lab [...] we also use for the Teletandem project. So, the machines are not the most updated ones. And we don't have somebody locally to take care of it. So, we depend on calling a department to come and fix things for us. We do the job ourselves. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

Lack of infrastructure was another major issue for triggering anxiety among the Brazilian participants (Johnson et al., 2019; Lee & Park, 2020; Elanthiraiyan & Priyanath, 2023). The Brazilian institution did not provide necessary institutional support for the group to engage in VETDSELT. This shows that VE is still a peripheral activity carried out by individual faculty (bottom-up initiatives) who want to use technology to implement

intercultural learning into their content-based courses, without training and institutional support (O'Dowd, 2020; Lewis & O'Dowd, 2016). Pre-service English teachers English teachers in/from rural and remote area experience moderate to high levels of L2 anxiety due to limited access to adequate infrastructure, digital technologies, teaching resources, institutional support, and online intercultural exchange opportunities (Johnson et al., 2019; Lee & Park, 2020; Elanthiraiyan & Priyanath, 2023).

We don't have computers for me in the other room. So that's a problem. But that's why I made the mediation at home. I wasn't with them because of this, because of the connection. I got anxious because I know my room on the Zoom [breakout room].
(Participant H9, FG4, Cycle 2)

We don't see it here [VE projects] because we are 500 kilometres from São Paulo, for example. We don't meet foreigners in the street, in the corridors of the university. So, this is a great point from this experience. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

It is such a small lab [...] here things are really difficult [...] this internet connection. Because we are a multi-campus institution in the state of São Paulo, our internet connection comes from a different campus, which is an hour from here. And so many things we cannot really fix locally. We depend on the other campus to fix. And so, these are the struggles, you know. We struggle with technology concerning internet service, concerning the machines [...] we leave a machine working on a day, and the next day it doesn't work. And so, we don't have much control on this. (Brazilian partner, FG4, Cycle 2)

Despite the anxiety episodes, VETSDELTA appears to have helped participants to identify and interrogate colonial legacies (Souza 2019a; Souza & Duboc, 2021). The encounter with the Other in the Third Space offers new possibilities for disruption, displacement and transcendence of authoritative narratives and the opening of liminal transformational and collaborative learning landscapes (Bhabha, 1994).

I got to think about things that I've never thought about before. (Participant H2, FG4, Cycle 2)

It made me have a different perspective on English speaking. I think it's a very enriching experience. [...] I wish it was a longer experience. (Participant H7, FG4, Cycle 2)

It was interesting to see how, like, they have the same problems with the learning English, and with the questions about how to teach English to other people. (Participant H14, FG4, Cycle 2)

So, our discussions about the circles [The Three Circles of English] that we learned about [...] and those linguistics information that we share[d] together was very nice. I [have] never had a COIL like this that we share those theoretical materials. This was very important to me, and I liked very much this COIL [VETSDEL] because discussing those materials is important for us Brazilians that are learning English. (Participant H17, FG4, Cycle 2)

The quotes highlight that the exposure to diverse perspectives enabled participants to recognise pluralised ways of being, knowing, and relating (Wimpenny et al., 2022) in the world. They reflect participants' growing awareness and appreciation of English varieties, accents and contexts. Overall, VETSDEL broadened their perspectives and intercultural awareness.

It was nice to know about other accents and other [...] and the same challenges about learning and teaching English from the other side of the world. (Participant H12, FG4, Cycle 2)

I think it was a very positive experience meeting new people and new culture and knowing that it's not wrong to have an accent or difference to speak English. It was very interesting. (Participant H13, FG4, Cycle 2)

I also like[d] to talk about with Chinese people and know about their [...] how can I say this? [...] their system of education works and everything. (Participant H2, FG4, Cycle 2)

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented and analysed the data collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods. Due to the study design, the findings were divided into two main sections: autoethnographic and nethnographic. The autoethnographic data included the reflections I recorded in a logbook from Stage 1 (student participant perspective) and Stage 2 (e-mediator perspective). The nethnographic section focused on the data from interaction and reflections of research participants in Stage 3 (3a and 3b). Chapter 6 presents a discussion, reflection on and interpretation of my findings in the light of my theoretical framework and literature reviewed.

Chapter 6 – Discussion of Research Findings

In this chapter, I discuss the most important findings in light of the literature reviewed to answer the RQs. My initial hypothesis in this study is that VE is Third Space that can facilitate a decolonisation of ELT. I believe that my findings show that VE can indeed be a transformational Third Space for English Language Teacher Education, as it has the potential to decolonise dominant narratives and ideologies in ELT such as native-speakerism. I also believe that I have demonstrated, through my reflective journey, that the VE Third Space is a fertile liminal space that can, as suggested by Souza and Duboc (2021), support both novice and experienced ELT students engaged in teacher education at HE level in a decolonial praxis of Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt coloniality in ELT. The encounter with the Other in the VE Third Space offered the opportunity for L2 participants to engage in a learning and unlearning process, rethink the ways they looked at English and reflect on possible alternatives (Freire, 2005; Biesta, 2013). The results from Stage 3 (a & b) indicate a shift towards agentification in the VE participants – who were female from the Global South in the majority -, in raised awareness towards the role they themselves can play in undermining native-speakerism and its colonial connotations in ELT as current/future teachers of English language. This would appear to illustrate that the VE Third Space can be a powerful knowledge-sharing space in teacher education that can open up ‘otherwise’ learning opportunities and ways of looking at the subject matter under study.

However, the data suggest that it takes time for the VE Third Space to be (perceived as) a safe space as it involves a process of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). Orsini-Jones and Finardi (2024) argue that the VE Third Space disrupts the expectations of students and therefore takes them out of their comfort zone of what they expect in the HE curriculum such as face-to-face formats (lectures, seminars, and workshops). In the VE they are confronted with an unfamiliar and somewhat displacing learning setting. However, as illustrated in Figure 4, where the most prominent word is ‘interesting’. The Third Space encounters

promote questioning and stimulate alternative ways of knowing, being, relating, and expressing (Wimpenny et al., 2022, p. 289). This disruption fostered by the Third Space emerged particularly from the feedback received in the VETSDELT FG meetings, where some participants expressed initial discomfort that was however overcome after the first session. In my roles as a student participant, e-mediator and VE 'lead' I have personally experienced VE as a space of hybridity, afforded by the global dialogue in the VE Third Space, where I have undergone transformational change of my beliefs on ELT and changes in perspective as a L2 English teacher. Being exposed to a plurality of worldviews (cultural, linguistic, and epistemological perspectives) challenged my deep-seated assumptions about canonical varieties (US/UK) and language hierarchy/norms/ownership. During my VE journey, I continuously reflected on my positionality speaking from the Global South in contrast with the effects of native-speakerism and colonial legacies in my identity as a L2 English teacher, which only emerged from my intercultural encounters with the other in the VE Third Space. This transformative journey impacted me both personally and academically and will continue to inform how I teach, research and engage in global contexts.

The data collected from VETSDELT Stage 3 (3a & 3b) of this study interestingly contradicts some of the experts' recommendations on VE length (e.g., O'Dowd, 2021; Calvo & Hartle, 2024) that a VE project should last from four to eight weeks so that students can engage meaningfully. I believe my four-week VE model worked and had a positive impact on decolonising L2 English teachers' beliefs about English and ELT. This suggests that well-designed shorter-term VE projects such as VETSDELT can be as effective as six-week ones in achieving their set objectives. This also shows the importance of the three-stage methodological approach I followed to capture a holistic frame of the VE Third Space and plan the best curricular intervention design. My immersion in the VE context as both a student participant and mediator enabled me to understand the specific challenges faced by L2 English teachers and identify the problem I wanted to address. As a result, I proposed a solution and implemented VETSDELT to encourage other L2 students in English teacher

education to examine critically the discourses that support native speakerism in ELT, as well as develop more positive attitudes towards themselves as L2 English teachers.

Wimpenny et al. (2022) propose that in South-North COIL-VE students and academic staff engage with values and capitals that can underpin the development both professional practice and citizenship attributes for the 21st century, namely the values of *equity, equality, mutuality, inclusivity* and *diversity* and the capitals of *trust, cultural, social, digital, psychological* and *structural* (p. 289). The interrelation between students' cultural psychological and social capitals emerged as relevant from the VETSDELT data. For example, the correlation between cultural capital and the institutional social context seemed to influence psychological capital. This was evident in Cycle 1, where, during the discussion on multilingualism, most Spanish participants (Global North) expressed a strong cultural pride of their Catalanian/Valencian heritage and linguistic cultural resistance, while the participants from the British institution, who were from different countries in the Global South, did not.

Although in some cases there was evidence that the VE Third Space had supported the students' psychological capital (see Graphs 12 and 27), there was also a correlation between psychological factors (anxiety, shyness, introversion, and low self-esteem) and the institutional context. For example, in Cycle 2, the Brazilian participants experienced significantly higher levels of anxiety compared to the other participants as illustrated in the findings of FG3 meeting. The data that emerged from FG3 revealed that the location of the Brazilian institution's campus, 500 kilometres from the capital, combined with issues to do with digital capabilities (low bandwidth) and literacies, lack of institutional support and outdated infrastructure (i.e. inadequate hardware) contributed to high levels of anxiety, which highlights the impact that structural capital and infrastructure can have on psychological capital. English is the compulsory foreign language to be taught in all state and private Brazilian schools; yet, less than 5% of the population self-report speaking the language fluently. As a Brazilian, I see this paradox as a mark of colonial legacy. In Brazilian

Portuguese there is a term to describe this colonial matrix of power (Quijano, 2007): o *complexo de vira-lata*, the mongrel complex or street-dog complex. This term was coined by writer and journalist Nelson Rodrigues to describe the impact in the Brazilian national pride after the defeat of the Brazilian football team in the final match of the 1950 FIFA World Cup. Rodrigues defined the mongrel complex as the “inferiority to which Brazilians voluntarily place themselves in the face of the rest of the world” (1993, p. 51). It represents a feeling of low self-esteem, as if Brazilians are less capable than people from other countries (particularly from the Global North), as well as a subconscious (or colonial) belief that our culture is inherently less valuable than those of the Global North. This has resulted in a collective sense of inferiority and a lack of confidence, shaping how we view ourselves and our country (culture) in relation to Western cultures. Therefore, there is a culturally internalised belief that we cannot speak English well. Brazilians apologise for their ‘bad’ English and accent very often in intercultural communication, manifesting a deeply rooted colonial legacy in our culture. As shown by the data, the mongrel complex affects equally Brazilian English teachers, despite their adequate level of linguistic competence in English (B1/B2) and pedagogical training in language education.

The data also illustrate that to support the successful implementation of VE Third Space projects, training academic staff in the internationalisation of the curriculum is of fundamental importance. As O’Dowd (2021) states, VE/COIL projects have been a peripheral activity in the HE context and therefore often promoted and implemented by individual staff/faculty (bottom-up initiatives) motivated by the desire to use technology to integrate intercultural learning into their content-based courses, even if there are some exceptions (Wimpenny and Orsini-Jones, 2020; BRaVE VE initiative¹⁵) where institutional support and staff training are provided. With reference to VETSDELT, VE training for academic staff was only provided in the lead institution in the UK; the other institutions

¹⁵ See: <https://www.international.unesp.br/#!/study/virtual-exchange-program/>

involved in both cycles of the study had no VE structural support, something corroborated by other studies on VE in the Global South (e.g. Finardi & Asuman, 2024).

Structural capital involves providing the necessary technical and administrative infrastructure for academic staff and students to engage in VE projects. However, there were logistical and structural challenges. For example, the Spanish partner had to book classrooms in advance to allocate students in pairs. While the Brazilian had a lab, the overall condition of its infrastructure was insufficient to provide an immersive learning experience. The following section addresses the RQs in depth.

6.1 Research Question 1

How can VE support the identification of native-speakerism ideology within ELT?

The VE experience as part of university-level coursework offers students unique opportunities for intercultural exchange and exposure to other values, cultures, perspectives, and ideologies through engagement with speakers of other languages. In this sense, VE supports a social justice agenda of inclusion and participation for otherwise marginalised and/or excluded HE population (Hauck, 2023), particularly those who are unable to take part in physical mobility programmes (Beelen & Jones, 2015). I could only identify that native-speakerism is deeply ingrained in ELT because of my engagement with other L2 English teachers in VE projects as a strategy of IaH. VE allowed me to step outside my local context and confront assumptions I had previously taken for granted. This self-awareness process would not have emerged without the intercultural and dialogic nature of VE that opened up space for me to critically interrogate my own positionality within ELT and recognise the need to challenge native-speakerism through an AR VE project.

As recommended by Finardi, Hildeblando Júnior and Guimarães (2020), both cycles of VETSDELT provided participants with opportunities to examine, elaborate, and integrate new information into their existing belief systems. Through the encounter with the Other

(Simoneli & Finardi, 2020) and global perspectives, participants identified that native-speakerism is a pervasive ideology in ELT (Holliday, 2006; 2015; Jordão, 2014; 2023) across different contexts. Although there were 17 nationalities represented in both cycles of the study, the consequences of native-speakerism ideology for L2 English teachers appeared to be the same. The data highlighted that the implications of native-speakerism transcends geographical boundaries and therefore L2 English teachers face the same challenges as illustrated by quotes from Padlet posts in section 5.1.7.1 (the effects of native-speakerism).

The data indicate that native-speakerism impacts deeply professional opportunities. Holliday (2006; 2015) argues that the belief in the superiority of the 'native speaker' teacher has resulted in discriminatory hiring practices against L2 teachers. Consequently, native-speakerism ideology has imposed a preference for the 'native speaker' for employment opportunities and fostered dominant professional discourses (Houghton & Rivers, 2013). This preference for hiring 'native speaker' teachers was confirmed by the findings. The post-survey data of both cycles showed that over 80% of respondents felt that L1 teachers are advantaged on the job market, also highlighted in the BoR discussions and by Participant I6 in section 5.1.7.2 (job opportunities and payment gap).

The findings also indicate that native-speakerism appears to influence learners' and parents' expectation of English learning (see section 5.1.7.3, value for the symbolic representation of 'native' speakers). Although parents and students are aware that L1 teachers are generally underqualified in many contexts, nativeness is still perceived as an asset that L2 teachers lack (Houghton & Rivers, 2013). The post-survey data of both cycles showed that over 60% of respondents believed that L1 teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners.

The data show that another effect of native-speakerism in ELT is discrimination, which can be manifested in diverse forms such as racism, xenophobia, wage inequality, and undervaluation (section 5.1.7.4, discrimination faced by L2 teachers). For example, in the

FG2, Participant A12 reported not being hired by website to teach English because of her ethnic background; instead, she was offered a Maths teaching position. Similarly, Participant B7 shared that hired as a receptionist rather than an English teacher, despite her qualification.

Holliday's (2006; 2015) definition of native-speakerism emphasises that the 'native-speaker' supposedly represents the 'Western culture'. This imaginary in the ELT industry reinforces the stereotype that the 'native speaker' teacher is typically from 'inner circle' countries (Kachru, 2005), or the Global North, notably the USA, the UK and Canada. The connection among race (whiteness), cultural content (western-oriented) and standard English (mainly American and British) creates an us/them dichotomy, which, in turn, leads to discrimination against L2 English teachers. The data also show that the ethnic-racial background can hinder the effects of native-speakerism (see section 5.1.7.4, discrimination faced by L2 teachers). Consequently, L2 teachers who neither have a 'Western looking' nor is "Caucasian" are likely to have fewer professional opportunities in ELT.

Native-speakerism promotes the construction and reproduction of unequal power relation (hierarchy) between L1 and L2 English teachers in ELT (Holliday, 2006; 2015). The L1 of the teacher and 'nativeness' are still more important than pedagogical qualifications and skills in hiring criteria. Furthermore, it systemically minimises professional qualification, training, and experience to sell the 'native speaker' / 'authenticity' brand (Holliday, 2015). As a result, L2 English teachers are treated as inferior, deficient, incompetent, and their teaching qualification is disregarded as shown in section 5.1.7.5 (selection based on qualification).

The post-survey data of both cycles showed that over 88% of respondents disagreed with the notion that L1 teachers are more qualified than L2 teachers. Similarly, over 76% of respondents rejected the idea the L2 teachers lack competence and less suited to teach English than L1 teachers. This suggests a recognition of the contribution of all qualified English language teachers to ELT, despite their cultural background, as proposed by Holliday (2015).

Holliday (2015) claims that cultural belief, or an acknowledgment of the contribution of all teachers regardless of cultural background, is the only way to remove the bias that places L2 teachers in the subaltern position. Drawing on Holliday (2015) and Kumaravadivelu (2016), I argue that cultural belief is a decolonial option to act against native-speakerism and delink ELT from Western Eurocentric colonial knowledge systems. So, ELT could become a space open to the plurality of accents, English varieties, ethnic backgrounds, and ways of being, knowing, and relating in the world.

6.2 Research Question 2

In what ways do beliefs about English among pre-service and in-service teacher education students reflect coloniality?

Colonisation left its marks on the imagination of colonised people through attachment to a set of colonial/cultural values, or colonial ideologies (Pennycook, 2001), I previously explained the mongrel complex in the case of Brazil. These long-standing patterns of power, as Maldonado-Torres (2006) explains, are intertwined with forms of domination and subordination. This is particularly relevant to most participants in study, many of whom come from countries either with a colonial past or that are part of the Global South such as Brazil, China, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Turkey. The current globalised world is a result of the consolidation of Western colonisation and the ongoing asymmetrical power control between former colonies and coloniser (Quijano, 2007). The data presented in section 5.1.7.6 (colonial matrix of power) show this ongoing influence of the colonial matrix of power (Quijano, 2007).

The findings also reveal that English is seen as a marketable commodity in some countries in the Global South. The historical dominance of English as a global lingua franca (Crystal, 2001) and its colonial legacy has undoubtedly constructed English as an indispensable commodity in these contexts. My participation student perspective in Stage 1

showed that the current status of English as a global language is the result of two main factors: the expansion of British Empire between the 17th and 19th centuries and the rise of the USA as a global economic power in the 20th century (Castro-Gómez, 2021). For example, in both Brazil (Rajagopalan, 2003) and Malaysia, it is believed that those who speak English fluently tend to have better job positions and salaries, as well as social opportunities (see section 5.1.7.7, coloniality and power dynamics). Specifically in the Brazilian context, proficiency in English is widely perceived as a form of human capital, a marker of socioeconomic status and upward social mobility, as well as a symbol of national progress and modernity. English is therefore seen as a means to ensure an edge in the competitive world system.

The findings highlight the intricate relationship between coloniality, language, and power dynamics (Quijano, 2007; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). As argued by Kroskrity (2015), the notions of what is 'true', 'morally good', or 'aesthetically pleasing' about language are rooted in sociocultural experience and often tied with political economic interests. Similarly, Mignolo and Walsh (2018) points out that the sociohistorical and geographic contexts contribute to diverse forms of social discrimination. Consequently, coloniality is the 'darker side' of modernity (Mignolo, 2011) as it structures, maintains, and reproduces social power and domination. Coloniality is therefore the root of global inequalities (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). For instance, despite recognising 22 official languages, India adheres to the British English variety. Similarly, the preference for American English in Brazil is attributed to the economic influence of the United States as shown in section 5.1.7.7 (coloniality and power dynamics).

The data from Microsoft Forms indicate that most participants viewed English as either a lingua franca or a Global language in both cycles. However, there appeared to be a strong attachment to these statuses of English, mainly with 'standard' forms from the 'inner circle' (American or British English), reflecting a colonial legacy across their sociocultural contexts (see section 5.1.7.7, coloniality and power dynamics). For example, the curriculum

of teacher education programmes in Brazil often includes American and British English as the 'ideal standard' (Rajagopalan, K. & Rajagopalan, C., 2014).

Colonial structures of power continue to influence the perception of L2 teachers mainly through the effects of native-speakerism, as discussed in the previous section. As pointed out by Quijano (2007), coloniality is still the most general form of domination in the world today resulting in forms of social discrimination. An excerpt by Participant E7 (see section 5.1.7.6, colonial matrix of power) illustrates a colonial mindset that prioritises the 'inner circle' English norms to maintain order and avoid chaos. It also shows how coloniality shapes the legitimisation of language correctness and standardisation by othering other English varieties. The colonial matrix of power presents itself as a universal totality, as exclusively Western, white, and Eurocentric (Quijano, 2007).

The policies and educational system in Spain (Participant B1, FG1, Cycle 1) and Malaysia (Participant E4, FG3, Cycle 2) exemplify how colonial structures continue to favour L1 teachers to the detriment of local/L2 teachers and English varieties. According to Llurda and Mocanu (2024), native-speakerism is deeply rooted in the discourses around language learning and teaching in Spain, and even pre-service English teachers are subject to native-speakerist ideologies and discourses. Madrid, for instance, still has a native-speakerist policy, despite evidence that importing L1 teachers from the USA has been inefficient (Llurda & Mocanu, 2024). In Malaysia, in the views of the participants, local teachers perceived as less qualified, and frequently assigned to teach in remote/rural schools. This reflects a preference for 'authentic' language models based on native-speakerism ideology.

6.3 Research Question 3

What role can VE play in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs?

The findings show that VE has the potential to integrate new information into existing belief systems – identifying, interrogating, and interrupting beliefs (Finardi, Hildeblando Júnior &

Guimarães, 2020) – and reshape them, even if it does not completely interrupt deep-seated beliefs/coloniality, as shown by the analysis of the pre- and post-surveys of both AR cycles. However, the recognition of the *locus of enunciation* and colonial legacies is fundamental for VE to become a Third Space. That is, VE can only become a Third Space to decolonise ELT through individual awareness of how coloniality shapes beliefs.

During my VE journey, I had to recognise my own *locus of enunciation* as a Black L2 English-speaking teacher and researcher from the Global South. Though engagement with otherwise perspectives in the VE Third Space, I realised the extent to which my positionality shaped my beliefs and assumptions. This self-reflection process, though co-constructed with an ‘otherwise’ epistemic lens, enabled me to critically interrogate and reshape my understanding of ELT beyond the limiting native-speakerism ideology.

The data indicate that participants changed, shaped or kept beliefs about English and ELT (as shown in sections 5.1.3 and 5.1.6). As pointed out previously, the data that emerged from the post-survey in Cycle 1 were skewed, with 65.3% (17 out of 26) of responses from Institution B in Spain. This skewed data represents specifically the perspectives of the Spanish participants rather than the overall sample in Cycle 1. Most of them attended private/bilingual/international schools, where the teachers hired were ‘native speakers’. However, data triangulation showed change in beliefs among participants from other institutions in Cycle 1.

The data analysis of the pre- and post-surveys indicate a lack of significant shift in attitudes, ideologies, and beliefs among respondents in Cycle 1. This aligns with responses from the Spanish participants for the open-ended question of the post-survey: “Has VETSDELT affected their previous beliefs about English in general and learning/teaching/use/ownership of English in particular?”. Participants B3, B9, B18, B19, B22 and B24 stated that their beliefs did not change at all.

On the other hand, the beliefs of some Spanish participants were shaped by VETSDELT. For instance, Participants B17 and B18 stated that the exposure to different perspectives helped them raise awareness and gain new perspectives about English and

ELT (section 5.1.7.8, the impact of VETSDEL on participants in Cycle 1). This aligns with Helm's (2018) argument that VE encourages teachers to establish relationships and review perspectives.

Nevertheless, the post-survey (open-ended question) also showed impact of VETSDELT on the beliefs of some Spanish participants about English and ELT (section 5.1.7.8 the impact of VETSDEL on participants in Cycle 1). This corroborates with the data from the FG2 meeting, wherein Participants B7 and B8 highlighted that engaging in VETDELT had changed their beliefs about English Global language and English varieties.

Overall, FG2 meeting suggest that VETSDELT changed participants' beliefs in Cycle 1 (see results in section 5.1.7.8, the impact of VETSDEL on participants in Cycle 1). Besides, FG2 revealed that their participation in the project impacted: teaching practice, awareness and appreciation for English varieties and accents, understanding the role of English as a Global Language, and view of 'standard English' and English ownership.

The data also suggest that participants recognised the interconnectedness of global issues in ELT, specifically the effects of native-speakerism, through global perspectives and critically analysed how these issues transcend national boundaries. This holistic approach to ELT not only prepares teachers for (future) professional demands but also fosters a sense of global community and empathy. VE brings HE institutions closer to real-life contexts by preparing graduates to meet the demands of future culturally diverse societies and the globalised labour market (Helm & Beaven, 2020).

The findings indicate a significant shift in beliefs among respondents after VETSDELT in Cycle 2. Results from pre- and post-surveys show change in opinion of standard English, perception of English as a global language, geographical ties of English, and acceptance and importance of teaching and learning English varieties. Similarly, FG3 revealed that VETSDELT contributed to the triad of Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt (Souza & Duboc, 2021; Finardi & Samolão, 2024) previous beliefs. For example, Participant E5 argued having shifted her perspective toward the British 'standard English', despite growing

up in a country such as Nigeria where British English is the language of instruction and often considered 'standard'. Participant G3 emphasised how VETDELST empowered her to embrace her Chinese English after believing in the superiority of 'standard English' for more than 15 years.

Furthermore, FG3 demonstrates VETSDELST might have impacted beliefs on teaching practice, awareness and appreciation for English varieties and accents, view of 'standard English' and English ownership, and recognition the interconnectedness of global issues in ELT – the effects of native-speakerism for L2 teachers. All participants in Cycle 2 stated that VETDELST changed their beliefs about English an ELT (section 5.1.7.9, the impact of VETSDEL on participants in Cycle 2).

The data suggest that participants from countries with a colonial past, or part of the Global South, are more likely to recognise the effects of coloniality on their lived experiences, what Mignolo (2011, p. 93) called "the common experience of the colonial wound". In the case of this study, the effect of native-speakerism on L2 English teachers emerges as a manifestation of this 'colonial common wound' – a collective experience of marginalisation that continues to shape professional identities, self-perception, and legitimacy in ELT.

Although the data indicate that the implications of native-speakerism transcend geographical boundaries and affect L2 teachers equally, the perception (and the experience) of its effects seems to vary according to the *locus of enunciation*. While the Spanish participants acknowledged being affected by native-speakerism, their *locus of enunciation* within the European context appears to have shaped their understanding of the implications for them as L2 English-speaking teachers. Their *locus of enunciation* may have induced a certain degree of proximity (racial, geopolitical, historical, and cultural) to ways of knowing, being, and relating in the world and therefore softened their perception of the marginalisation faced by L2 English teachers in ELT. In contrast, the participants from the Global South

showed more awareness of the exclusionary nature of native-speakerism. Despite operating globally, native-speakerism is experienced and understood unevenly across ELT contexts.

6.4 Research Question 4

How does the *locus of enunciation* influence emotion (specifically anxiety) and affect participation in VE?

The data showed that overall technology-related anxiety reduced. In Cycle 1, for example, 13.6% of participants reported feeling anxious to use technology before engaging in VETSDELT. This number decreased to 3.8% after the project. On the other hand, participants in Cycle 2 reported high level of anxiety: 43.1% before VETSDELT, decreasing to 12% after VETSDELT. This indicates that, for some participants, it takes time for the Third Space to be a safe Space (Bhabha, 1994).

Overall, the data also indicate a feeling of stress/expectation among participants in the first session in both cycles of the study (see section 5.1.7.10, initial feeling of stress). This suggest that the initial feeling of discomfort was associated with the unfamiliarity with VE and the exposure to different cultures, perspectives, and English varieties. As argued by Orsini-Jones, Cerveró-Carrascosa and Zou (2020) and Orsini-Jones and Finardi (2024), this reflects a feeling of being taken out of the comfort zone of the traditional curriculum. I felt a little bit of discomfort in the first VE session as a student participant mostly because of my unfamiliarity with intercultural dynamics and some digital tools. This ‘bottom-up’ experience triggered a disruption to my prior assumptions of the HE educational context, which was largely influenced by traditional teaching/learning approaches in my Brazilian HE context. The VE Third Space challenged my notion of how learning typically occurs in HE settings. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Brazilian state universities did not have a long tradition with VE, aside from initiatives such as Teletandem and BRaVE based in the state of São Paulo. Both projects remained isolated cases until VE gained popularity during the pandemic. In

this context that I had the opportunity to participate in the first VE project of this study (Stage 1), although I had engaged previously engaged with COIL through a collaborative project with a university in Chile. After the pandemic, the Brazilian Ministry of Education required all coursework to be fully delivered in person at state universities and, as a result, VE remains a peripheral activity in the national HE context.

However, feedback from the Microsoft Forms results indicate that participants felt comfortable and at ease in the first session, particularly in Cycle 1 (section 5.1.7.11, Microsoft form feedback on session 1). For example, 100% (29) and 92.9% (39 out of 42 responses) of respondents stated to feel comfortable, cycles 1 and 2 respectively. Only 3 participants reported feelings of anxiety, nervousness and shyness in Cycle 2. The overall feedback was very positive and highlights a positive atmosphere. It is important to note that feedback through Microsoft Form was anonymous and voluntary, but most participants completed it. This suggests that they were motivated and willing to share their feedback at the end of the session.

The findings suggest that the *locus of enunciation* had influence on anxiety levels, which, in return, affected participation in the VE (section 5.1.7.12, the influence of the *locus of enunciation* on anxiety). Notably, anxiety levels were exclusively reported by the Brazilian participants in Cycle 2, highlighting the triad among *locus of enunciation*, anxiety and participation. The data show that some factors contributed to their anxiety: English proficiency, lack of confidence to communicate in English, and psychological traits (such as low self-esteem, shyness, introversion, perfectionism, and social anxiety), technology-structural constraints.

First, 81% of the Brazilian participants reported their English level as lower intermediate: 3 of them self-rated their English proficiency as higher intermediate (B2) and 13 rated themselves as lower intermediate (B1). This result was corroborated by the Brazilian partner in the FG4 meeting: “I think they are like B1 going to B2” (Brazilian partner, FG4). The findings show that their English proficiency caused communication anxiety

because they did not necessarily see themselves as proficient English speakers (Lagares, 2013). Interestingly, the fact that I am Brazilian and speak English as a L2 did not reduce participants' anxiety in the FG4. Besides, they were informed that they could speak both in English and Portuguese as a strategy to mitigate anxiety levels.

Second, the results also show that Brazilian participants were expecting to interact with 'native speakers', resulting in a lack of confidence to communicate in English. Despite the fact that all participants were L2 English speakers, Brazilian participants showed a lack of confidence because the overall English proficiency of the other students was higher than theirs. Their lack of confidence was exacerbated by the fear of speaking with more proficient peers, poor language performance (and being judged) and the inability to convey their ideas. Their lack of confidence was noticed by Participants E5, F16, Participant I8 in FG3 (Appendix I).

Last, the FG4 meeting also indicated that psychological traits contributed to increased anxiety levels among the Brazilian group. Participants reported traits such as low self-esteem, shyness, introversion, perfectionism, pragmatism, and social anxiety as struggles for effective participation. Unfortunately, those psychological traits prevented some of them from attending some sessions and the FG4 meeting. Their Brazilian tutor (and partner in the project) described them as "a very shy group".

The findings indicate that the *locus of enunciation* – the place from which the Brazilian participants spoke, shaped by their sociocultural identities, language proficiency, and psychological traits – had an impact on anxiety levels, which, in turn, deeply affected their participation in VETSDELT. The data also showed traces of abyssal thinking (Santos, 2007) in their self-perception, which led to an overall sense of inferiority and complex of 'the bad English'. This self-perception highlights how modern Western thinking operates in imageries through abyssal lines, thereby creating a hierarchical and exclusive worldview where one side of the line is privileged and considered 'real' and valid, while the other side is marginalised and non-existent those colonised knowledges.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research findings. The results showed that the VE Third Space is a fertile liminal space that can support both novice and experienced students in English language teacher education with engaging in a decolonial praxis of Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt coloniality in ELT contexts, particularly those related to native-speakerism.

However, it takes time for the VE Third Space to be perceived as a safe space, as it involves a process of hybridity. The findings suggest that well-designed shorter-term VE projects can support a reflection and review of the beliefs/ideologies/assumptions of students in English language teacher education in HE. In addition, the results also reveal a correlation between psychological factors, the *locus of enunciation*, and the institutional context. In Chapter 7, Conclusion, I summarise the research findings, discuss some of the limitations identified, and present suggestions for future research.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

This chapter presents a synthesis of the findings, highlighting the contribution of this study to the field of VE in ELT, the limitations identified and proposes some suggestions for future research. Chapter 1 laid the context of the thesis and provided the background information on theme under investigation. It also contextualised my *locus of enunciation*, as the starting point for this research endeavour. Chapters 2 and 3 provided the theoretical and empirical foundation for this study, in particular, Chapter 2 explored the conceptual lenses for examining the potential of VE in the process of decolonising ELT, namely: decolonial theory and the Third Space. Chapter 3 reviewed relevant literature on: a) Internationalisation of the Curriculum, b) Virtual Exchange, c) native-speakerism and language ideology, and d) ELT n. Chapter 4 presented the methodology, methods, and instruments to gather data. Chapter 5 provided the results and the analysis of findings, and Chapter 6 presented the discussion of research findings in light of the theoretical frameworks and the literature reviewed. The next section presents a synthesis of the findings.

7.1 Synthesis of the Findings

The global spread of English has given this language a unique position as the world's lingua franca. Yet, the native-speakerism ideology is still widespread in ELT programmes and contexts, not reflecting the diversity intrinsic to English in the 21st Century. This thesis investigated the potential of VE as a Third Space to decolonise ELT, particularly in the identification, interrogation, and interruption of biases associated with native-speakerism. In order to answer this central research question, the thesis proposed to: (1) understand the potential of VE supporting participants to identify native-speakerism in ELT, (2) analyse how beliefs of participants reflect colonial legacies, (3) understand the potential of VE in interrogating and reshaping these beliefs, and (4) examine how the locus of enunciation influence specifically anxiety and affect participation in VE.

The data collected would appear to corroborate the argument that VE is a liminal Third Space where students enrolled on English language teacher education courses in HE (both future and experienced teachers) can critically engage, interrogate, and examine their beliefs through global perspectives and challenge the colonial tacit knowledge that underlies much of the ELT field. The results of this study showed that VE can indeed be a transformational Third Space for ELT and has the potential to decolonise dominant narratives and ideologies in ELT, even if it does not completely and/or always interrupt deep-seated beliefs/coloniality. VE supports the engagement with a decolonial stand on curricular implementation and, as suggested by Souza and Duboc (2021), “Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt” (p. 876) coloniality. However, the recognition of the locus of enunciation and colonial legacies are fundamental for VE to become a Third Space. According to Bhabha (1994), it is only when we understand that all cultural systems are socioculturally constructed that we begin to understand coloniality. The encounter between cultures in the Third Space always entails a discontinuity of discursive practices, weakening not only the authority of colonial discourse and the beliefs that accompany it, but also how it is exercised. VE can only become (be recognised as) a Third Space to decolonise ELT through dialogic encounters and awareness of how coloniality shapes beliefs.

The results of this study demonstrate that the exchanges on VETSDELT impacted on most of its participants’ beliefs, challenged their preconceived notions, broadened their horizons and empowered them to adopt a decolonial approach to ELT. Additionally, many participants stated that VETSDELT had impacted on the way they saw their ELT practice, their awareness and appreciation for English varieties and accents, their views on ‘standard English’ and English ownership, and their recognition of the effects of native-speakerism on L2 teachers. This demonstrates that VE is a Third Space in the decolonial exercise of Identify-Interrogate-Interrupt colonial legacies (Souza & Duboc, 2021).

This study provides an original contribution to the field of VE in ELT. First, it employed a combination of autoethnography and netnography to capture a holistic frame of

the Third Space through three stages/roles: participant, mediator, and project leader.

Second, it expanded on previous studies on VE showing that well-designed shorter-term VE projects can be as effective as six-week ones in achieving their set objectives, in the case of VETSDELT to decenter Western paradigms and bring together marginalised perspectives into being. Third, it combined postcolonial (the concept of Third Space) and decolonial (the concept positionality, or *locus of enunciation*) theories to investigate colonial legacy and critique Western Eurocentric discourse/thinking.

Three limitations of this study were identified. First, the ELT contexts of participants' respective countries were not thoroughly expanded upon and contrasted with their perspectives. I did not investigate participants' *locus of enunciation* individually; rather, I made inferences based on both their cultural/institutional contexts and the data collected (particularly the responses to open-ended questions, FC interviews, and my observation of their participation in the VEs). In future studies, portfolios, logbooks, diaries, autobiographical narratives, and journals could be employed to capture participants' *loci of enunciation* and document their experiences from VE interactions. However, I concentrated on documenting and interpreting participants' beliefs/ideologies/attitudes and experiences and overlooked the influence of other factors (i.e., institutional policies, curricula, and syllabi) in relation to the decolonisation of ELT in their contexts.

Second, due to the decolonial approach of the study and its effort to decolonise ELT, it unintentionally risked reproducing coloniality by not bringing to the fore the driving forces, such as institutional and cultural contexts, shaping participants' beliefs. My analysis focused primarily on (micro-) individual ideologies/attitudes/beliefs and VE experiences rather than relational (meso-) and structural (macro-) factors through which coloniality also perpetuates. The generalisations drawn from the findings reflect this focus of the research.

Third, there was a lack of sample diversity in Cycle 1. 45.4% of participants were from Institution B. Consequently, the data that emerged from the post-survey in Cycle 1 were

skewed, with 65.3% (17 out of 26) of responses from that institution. The next section presents some suggestions for future research on VE.

7.2 Suggestions for Future Research

As this thesis focused on investigating the potential of VE as a Third Space to decolonise ELT, in view of the findings, future research should expand further on the complex role of anxiety and psychological capital in VE, particularly in relation to VEs that utilise English as Lingua Franca, as there is evidence that this, in itself, can cause anxiety for students in English language teacher education (Orsini-Jones, et al., 2025). Self-report instruments (e.g. autoethnographical reflective reports and e-portfolios) could be useful to investigate how both novice and experienced students cope with anxiety while navigating intercultural encounters in VE contexts, given the emerging significance of the emotional dimension in online spaces. Individual interviews could also be used to gain insights into participants' emotional experiences and ask questions relating to psychological capital and its four core dimensions (hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy), as conceptualised by Luthans et al. (2007).

Longitudinal comparative studies could investigate the long-term impact of distinct types of anxiety (i.e., related to communication and performance) on engagement and learning outcomes of students from different cultural backgrounds and their correlation with other variables such as language proficiency, individual personality traits, sociocultural and institutional contexts, digital literacy, and intercultural competence. Besides, strategies to manage and mitigate anxiety about the perceived hegemonic power (and associated fear) of 'canonical' (UK/US) varieties of English should be investigated. ELT students should be encouraged to embrace their own English variety as legitimate. Former VE participants could be invited to share their experiences/narratives on how VE impacted their self-awareness and confidence in using their English variety, and how VE shaped their teaching practice. I

suggest some topics of discussion in future VEs, though not limited to these: the legitimacy of EMF, colonial legacies in ELT, multilingualism and translanguaging, representation/bias in ELT materials, imbalances in teacher recruitment in ELT, and the role of race, gender, class, and geopolitics in ELT.

Future studies could also explore how engrained beliefs influence experience and learning outcomes in VE and the underlying reasons of resistance to change beliefs. Participants' programmes of study at their home university could be examined to determine the extent to which they are oriented towards native-speakerism versus an approach informed by Global Englishes/EMF, as well as if authors from the Global South are included in their syllabi. The impact of e-mediation in VE could also be further investigated. For example, the role that e-mediators play in enhancing the learning experience in VE and the role reversal of students as e-mediators, which had a positive impact in the context of this study. Individual interviews with mediators should be carried out to examine the effect of their intervention on discussion, conflict resolution, and power dynamics in BoRs.

Building on the findings, I suggest some practical recommendations for future research on VE.

1. Praxis to mitigate anxiety: Participant E5 suggested an approach to mitigate anxiety by dedicating the first session to explore the *introductory Padlet*, in which participants were asked to introduce themselves, share cultural information, and upload a picture before the beginning of the project. The focus of the session should be to build connections and confidence. Participants would be assigned to BoRs to engage with peers and then, in the main room, each one of them would share a piece of information a fact/curiosity/information about their peers. Participants should be allocated to different BoRs (groups) to ensure that *everyone had the opportunity to experience everyone*. At the end of the session, participants would be encouraged to exchange social medias to keep in touch during the project. This strategy could mitigate anxiety related to accent and speaking skill and enhance confidence for engagement.

2. Utilising and training e-mediators: the data show it is important to allocate e-mediators for group work and provide in-depth training for mediators beforehand so that they feel confident to give clear instructions and facilitate interaction in the BoRs. There were two outcomes of this study: a *Guidelines Manual* (Appendix K), based on [ViVEXELT Breakout Room Guide](#), providing instruction for training mediators; and a *session checklist* (Appendix L), which is a practical tool to support mediation and standardisation in BoRs. The data also indicate the importance of dual mediation to divide responsibilities in BoRs. While one mediator guides the discussion, the other gives technological support, e.g. Padlet posts and communication with the meeting host.

3. Creation of different groups for the BoRs in each synchronous session: The results indicate that assigning participants to different groups (BoRs) in each session is very positive. Although groups get well work better, being exposed to different voices is also beneficial. This strategy enriches participants' learning experiences, raise their intercultural awareness, and foster multicultural understanding through engagement in diverse groups.

Despite the claims that VE is inherently more accessible and inclusive than physical mobility, studies (i.e. Abba, Leal & Finardi, 2022; O'Dowd, 2023; Hauck, 2023) have shown that VE as a IoC strategy can intensify and reproduce South-North asymmetries. The findings of this study also showed that inequalities in access, lack of institutional support, experience with technology and sociopolitical challenges can constraint more equitable and inclusive learning outcomes in VE. Besides the diversity, accessibility and inclusivity aspects of VE – reaching out to larger number of graduates and HEIs worldwide –, the future of VE is ultimately entangled with issues of equity and social justice. Factors such as institutional support, access to technology (software and hardware, and reliable internet connection), digital literacy, language proficiency, though not limited to, are imperative to provide a successful international learning experience for all graduates and horizontal relationships among HEIs, as well as the integration of VE into curricula.

Hauck (2023) suggests that CVE can alleviate some of the issues that emerged in terms of EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion). This model embeds EDI principles and includes the following components: 1. use of low-bandwidth technologies; 2. setting up exchanges which specifically target student populations traditionally underrepresented in study abroad and/or IaH programmes (from low socio-economic backgrounds); 3. alignment of VE project outcomes with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 4. inclusion of local outreach activities, i.e. student contact with local businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and non-profit organisations as part of VE projects. The inclusivity needs highlighted by Hauck (2023) are relevant in the context of this study, as the Brazilian partner institution in Cycle 2 (Stage 3b) had relatively low IT level of infrastructure, and its students showed high levels of anxiety about their B1 level of English. These factors suggest that this institutional context might have benefitted more from an asynchronous CVE to accommodate both technological and linguistic challenges.

Notwithstanding the challenges encountered, I believe that this thesis makes a relevant contribution to the field of ELT. It illustrates a critical and innovative approach to decolonising ELT through the VE Third Space. At a professional level, I plan to implement VEs in my future teacher educator practice with the aim of raising my students' awareness of the pluralistic world of Englishes in general and the appreciation of their English in particular, continuing to address the effects of native-speakerism in ELT. Besides, I intend to further investigate the potential correlation among language proficiency, anxiety, and the *locus of enunciation* amongst L2 English teachers to understand how these factors influence participation and self-perception in VE contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Cycle 1 AR (Stage 3a) – Reading List

VE / COIL / Telecollaboration

VETSDELT – Virtual exchange as a Third Space to decolonise ELT

November 2022

Mondays 11-12am/pm UK, 8-9am Brazil, 16-17pm Sri Lanka, and 12-1pm Spain

Week	Content	Resources
W1 7/1 1	Varieties of English The perception of language 'standards' and/or (local) varieties	Cameron, A., & Galloway, N. (2019). Local thoughts on global ideas: Pre- and in-service TESOL practitioners' attitudes to the pedagogical implications of the globalization of English. <i>REL C Journal</i>, 50(1), 149–163. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688218822853 Saraceni, M. (2009). Relocating English: towards a new paradigm for English in the world. <i>Language and intercultural communication</i>, 9(3), 175–186. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708470902748830 Further reading: Scales, J., Wennerstrom, A., Richard, D., & Wu, S. H. (2006). Language learners' perceptions of accent. <i>TESOL Quarterly</i>, 40(4), 715–738. https://doi.org/10.2307/40264305 Zoom link: https://coventry-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/84708470902748830
W2 14/11	Beliefs, ideologies and attitudes The perception (awareness) of language structure, use and discourse	Kroskrity, P. V. (2010). Language ideologies: evolving perspectives. In J. Jaspers, J.O. Östman, & J. Verschueren (Eds.), <i>Society and language use</i> (Handbook of pragmatics highlights) (pp. 192–211). John Benjamins. Rose, H., & Galloway, N. (2017). Debating standard language ideology in the classroom: using the 'Speak Good English Movement' to raise awareness of Global Englishes. <i>REL C Journal</i>, 48(3), 294–301. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688216684281 Further Reading: Kroskrity, P. V. (2016). Language ideologies: emergence, elaboration, and application. In N. Bonvillian (Ed.), <i>The Routledge handbook of Linguistic Anthropology</i> (pp. 95–108). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203492741 Lew, S., & Siffrinn, N. E. (2019). Exploring language ideologies and preparing preservice teachers for multilingual and multicultural classrooms. <i>Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice</i>, 68(1), 375–395. https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336919870281 Weekly, R. (2019). "English is a mishmash of everything": Examining the language attitudes and teaching beliefs of British Asian multilingual teachers. <i>Critical Inquiry in Language Studies</i>, 16(3), 178–204. https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2018.1503936 Zoom link: https://coventry-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/84708470902748830
W3 21/11	Teaching English as a Global	Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2020). Informing and transforming language teacher education pedagogy. <i>Language Teaching Research</i>, 24(1), 116–127. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818777539

	Language English as a reflection of other linguistic realities (the majority of English users are 'non-native')	Melitz, J. (2016). English as a Global Language. In V. Ginsburgh & S. Weber (Eds.), <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Economics and Language</i> (pp. 583–615). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-32505-1_21 Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/302923637_English_as_a_Global_Language Further reading: Crystal, D. (2003). <i>English as a Global Language</i> (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. Available at: https://culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/pdf/research/books/nation_branding/English_As_A_Global_Language_-_David_Crystal.pdf Zoom link: https://coventry-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/6481680b871
W4 28/ 11	Native-speakerism The so-called NESTs are the ideal and more qualified English teachers, whereas NNESTs are frequently excluded, marginalized and stigmatized	Holliday, A. (2006). Native-speakerism, <i>ELT Journal</i>, 60(4), 385–387, https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl030 Holliday, A. (2017). Native-speakerism. In J. Liantas (Ed.), <i>TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching</i> (pp. 1–7). John Wiley & Sons. Available at: https://adrianholliday.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/native-speakerism-proofs.pdf Further reading: Holliday, A. (2015). Native-speakerism: taking the concept forward and achieving cultural belief. In A. Swan, P. Aboshiha, & A. Holliday (Eds.), <i>(En)Countering native-speakerism</i> (pp. 11–25). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137463500_2 Houghton, S., & Rivers, D. (2013). Introduction: redefining native-speakerism. In S. Houghton & D. Rivers (Eds.), <i>Native-speakerism in foreign language education: intergroup dynamics in Japan</i> (pp. 1–14). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847698704-004 Zoom link: https://coventry-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/6481680b871

Aula Space

Space title	Virtual Exchange for English Language Teaching and Learning
Link for Coventry students	https://coventry.aula.education/#/dashboard/83c49a46-8d37-4d6b-867f-95a81680b871/feed
Link for external students	https://signup.coventry.aula.education/?spaceCode=Xd2Y24

Appendix B. Cycle 2 AR (Stage 3b) – Reading List

VE / COIL / Telecollaboration

VETSDELT – Virtual exchange as a Third Space to decolonise ELT

March to April 2023

Mondays 11:30-12:45am/pm (UK), 8:30-9:45am (Brazil), China 6:30-7:45pm, and 14:30-15:45 (Turkey)

Week	Content	Resources
W1 13/03	Varieties of English The perception of language 'standards' and/or (local) varieties	Proshina, Z., & Nelson, C. (2020). Varieties of English and Kachru's expanding circle. <i>Russian Journal of Linguistics (Online)</i> , 24(3), 523–550. Recommended: Kumaravadivelu, B. (2016). The Decolonial Option in English Teaching: Can the Subaltern Act? <i>TESOL Quarterly</i> , 50(1), 66–85. Cameron, A., & Galloway, N. (2019). Local thoughts on global ideas: Pre- and in- service TESOL practitioners' attitudes to the pedagogical implications of the globalization of English. <i>RELC Journal</i> , 50(1), 149–163. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688218822853
W2 20/03	Beliefs, ideologies, and attitudes The perception (awareness) of language structure, use and discourse	Lew, S., & Siffrinn, N. E. (2019). Exploring language ideologies and preparing preservice teachers for multilingual and multicultural classrooms. <i>Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice</i> , 68(1), 375–395. https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336919870281 Recommended: Kroskrity, P. V. (2010). Language ideologies: evolving perspectives. In J. Jaspers, J.O. Östman, & J. Verschueren (Eds.), <i>Society and language use (Handbook of pragmatics highlights)</i> (pp. 192–211). John Benjamins. Klapper, J., & Centre for Information on Language Teaching Research. (2006). <i>Understanding and developing good practice: Language teaching in higher education</i> . CILT.
W3 27/03	Teaching English as a Global Language English as a reflection of other linguistic realities (the majority of English users are 'non-native')	Finardi, K. R. (2014). The Slaughter of Kachru's Five Sacred Cows in Brazil: Affordances of the Use of English as an International Language. <i>Studies in English Language Teaching</i> , 2(4), 401–411. https://doi.org/10.22158/selt.v2n4p401 Recommended: Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2020). Informing and transforming language teacher education pedagogy. <i>Language Teaching Research</i> , 24(1), 116–127. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818777539
W4 03/04	Native-speakerism The so-called NESTs are the ideal and more qualified English teachers, whereas NNESTs are frequently excluded, marginalized and stigmatized	Holliday, A. (2006). Native-speakerism. <i>ELT Journal</i> , 60(4), 385–387, https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl030 Recommended: Holliday, A. (2017). Native-speakerism. In J. Lontas (Ed.), <i>TESOL Encyclopedia of English language Teaching</i> (pp. 1–7). John Wiley & Sons. Available at: https://adrianholliday.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/native-speakerism-proofs.pdf

		Dewaele, J. M. (2018). Why the Dichotomy 'L1 Versus LX User' is Better than 'Native Versus Non-native Speaker'. <i>Applied Linguistics</i> , 39(2), 236–240. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw055

Aula Space

Space title	Virtual Exchange for English Language Teaching and Learning
Link for Coventry students	https://coventry.aula.education/#/dashboard/83c49a46-8d37-4d6b-867f-95a81680b871/feed
Link for external students	https://signup.coventry.aula.education/?spaceCode=Xd2Y24

Appendix C. Pre-VE Survey

Part I - Background information

1. Please state your first name (e.g., John, Mary). Make sure you always use the same first name provided here for any VETSDELT activity. This should be the same as what you have on your ID card or passport.
2. Please state your family name (e.g., Smith). Make sure you always use the same surname provided here for any VETSDELT activity. This should be the same as what you have on your ID card or passport.
3. Please provide your email address. Please always use the same email address when interacting on this project.
4. I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
() Yes () No
5. I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my data, without giving a reason, by contacting the researcher and the Coventry University Research Support Office at any time until the date specified in the 'Participant Information Sheet'.
() Yes () No
6. I agree to contact the Researcher, Carlos Alberto Hildebando Júnior, if I want to know my allocated research code number if I wish to withdraw from the study.
() Yes () No
7. I understand that all the information I provide will be held securely and treated confidentially.
() Yes () No
8. I am happy for the information I provide to be used (anonymously) in academic papers and other formal research outputs.
() Yes () No
9. I am happy to be video recorded during the four online course sessions.
() Yes () No
10. I am happy to be audio-recorded during the four online live course sessions.
() Yes () No
11. I am happy to be video recorded during the post-project interview sessions in case I decide to take part in them.
() Yes () No
12. I agree to take part in VETSDELT.
() Yes () No
13. What is your nationality?
14. In which educational institution are you based?
15. Are you a student in English language teacher education, an ELT teacher trainer or a practising ELT teacher? (please put student if you are a student who is teaching)
() Student () Teacher () Teacher Trainer
16. What is (are) your L1? First language(s) you speak.
- 16a. What other language (s) - L2(s) - do you have?
17. What is your age?
() 18-20 () 21-30 () 31-40 () 41+
18. Do you identify yourself as
() Female () Male () Non-binary () Prefer not to say
- 18a. Other (please specify)
19. What is your proficiency level in English? (e.g. CEFR B1/B2/C1/C2/L1 or IELTS 5.0/5.5/6.0/6.5/7/7.5/L1) C1= advanced; B1 lower intermediate; B2 higher intermediate.
20. Have you ever taught before?
() Yes () No
- 20a. If yes, for how long have you been teaching?
21. If you have taught before (or are currently teaching), what English-related subject(s) did you teach/are you teaching? (e.g. English as a Foreign Language, Preessional English; Secondary School; Primary School; University - specify if English for Academic Purposes or Literature or other).

Part II - Teaching and learning English

Please indicate how much you agree with the statements

Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree

22. Only American and British English should be taught as standard
23. English belongs to everyone who speaks it and it is nobody's mother tongue
24. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA
25. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible
26. Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned
27. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)
28. The distinction between English teachers as L1 ('native speakers') and L2 ('non-native') speakers is hierarchical
29. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than to L1 ('native') speakers
30. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are ideal, more qualified, and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native') teachers
31. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it
32. L2 ('non-native') teachers often encounter discriminations on the job market/or at the workplace
33. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged in job market and/or at the workplace
34. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners
35. The spread of English might threaten the status of other languages
36. English is as an imperialist language

Part III - Use of digital technologies

Please indicate how much you agree with the statements

Please indicate how much you agree with the statements				
Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
37. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others, and for creating resources and knowledge together with others				
38. I am able to interact through a variety of digital technologies and to understand appropriate digital communication means for a given context				
39. I believe that engaging in online collaborative projects and activities help to promote the development of intercultural values				
40. I believe it is beneficial for pre-service English teachers to experience online collaboration				
41. I am able to use online networks to collaborate with others on innovative pedagogical practices				
42. I am able to use digital tools and technologies for collaborating with others in a synchronous way ('live' interaction)				
43. I believe in the value of promoting the use of online collaboration among my peers				
44. I believe in the value of Virtual Exchange/Collaborative Online International Learning as a tool for my own professional development				
45. I believe it is important for pre-service English teachers to have experience in using various online collaborative tools				
46. I like to use technology to learn languages				
47. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English				
48. I feel anxious about communicating in English using digital technologies				
49. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed my beliefs about online learning and teaching				
50. I plan to engage my future students in projects and activities which involve virtual exchange/collaborative online international learning				

Part IV - Use of digital technologies

Please indicate how much you agree with the statements

Please indicate how much you agree with the statements				
Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
51. I am very interested in the values and customs of other cultures				
52. I am interested in learning about people's beliefs and the way they see the world				
53. I respect the values and customs of other cultures				
54. I am able to adjust to new people, places, and situations				
55. I feel that people from other cultures have many valuable things to teach me				
56. I sometimes try to understand people from other cultures better by imagining how things look from their perspective				
57. I change my non-verbal behaviour when an intercultural situation requires it				

-
58. I often notice personality/behaviour similarities between people who belong to completely different cultures
-
59. I am able to adjust to new people, places, and situations
-
60. I find it easier to “categorize/classify” people based on their cultural identity than on their personality
-
61. I can imagine myself living/interacting with people from other cultures
-
62. I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures
-
63. I feel closer to people from cultures similar to mine, because I can relate better to them
-
64. I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures
-
65. I wish other cultures were similar to mine
-
66. I have difficulty differentiating cultures that have similar customs
-
67. I modify the way I disagree with others to fit the cultural setting
-
68. I change my verbal behaviour (e.g., accent, tone) when intercultural interaction requires it
-
69. Globalization promotes homogenization and may result in the loss of cultural identity and local values
-
70. I get nervous and/or confused when I interact with people from other cultures
-
71. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions
-
72. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures
-
73. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 (‘native’) speakers or proficient speakers
-
74. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture
-

Appendix D. Post-VE Survey

Part I - Open questions

1. Please state your first name (e.g., John, Mary). Make sure you always use the same first name provided here for any VETSDELT activity. This should be the same as what you have on your ID card or passport.
2. Please state your family name (e.g., Smith). Make sure you always use the same surname provided here for any VETSDELT activity. This should be the same as what you have on your ID card or passport.
3. What do you understand by 'native-speakerism'? Please define it in your own words.
4. What does 'English as a Global Language' mean to you? Please explain it in your own words.
5. Could you provide up to three examples of what you understand by 'varieties of English'?
6. Do you agree the classification of English teachers as L1 ('native') and L2 ('non-native') speakers entails a hierarchical relationship in the profession, as well as dominant professional discourses? Please explain your answer.
7. Do you feel confident to teach English considering your level (competence) of English? Please explain your answer.
8. How did you feel about communicating (speaking) in English using digital technologies during the VETSDELT project?
9. To your knowledge, do L2 English-speaking ('non-native') teachers encounter discrimination in the ELT job market/workplace? Please explain your answer.
10. Has VETSDELT affected your previous beliefs about English in general and learning/teaching/use/ownership of English in particular?
11. Please write up to three things the VETSDELT team did well and up to three they could have done better and any other suggestions you would like to provide.

Part I - Please indicate how much you agree with the statements

Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
12. Only American and British English should be taught as standard				
13. English belongs to everyone who speaks it and it is nobody's mother tongue				
14. English is traditionally tied to geographical spaces, mainly the UK or the USA				
15. It is important to teach and learn as many varieties of English as possible				
16. Any English variation is illegitimate and should be not taught or learned				
17. Every English variation has equal value and legitimacy (e.g., Chinese, Australian, British, Indian, Canadian, American, etc.)				
18. L2 ('non-native') speakers of English lack sufficient competence in the language and therefore are less suited to teach English than to L1 ('native') speakers				
19. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are the ideal, more qualified and expert teachers of English than L2 ('non-native speaker') teachers				
20. L1 ('native speaker') teachers represent 'Western culture', from which comes the ideal English language model and the methodology for teaching it				
21. L1 ('native speaker') teachers are advantaged on job market and/or at the workplace				
22. I believe that L1 ('native speaker') teachers have more prestige and are preferred by learners				
23. I am a bit worried about using technology to interact in English				
24. Speaking English is important to me because I can interact with people from other cultures and regions				
25. I feel confident communicating in English with members of other cultures				
26. I feel uncomfortable speaking English with L1 ('native') speakers or proficient speakers				
27. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture				
28. I feel more comfortable when interacting in English with people from my own culture				
29. It is better to learn English in an English-speaking country				
30. If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get better job positions				
31. People in my country think that it is important to speak English				
32. I feel I learned a lot from the VETSDELT Virtual Exchange project				
33. I found the Virtual Exchange useful for my (future) career as an English teacher				
34. I would recommend other English teachers to do a Virtual Exchange if they have the chance				
35. I would recommend other English teachers/English learners/students, in general, to do a Virtual Exchange as part of their training if they have the chance				

36. Overall, I am satisfied with my experience in the VETSDELT Virtual Exchange project

Appendix E. Microsoft Forms

Session 'Varieties of English'

1. How would you rate this VETSDELT session?

😊😊😊😊😊

2. What is the most important thing you discussed today in your opinion?

3. What is English in your opinion?

() A lingua franca () A foreign language () A global language () A hegemonic language

() A medium of instruction () Other

4. How did you feel about taking part in a Virtual Exchange with students and staff from other countries today?

Session 'Beliefs, ideologies and attitudes'

1. How would you rate this VETSDELT session?

😊😊😊😊😊

2. What is the most important thing you discussed today in your opinion?

3. Say how much you agree with the statement below

Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree

Language is owned by the communities who use it, not the government or grammarians

4. Any other comments?

Session 'Teaching English as a Global Language'

1. How would you rate this VETSDELT session?

😊😊😊😊😊

2. What is the most important thing you discussed today in your opinion?

3. What do you believe could be introduced into English language classrooms today for English to be more reflective of its functions as a worldwide language?

4. Any other comments?

Session 'Native-speakerism'

1. How would you rate this VETSDELT session?

😊😊😊😊😊

2. What is the most important thing you discussed today in your opinion?

3. Say how much you agree with the statement below

Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree

As long as 'standard' English is valued above all else, the 'native' speaker will remain the prevailing model

4. Any other comments?

Appendix F. Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Has VETSDELT affected your previous beliefs about English in general and learning/teaching/use/ownership of English in particular?
2. How has the project affected your beliefs about Global Englishes/World Englishes/'varieties of English'?
3. How has the project affected your beliefs about the L1 ('native speaker') model and the teaching and learning of English?
4. Has VETSDELT affected your intercultural awareness?
5. How do you feel about the belief held by many that 'native speaker' teachers are ideal English teachers and are better suited to play a better role than L2 English-Speaking ('non-native') teachers to teach English?
6. How do you feel about the claim made by some that 'non-native speaker' teachers lack legitimate competence in the language and therefore are less suited than 'native speakers' to teach English?
7. To your knowledge, do L2 English-speaking ('non-native') teachers encounter discrimination in the ELT job market/workplace?
8. How did you feel about communicating (speaking) in English using digital technologies during the VETSDELT project?
9. How did you find the experience of interacting in English on VETSDELT in comparison with the experience of interacting in other online learning settings and/or in face-to-face settings?
10. Will your participation in VETSDELT affect your own teaching practice? If so, how?
11. Any other comments?

Thank you very much for taking part.

Appendix G. Transcription of Focus Group 1 (Cycle 1, Stage 3a) – 8 December 2022

66 minutes

Researcher. Okay. Thank you so much again for coming. Today's focus is to, you know, talk about the project and get your feedback for the next cycle because this was the first one. Probably next year I'll have another cycle, the second one. So yes, I would much appreciate to receive your feedback, you know, to see what was good and what didn't work so well. I just want to know your opinion and feel free to talk everything that you want to. No hard feelings. The important thing here is to get your feedback. So, the objective is, you know, to reflect about the project to get a deeper understanding of the topics that we recovered during the project and receive your feedback. We have 11 questions [...] you know, some images and cartoons to reflect and to talk about [...] and pretty much it. Okay. As the first question, has the project affected your previous beliefs about English in general and teaching/learning/use/ownership of English in particular? As I said, there is no right and wrong answer. So just say, you know, based on your experience during the project.

Participant B17. Yeah, well, for me, it hasn't changed that much, but it is true that it helped me to raise some awareness about the issues. I liked, you know, I like very much the thing that I could [...] I could hear some people or ideas from people from, you know [...] it was Sri Lanka or India or Pakistan. So, the opinions *were* really interesting because, you know, I wasn't aware about, you know, some issues about, you know, being maybe from the western part of Europe or the English. So, I didn't know that much. It was interesting to know the opinion. So, somehow, yeah, it helped.

Researcher. Yes, was it so different, Participant B17, from your context, the Sri Lankan and the Indian, for example?

Participant B17. Yeah, because, you know, I mean, it was a bit quiet in those days because, you know, being a man and a white man, so it might, you know, affected some others opinions. So, you know, it was good. Yeah, it affected somehow.

Participant A13. Yeah, that's great. What about you, Participant A13? I think it was very interesting as a mediator to listen to what students had to say regarding these topics. And I never thought about the ownership of the language. I mean, I had thought about the native speaker model, which should not be imitated by students or future teachers, but never thought about the ownership of the language. Like, is it English only for native speakers, or is it a global language for everybody? So, in this sense, yes, it has changed. I mean, I don't have the right answer. I don't know if English is only for Anglo-Saxon people or is for everybody. I still don't know, but I'm start thinking about that. And I think that's interesting, yeah, to, you know, change perspective.

Researcher. Yeah, I was going to ask you this [...] your opinion about, you know, the ownership of English [...] How do you feel as a L2 speaker of English and as a teacher too? How do you feel about the ownership of English? Do you feel that you also own the language or it's something distant from you [...] really a second language?

Participant A13. I'm not sure about that. I mean, I feel somehow also owner of the language, but if I was an Anglo-Saxon speaker of English, I would feel weird about that. I mean, like non-native challenge me that the language is not mine. I mean, it's my language. As I'm talking about, for example, Spanish or Italian, I think they're my language. Of course, many people speak, maybe not Italian, but Spanish, many speakers in the world. But I would say that that's my languages. So, I think English is also kind of my language, but I don't know how they feel about that, about me feeling that it's my language. I don't know if I'm making myself clear.

Researcher. What about you, Participant B17?

Participant B17. I don't think the language belongs to anyone or especially not me. I don't think it's my language, but it's something that I enjoy talking or practicing, learning, improving, but it's not my language.

Researcher. Okay. The next question, how has the project affected beliefs about, you know, specifically varieties of English? Because you remember that, you know, we talked about the English from Jamaica, English from India, English from different parts of the world. You see, the cartoon says that “doesn’t anyone speak proper English anymore?” Since English has this, you know, lingua franca status, of course the language has a lot of varieties around the world. So how do you feel about it? The project helped you to reflect about the varieties of English itself?

Participant B17. For me, it was tricky to talk about this because somehow [...] We think that English [...] there is what should be like a standard English. No matter what’s the standard, but in terms of communicating with people, we need something more neutral because it would be, you know, impractical to teach every variety of English to anyone, even learning [...] so, I don’t know. And I can explain something that is happening in Spain. So up North in Spain, we have the Basque country, and they speak Basque, the Basque language. But the Basque language, before that or even now, so there are kind of seven different varieties of Basque. So, at the end, they couldn’t understand each other because it was, you know, [...] even having the same root, so it was quite different. They ended up having the *Batua*, which is like a common language for all of them, the common and standard Basque. And I think it would happen kind of the same thing [to English] if we still managed to teach different varieties because at the end, if the language evolves or as language is evolving, it would become very different and, you know, we couldn’t understand each other at the end. So, sure.

Participant A13. I agree with Participant B17 in the sense that I think it’s very difficult or maybe even impossible to teach all the varieties in an English class. I mean, I think as a teacher, I couldn’t do that. But what I think we can do as teachers is maybe not to teach the variety itself, but for example, in a listening activity, instead of using recordings only from American English or British English, we can expose our students to, I don’t know, a recording from Scottish people or Jamaican people, Indian people talking English, because that’s real life. I mean, if you teach them just the two main varieties, then maybe they will go abroad and they will face an Indian speaker of English or a Chinese speaker of English. And they will have many difficulties in understanding them because it happened to me also when I was a student. So, I don’t think that the project in this sense has changed my beliefs because I was already thinking that before the project. So, I don’t know if these answer your question.

Researcher. Yes. And did you have any difficulty communicating and understanding the other participants from other cultural backgrounds, you know, regarding accents and varieties of English? Did you have any difficulty to communicate during the project to understand people in general?

Participant A13. Once a student from Sri Lanka joined, I don’t remember, I don’t remember his name. It was just the first time. And I think the only time that he joined my group. And at the beginning, I couldn’t understand him because I don’t know if there were technical problems, or it was just his accent. But the other students were from Spain. So, I was familiar with their accent. And the other students that I had were [researcher supervisor’s] students at the [English institution]. I already knew them. So even though I’m not familiar, maybe with Pakistan or Indian accent, I was familiar with that person. But yeah, when this student from Sri Lanka joined, at the beginning, he made a question, and I couldn’t understand the question. He had to repeat the question like two or three times. So yeah.

Researcher. Yes, interesting. And Participant B17, did you have any difficulty communicating during the project with different accents?

Participant B17. No, not really. Maybe some words, but I think people managed to make themselves clear.

Researcher. So that’s good. The next question. Has the project affected beliefs about the native speaker model and the teaching learning of English. There’s another cartoon here that I found, and I really liked it. The guy says “meow” and the cat says “bah, listen to his accent!”. This represents, you know, the native speaker model. Did you think about this, or the project helped you to think about the native speaker model or how to teach English based on the native speaker model? How did you feel about this?

Participant B17. I don’t know. It didn’t change much. I know accent or [...] it’s a big matter for many people. But for me, as long as you can be understood, understand people, no matter the accent. So,

for me, it's fine. As long as the communication process is happening, I'm happy. So, it didn't change much. I know that for many people pronunciation is an issue. Because that's why I think they tend to choose native speakers, just to improve their pronunciation.

Researcher. So you never felt pressured to sound like an American, a British or another L1 speaker of English during your life learning and teaching English?

Participant B17. Yeah. Well even for me at the beginning so I thought in order to have a good command of English so you should speak like a you know with a British accent or American accent but that [...] way changed that [...] changed already, so before I joined the project, so yeah

Researcher. Thank you. And you Participant A13?

Participant A13. For me it hasn't changed that much, but I started thinking about job opportunities because we discussed that in the project [...] the feeling that emerged from students was that native speakers had more job opportunities because they're just natives. Maybe they're not good teachers, but yes Participant B17 was saying they have a good pronunciation because it's their first language, so students or even parents believe that this is better. I think people still think like that, that accent and pronunciation are like the most important thing to sound native or to sound as you have a good command of the language because when I come back the other day, I met with a colleague. She's from Iran, she doesn't speak English [...] sorry, she doesn't speak Spanish, so we used English to communicate and one of the first things that she said is "oh, you have more British accent now that when you went to Coventry" and I was like "oh, yeah? Thank you". But it was not like the purpose of my stay abroad, to sound like a British speaker. I mean, it's fine [...] it's not something bad, but I wouldn't say it's like the most important thing. So people still focus on accent and pronunciation a lot.

Researcher. Yes. But I think that happens naturally when you are exposed to a certain kind of English.

Participant A13. Yeah. Sure.

Researcher. So naturally happens [...] I think it's totally yes comprehensible, isn't it?

Participant A13. Yeah. I don't know this. I haven't noticed that, but she did, so I guess it's true [...] I don't know [laughs].

Researcher. Okay. What about intercultural awareness. Do you think that the project affected intercultural awareness?

Participant B17. Yes. Definitely, it helped.

Researcher. How do you know safe face dealing with people from another country [...] another culture? How was this?

Participant B17. It was very positive in my opinion, you know, knowing people from different countries, different backgrounds. It's amazing. So that's the purpose of communicating, learning from others, and if we can use English as a means [...] that was wonderful.

Researcher. Oh, great. And you, Participant A13?

Participant A13. Yeah, I think it was interesting to have people from such different countries, because even students from Coventry [...] they were not from the same cultural background. So, I think it was very interesting to see the perspective of people from Sri Lanka, Spain, Vietnam, Pakistan, you know, many different countries that do not share like a common language or culture. So yeah, in this sense, I think it was very [...] it was very interesting to see all these perspectives.

Researcher. Yes. And I think the way that they see language is completely different from us, from the Western, you know, world [...] it's completely different.

Participant A13. Yes.

Researcher. And I think this was very interesting to see [...] different views of teaching and learning English. For me, specifically, was great. Okay. So, “native speakers are ideal teachers and play a better role than L2 English speaking (non-native speakers) teachers?”. Do you agree with this? In this cartoon “Are you the new English teachers?”, and she says, “Yes, I am”. Usually, especially in the Brazilian concept, talking about my experience, people and companies tend to see English teachers like this [...] we don’t dominate the language [...] we don’t have enough background to teach the language. How’s it in your context? How do you feel about being an English teacher as a L2 speaker?

Participant B17. Well, I think that’s not true, or at least 100% true. Because if [...] being native doesn’t mean that you are able to teach, that’s one thing. But it’s also true that being a non-native, somehow you can teach up to a certain level. So in my case, I wouldn’t be able to, or wouldn’t be comfortable teaching people, you know, willing to reach like a C2 level, because I don’t think I have that level yet. So that’s tricky. It depends on the teacher, the command of English, and it depends on your students, obviously. So it would be, I think it would be a better English teacher for, you know, up to B2. Just because I know the process, I know what it takes to learn, what are the main difficulties that the students have to go through, better than just being native without being a teacher. But at some point, in matters of cultural things, or even pronunciation [...]

Participant A13. I agree with Participant B17, but I don’t think I would be able to teach C2 level Spanish, either, or Italian, I mean, I think it’s just a matter of training. You know, if you want to be a C1 or a C2 teacher, I mean, to prepare students to take that level of the exam, you just need to be trained to do that. It’s not just a matter of being native or non-native. So yeah, I agree, I wouldn’t be able to do that, but because I haven’t been trained to do that. Not even a B1 or a B2, I’m just a teacher at university, you know, they’re not thinking about levels or exams, but I said I wouldn’t be able to teach a C2 level of Spanish. I think sometimes I make mistakes also in Spanish and Italian, just because it’s natural to make mistakes in any language or any discipline in your life. Some people are very smart, but perfection is not usually the common thing. And regarding being a better teacher, if you’re a native, I think that’s just a prejudice. You could be a native and be a good teacher, but it’s not something related to being native, you can also be a good teacher, even if it’s your second language. Maybe it’s your second language, but you have been living in an Anglophone country for 10 years, so you perfectly master the language, even if it’s not your first language. That’s my thought.

Researcher. Sure. And how’s the context there in Spain? Usually companies, they prefer the native speaker, or do you feel any prejudice, you know, as an English teacher?

Participant A13. I think if you want to work in a private school, they probably would prefer a native speaker, or if you’re a non-native speaker, they will tell you not to say to your students that you’re not a native. You know, there are some private schools around Valencia that have this model, the native speaker model. So small kids, third year children, they think that their teachers are all natives because they are not allowed to speak in Spanish in front of the students. But that’s just a very specific context. I think, at university or primary school, secondary school, it doesn’t really matter if you’re native or non-native [...] so depending if people are paying for that and they are paying for a native speaker, so in that case, they will prefer maybe native, but in the public sector, it’s different.

Participant B17. Okay, I agree.

Researcher. Do you agree, Participant B17?

Participant B17. Yeah, yeah, yeah, definitely. A hundred percent.

Researcher. Okay. The next topic is all about this. Have you ever faced any discrimination for a job position as an English teacher, or have you ever heard of any colleague experiencing this in Spain, your context?

Participant A13. I never experienced any discrimination or heard about any colleague who has, but I was doing my Masters I went to one of the private schools around Valencia, I had to do just an essay for one of the subjects, and we had to do an observation of a multilingual school. So when I went there, I found out that even Spanish speakers were not allowed to use Spanish in front of the students, so if they were talking to the parents, for example, maybe the parents didn’t speak English,

but if some child just passed around them, they had to switch into English. So I don't think it's a discrimination, but I think it's something stupid, because you are teaching students that if you're not a native, you won't be a good teacher. So it's, you know, like a circle. It's the same prejudice over and over again. It's not a discrimination, but it's not fair. Maybe we can say that in some ways it's a discrimination, because they have to pretend to be natives.

Researcher. Thank you. And you, Participant B17, have you ever faced any discrimination? Any colleagues faced discrimination in the job market?

Participant B17. Well, I've never applied to work as an English teacher, but I'm very aware that even when people post jobs, like, or seeking jobs, and all of the, or many of them, of the both, you know, they're looking for native speakers, because they somehow, they think that they could be better teachers, but I think just because, you know, of pronunciation, of their pronunciation. You know, there's some native [...] and that would be a good thing for them, but personally, I've never had an experience that [...]

Researcher. That's good. Good news. Hello, Participant B1. Are you there?

(Participant B1 joins the focus group)

Participant B1. Hello, I am here. I am here. I'm sorry for joining this late, but I had some family issues to sort out and just I texted Marina that I would be these 20 minutes late. But you know, here I am.

Researcher. Thank you.

Participant B17. Welcome.

Participant B1. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Hi. Hi. Hi, Participant B17. Hi, Participant A13. Hi, Marina. Hi, Carlos.

Researcher. Participant B1, have you ever worked as an English teacher before becoming a professor in Spain?

Participant B1. Yeah, I did, actually. It was a long time ago. I started in a language school in Valencia. Okay. At that time, it was very trendy to have native speakers as teachers, particularly back, you know, beginning of the 21st century and the end of the 20th century. I joined this language school and there was [...] one of the teachers left. I think she was from Northern Ireland. I can't remember. And I had the opportunity to be promoted. So the thing is, they had to pretend that I was a native speaker. I think I mentioned it. They changed my surname. I went through an interview for [...] I think it was like for about, I don't know, about an hour. So they wanted to test that I could, or that I could be like, a native speaker. I had a native speaker like proficiency, and then they allowed me to do this kind of classes. They were different because they were different from the staff that Spanish people did at that time, and when native speakers did. So Spanish speakers were in charge of [...] always like a language laboratory. They basically managed the [...] they managed the lab with the students. They, you know, they sorted out any technical problems the students could have, and then the native speakers were the only ones allowed to deliver [...] let's say English classes following a more or less like a kind of an audio-lingual approach, I have to say. So it was funny at that time, because they were my first classes as an English teacher. But sometimes it was like, I don't know, you felt powerless because, you know, you couldn't be promoted unless you were a native speaker. And the students, discrimination [...]

Researcher. It was discrimination, wasn't it?

Participant B1. Yeah, at that time it was [...] discrimination was just like that because I remember one of my colleagues there. You know, there was another Spanish teacher, and he was really, really good. And he didn't have the chance to be promoted to teach those classes and he left. And also, at the same time, it was also the money. And they [...] the wages they got were higher and they had no training at all. I can remember, I think I mentioned it in one of the [...] in one of the breakout rooms. You know, I remember Calvin, who used to be a taxi driver in London. I remember, what was her name? I can remember another lady who got a degree in economy and then she wanted to have

some fun in Valencia and then, you know, she had a job offer and she got. It was, I mean, the atmosphere was great but some teachers that had no training at all.

Researcher. Yeah, that's really bad. I think in Brazil is the same, especially in bilingual schools. You know, they import teachers, especially from the USA, and they pay them a higher salary than the Brazilian teachers. That happens a lot, I've heard, especially bilingual schools in Brazil.

Participant B1. And I don't know if you have mentioned it here in this focus group. But the thing is, for example, in Madrid, the policy was to import basically native speakers from America and because they set up like different bilingual programmes in Madrid that apparently haven't worked very well. This is one of the policies here. And also, in Valencia, I think that the local authorities, they wanted to do, I don't know [...] it was for the best, I know, but they hired many people. And in fact, in primary and secondary schools, you can run into one person, one English native speaker, okay? And it's paid for [...] by the, I think, I can't remember if it's the ministry of education or the local administration, but still you can have like a native speaker rather than just finding people who have a very high proficiency here in Valencia and who have been trained as teachers, language teachers, English teachers. We still, you know, in 2022, we still find these situations here. It's unfair for our students, for my students.

Participant A13. But that thing about the native speakers and primary teachers, are they hired just like *auxiliar de conversación* [language assistants]? I don't know [...]

Participant B1. That's what it is. That's what it is.

Participant A13. But I think it's more an exchange programme. I mean, we can do the same and go to one English speaking country and be like a support for the teachers to teach Spanish. But because I think, I know that the ministry of education offers a grant. It's just nine months and they're not paid well. I don't know if it's the same thing you are mentioning because I had, I looked at it, they paid, I mean, four Spanish speakers going abroad is like 800 euros per month. So it's not even the minimum salary. I don't know if it's the same for English speaking coming here.

Participant B1. As far as I know, in Valencia, I think that some of them are into that programme. I'm not sure. I think that in Madrid is completely different. So they're expect to do that. What they did is basically just, as you put it, they imported a huge load of, I don't know, English teachers. I don't know about their background. I mean, I don't know if they, you know, they had some training and they've done degrees in English and English history, you know, in language teaching. I'm not sure about it. That's a common policy anyway.

Researcher. Yes, I think we discussed a little bit about this before Participant B1 arriving, but how did you feel about communicating English and using digital technologies during the project? Did you find any difficulty, was it okay, you know, during the breakout rooms and Zoom itself, any difficulty?

Participant B1. Technical difficulties you mean?

Researcher. Yeah.

Participant B1. Yeah, well basically we had some technical issues. I think that, you know, some people were in campus and because of the Wi-Fi sometimes, I think the equipment was fine the people who connected from home they had no problems as you know, at least as far as we are concerned. I think Participant B17 was with me in the same room, I think the four sessions, and everybody communicated apart from those people who I think they were in campus at [university]. I think some people experienced some issues but apart from that [...] because of that this is a common thing, you know, sometimes it works [...] you can have just like a clean virtual extension, sometimes you just have people who cannot connect because of the Wi-Fi or because of the home connection, so you never know but [...] that was fine. I mean, it was fine, and I think that everybody participated, and everybody understood each other and the points that people made. It was just like great. Participant D1 brought about some the opinions that somebody can have from Brazil, so it was it was great. I have to say that everybody communicated. I think that, as a mediator, I tried hard to make everybody speak because sometimes some people, you know [...]

Participant B17. I didn't experience any [...] personally any problem, but there was some issues with some of the people with the connection. Actually, maybe the camera [...] they couldn't turn on the camera or something like.

Researcher. It's because sometimes some people want to save face [...] they don't want to show the background and, you know, they just don't want to open that camera. And you, Participant A13, had any technical issue during project?

Participant A13. I think some technical issues with some students who lost their connection, maybe for one or two minutes [...] but any big issue. I wouldn't say that there were big problems with technology in general. And the same as Participant B1, as I'm a teacher, I tried to make everybody speak, but especially at the beginning, they were quite shy. I think it's just [...] it depends on the group. Some groups are more talkative, and others feel more [...] others feel shier, you know? But especially the last session, they were more communicative, you know? They, yeah, I think after four sessions, they started to know each other and to share their, yeah, their feelings or thoughts. So yeah, I know that we don't have much time to do this kind of project, but maybe adding one or two weeks more would help, you know, because yeah, I felt that at the end, students were willing to communicate more than at the beginning. So if you added one or two weeks more [...] that maybe in the last session, you would help like a super conversation about teaching English, you know?

Participant B17. I think that might be because of the topic of that day.

Participant A13. Could be also.

Participant B17. The very last day was, you know, people were willing to share their opinions and, you know, it was more open to discussion than other topics, maybe.

Researcher. The last session?

Participant B17. Yeah, the topic, I think, I would say. If you put that topic at the first or the second session, I think people will engage much more than maybe with other topics, I don't know.
[the topic was native-speakerism]

Participant A13. You can try [laughs].

Participant B1. That's a very good point. Maybe it's that kind of topic that everybody [...] because all the people who participated is because they're being trained to be English teachers. So, most of them have, you know [...] how they have attended classes, private classes, or they went to language schools. And also, at the same time, some of them went to bilingual schools here in Valencia, some of the students. So, that can be a good point at the beginning. Just, you know, just to make the eyes, let's say.

Researcher. How was the experience of interacting with people online? Did you see any difference of communicating online than the face-to-face? It was the same thing or different?

Participant A13. I think regarding silences, so when people are not talking, it's different when you are in a room with, let's say, ten people. It would be more awkward, you know, not to speak [laughs], but when they are behind a screen, you know, if nobody is talking, they just think, "oh, well, somebody else is going to say something, but not me", you know. But when you are physically with somebody, I think it's different. It's the only difference that I can think of. Apart from that, everything was as in face-to-face communication.

Researcher. Pretty much the same?

Participant B1. I think I mentioned it in one of these sessions [...] I can't remember if I mentioned it here, but the thing is, I think the pandemic, I don't know, played a great role in just, you know, making people more aware of how to participate in online interactions. And also, as for teachers and for mediators, it's easy these days. I remember when we started, I think I mentioned it, I remember when I started with Marina, we had Skype meetings and then we had all these students on one side and another pack of students. When they saw each other, they were just terrified, at least my students.

And students, so much [...] I can tell you, so, so much [...] they were even scared of just, you know, just posting on a forum, because we used Fora to exchange impressions, sometimes they were afraid. And now, these days, they're interacting, okay? One of the things that I miss, and probably this is one of the things that we could explore, just saying, is just making the students produce something together, okay? This is something that we've already done, or at least we tried in the sessions that, you know, we did here in [university] when the students from [university] visited us, and exactly the same thing when we were there. It was just brilliant. Most of my students, they still, when I speak to them, once they have, you know, they finished their graduate study, and they still remember when we went to Coventry Uni, and when they interacted with the students there, and when they, for example, when they [...] because we did some just small classes, let's say, small seminars about [...] they still remember that, and then they say, they learn more about clear when they do that. It was a bit, you know, when they did that, it was in person, but, you know, it was, let's say, it was the end of the whole virtual exchange, right? That probably [...] when they were attending the lectures here.

Researcher. Nice feedback, Participant B1. Do you think that your participation in the project will know affect your teaching practice in some way? Participant A13 mentioned that probably exposed students to different accents during listening activities, for example.

Participant A13. Yeah, I'm definitely thinking about that. Also, because as a student of Catalan, which is one of the co-official languages here in Spain, I took the C1 test last summer, and during the course, we were exposed to different varieties of the language. So, we are exposed to Catalan, Valencian, here in the Valencian community. Also, Catalan spoken in the Balearic Islands, you know, they were different accents, different varieties, even different words, sometimes. But, you know, it was a quite high level. So, I'm thinking about that, but also depending on the level of the class and on the varieties, because some varieties could be more difficult for students depending on their background. But yeah, I'm definitely thinking about that.

Researcher. Nice.

Participant B17. Introducing more varieties or more different accents, different videos or whatever from, you know, different English countries or English. That's the point.

Participant B1. Well, I have to say, and Participant B17 was there in class. I have to say, right [...] I've been an English teacher for a long time, and Valencian is my native language, and I love accents, I love varieties of the language, I love varieties of my language, and I love varieties. And we had a big issue in class, when I try to make people just being aware that the varieties are fine, that, you know, diversity is just like, you know, what humanity is like, the mankind. And, you know, when just facing the organization of languages according to power, politics, and that's just not basically something that is not natural, okay? Many, and just mentioning that, you know, these are prejudices that we learn that are culturally coded, and they are embedded in societies. It was a big issue, because everybody, an example, everybody understood that Spanish should be spoken the way that Castilian people are speaking, rather than, for example, the people from Andalusia, okay? And this is one of the varieties that is, let's say [...] it is said to be like, informal, the way they pronounce words, or the words they use, because they are not in the center of the power. So just making or trying to make students aware of what it, you know, what all this kind of organization in terms of languages, and organized in terms of, you know, culturally coded societies, it was great for me. It affected my teaching, because it's always affected my teaching. And at the same time, I wanted these students were trained to be teachers, okay? I wanted them to affect their training, okay? However, I know that is a thorny topic. It is quite thorny, because it is controversial, because, you know, it goes against people's beliefs, and the way that we all organize our thoughts. And for me, you know, I don't know, it brings about some kind of dilemma, because I learned English, the way I learn it is the way the way the way I speak it. And sometimes I tell people not to speak the way I speak. It's necessary to imitate the way I imitate it when I learned English 30 years ago, or 20 years ago. I have to say it, you know, that's my situation.

Participant A13. I think it's because you're a language teacher. So, you are training students to be English teacher, right? Is that your context?

Participant B1. Yes.

Participant A13. Because I've been teaching engineering students, aerospace or mechanical engineering, so they don't have that linguistic background. It's very difficult to try to make them

understand that culture is important when learning a language, that there are different varieties, all of them are correct. They don't even accept Spanish varieties. I have the recording of one of my aerospace engineering students during a virtual exchange project, saying that "oh, I don't like how people speak Catalan". He was from Alberta, I think. "I don't like Catalan. It's an awful language", and "I don't like how people speak in Andalusia, they don't speak properly". Those kind of prejudices. So I think it's also a matter of background. So, you are training language students, so they probably already think about those issues. But when you are teaching English to, I don't know, engineering students or medicine students, any other background, I think it's even more difficult to make people get rid of those prejudices.

Participant B1. Definitely. My brother is an engineer, so I know what it is like. My brother is an engineer, I know what it is like. Most of my friends are engineers. I know how challenging this is. I have to say that I'm really happy because this topic brings the topic that we were facing. It brings about all these contradictions, and also at the same time, it makes you more, I don't know [...] bringing about your linguistic sensitivity. And at the same time, I know it's very challenging and sometimes daunting for my students. The thing is, because this is what I said in class, we're challenging you, beliefs, and people who are not, Participant B17 is an exception, okay? But most of the students are 2021, okay? And they haven't gone through [...] they've only done two years at university. So basically, they face them the way they're going to be in life, and also how they are going to shape their teaching. Not only as citizens because teachers have, after all, we are citizens, we're part of the society, but at the same time [...] The teaching, okay? So how critical they will be about what they are told to do, how they are going to plan their classes, and basically how the methods [...] let's say, the approach they're going to take. And then for me, this type of aspects are crucial, to make them more open-minded. And sometimes they say, "right, teachers have to be open-minded", because this is something that we talk about in year four. My students are in year three and year four, the ones that participated. In year four, they have to be open-minded, but sometimes you don't know what open-minded means for people. Sometimes about particularly in this topic, okay? Let's say concerning this linguistic diversity and linguistic sensitivity.

Researcher. Yeah, sure. And the last question [or topic]. I'd like your feedback about Aula, Padlet, Zoom, Form, the order of the sessions, and the topics covered in VETSDELT. I'd like to have your feedback in general.

Participant A13. I mentioned on my post-survey that I think maybe students could be in charge of writing on the Padlet, instead of the mediators. So, these would make the task like [...] more [...] I don't know, interactive for them. It's not just discussing a topic but also paying attention to what other people are saying because then you had to write a summary, or just maybe to write a summary collectively, but I guess that they would need more time to do that. If you only have an hour, it would be a bit challenging. But I would try to make students do something together, even a summary or a final product. I would include something like that.

UK Supervisor. Sorry, I didn't want to speak. However, in reply to you [Participant A13], we originally had students doing it, and it didn't work.

Participant A13. Okay, you already tried.

UK Supervisor. Yes. And for that reason, we decided to have a double mediator to make sure something happened in the breakout rooms. So just to say that [...] I agree with the joint task, but again that didn't work on two occasions, even with Participant B1. We had a very nice task they had to do together, and two out of five groups did it. So, if it is not mandatory, not assessed, it is difficult. But I'll retire from... I'll observe again. Sorry.

Participant B1. This is a good point. If the assignment is compulsory [...] because most, most of the, you know [...] this is compulsory for my students. They have to participate in [...] they have to, and I do understand that sometimes virtual exchanges are not the same thing for all. And they can't be because of the [...]. I don't know the restrictions that institution may have. So, depending on that, I use the virtual exchanges basically to create to produce something extra, I do it on my end. Again, that was our first proposal, and it only worked when we did, or at least it worked with the students, when they interacted face to face it worked. It was a slightly better, but we don't have much time, this is one of the things, and working on synchronous and asynchronous interaction. That was another

issue for the students, and I remember when we had our students interacting with people from other countries, or other nationalities, I remember that that didn't work at all. Not even, you know, just producing something together, but just basically interacting. We had some troubles, I have to say.

Participant A13. In asynchronous, you mean?

Participant B1. In asynchronous and even synchronous. You're just trying to get your students to produce something together. It was just like utopia.

Participant A13. Really?

Participant B1. That's what we experienced. This is a great background. I think we earned after all these five years having the virtual exchanges. I think not all the students have the [...] let's say, they have the same, I don't know, the same understanding, the same approach of virtual exchanges.

Participant A13. Sorry, was the final product compulsory even on that virtual exchange or the project itself was compulsory for their students?

Participant B1. They had to produce something. I don't know. Marina, you can [...] I don't know [...] you can just bring some more [...] shed some more light here. And the thing is, we had, and I had my students produce something, but producing them, making them produce something, it became really, really challenging. And as Marina put it, some people wanted to do, some other people just skipped it.

UK Supervisor. I mean, just to give you an idea, on the ViVEXELT programme, we had 340 participants.

Participant A13. Yeah, that's a lot.

UK Supervisor. We said that the personal reflective portfolio on the VE was mandatory. We had 46 returns on 340. So they couldn't care even about the certificates. They just don't do it. And it's only the more motivated students who will do it. And in my case, it is not compulsory, it's an optional question. And they know that, but I don't want to make it too compulsory, because then it becomes dictatorship on VE. So it's really difficult. It's really difficult.

Participant A13. I can tell you that even if it's compulsory, and they're graded for that, there will be students that don't do all the tasks, because that was my case with [Professor's] students. It was part of their final grade. It was, I think, 10 or 15% of the final grade. Most of the students did all the tasks, some of them never showed up, you know, but I think it makes the difference. But in our case, it was a smaller group, maybe we had 30 students [...] 350 is a lot.

Participant B1. I'm lucky because I don't have many students, no more than 20. 20, 25 is, I think, is the maximum or even 30. So, I actually push students to do things. Some of them, not all of them, but I make it compulsory. So, you know, if there is an assignment, I make it compulsory. And they also devote time in class to discuss the questions, because I know that some of the students, I don't know what to say, because they are lazy, or just because, you know, they have loads of assignments, and I know this has been an issue in the last five years [...] because sometimes, you know, when you do the virtual exchange, you can keep your assignments under control, but you cannot keep the rest of the teachers' assignments under control. So, they have assignments. I try to devote some timing class to discuss the questions, to let the students read the assignments and stuff. But sometimes [...] there are people who have never read the assignments, or they don't want to participate because they, you know, they feel embarrassed, or they just basically [...] I don't know, some of you students doing the master's said "I'm not interested at all about virtual exchanges. I don't think it's a good idea". Fair enough. Okay, you didn't want to participate. You never participated. I know that some of my undergraduate students think so. I mean, I wouldn't say, not so dramatically [...] I would say, but, you know, they [...] we have to take into account that some people will be not motivated for the exchanges, and that's it. But we have to [...] I think [...] we think that is a great aspect of teacher training, and that's why we do it. I think this is the point here. It's great for them also to bear it in mind where they become teachers to, you know, to be familiar with all these [...] let's say, all these procedures.

UK Supervisor. I mean, on a positive note, Participant B1, I think both your students, I gather, and mine have really commented positively in the evaluation for the module and the course. We've had for the second time, 100% satisfaction, both for the module attached to the VE, and 100% for the course, master's in English Language Teaching. And the students mentioned this initiative as part of their satisfaction. So not all students are reluctant. In my experience, just, you know, you can consider it, Carlos, or leave it out. I find undergraduates buy into it less than postgraduates, because postgraduates can see the employability outcome of that, "I'm learning to teach online. I'm learning to interact online. It's an extra bow to my arrow". Undergraduates are still not there because they're not mature. You know, we start teaching undergraduates before they fully mature intellectually, according to research on neurolinguistics. You mature at 21. And that's where you finish your degree, your first award. So, they realized that, and in my past initiatives, when I did the Mexico project with 120 British undergraduates, when they graduated, they came back to me and they said "Marina, I'm so sorry I said I didn't like it, because I can see the importance of it now". And that happened three years on when they finished. And they actually wrote to me and said, "I'm so sorry, Marina. I hated that thing, but now I see how useful it is". It is also a level of maturity [...] working with others, the importance of digital literacy. You know, there is a lot in VE that you can take on in the world of work. And for yourself as well, your personal growth.

Researcher. Sure.

Participant B1. I do have the same impression, but in our case, in these last five years, I think the undergraduate students took it more seriously. Some of my postgraduate students, the ones that are doing their master's to become secondary school teachers, because of their availability and because they say "Oh, no, I've gained the knowledge. I think I gained the knowledge" because they finished their degrees during the pandemic. So, they think they are, at least they are a bit familiar with just managing online classes. They don't want to take part [...] But I have to say that [...] what research, at least the research we've done [...] the students think they developed the competencies. You know, here in Spain, the curriculum is just developing competencies to become teachers, and the self-perception of those students who are going to be teachers is that they develop their competencies during the virtual exchanges in a great sense [...] in some topics more than others, but in a great sense. So, you know, they have this perception. And I have to say one of the students that Marina had was doing a placement here in Valencia, and this is what she told me. And also, at the same time, she was able to manage a virtual exchange because she had done the virtual exchange before.

UK Supervisor. And now she's not teaching languages.

Participant B1. No, no. I don't know.

UK Supervisor. She's not, I think she's become a CEO, she's become pumpkin in a company.

Participant B1. Really?

UK Supervisor. I think so.

Researcher. What about you, Participant B17? So do you have a final feedback of the project?

Participant B17. I think, well, what I need to say? [It] is more to the maybe the design of the project, I would allow the moderators to ask directly to students, "What do you think?" or "What's your thoughts?" and "What you think about this? about that?". Because, you know, maybe sometimes there was, you know, they say 30 seconds of silence because maybe of the topic didn't, you know, didn't give much for discussion. But yeah, but maybe moderators just could ask questions, different questions, or even participate directly, giving their own opinions. Maybe that would open the topic for more discussion.

UK Supervisor. Participant B17, I think you could have a word in confidence with Carlos about which particular moderators, because we need to address this.

Participant B1. I would say that it's a tough task. I have to say, depending on, participants you have around [...] and always say this is one of the things that I think that it improved a lot. I think that from the beginning of the virtual exchange to the end of the virtual exchange, I think it improved a lot. It

was the organization. I think that we had the Padlet to post our thoughts, but at the same time, a little by little, I think it got better because we had some more clear questions to discuss.

Researcher. Thank you. So, I'll stop recording now.

Appendix H. Transcription of Focus Group 2 (Cycle 1, Stage 3a) – 14 December 2022

58 minutes

Researcher. Okay, guys, once again, thank you for coming and thank you for your availability during the whole project and for your time right now because I know this time of the year everybody is so busy. Thank you so much again for being. The objective of today's focus group is to about the project. I would like to hear your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers, so I'd just like to hear about your experience during the project. Another objective of this focus is to get a deeper understanding of the topics we covered during the project and receive your feedback. There are 11 questions. Let's just get started. The first question is "has the project affect your previous beliefs about English in general and learning/teaching/use/ownership of English in particular?". As I said, there are no right or wrong answers. Who would like to go first? Any volunteers?

Participant C3. I have the belief that English is particularly [does] not belong to those speakers who comes from English native speaking countries like in [the] UK, America, Australia, South Africa, and Canada. So, and I got more insights about that [...] English is a global language, and it belongs to all.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant C3. What about the others?

Participant A12. Yeah, I also came to know about that the non-native speakers of English outnumber the native speakers of English. So, it's not the thing that, you know, native speakers own this English and the sole ownership about, you know, because in India, I was like [...] if native speaker is there, so they are considered superior as compared to the ones who don't speak, like, you know, whose first language is not English. So, I also come to know about the terms L1 and L2, because, you know, when we say native, it already shows the superiority of the speakers whose native language is English. But when we use L1 and L2, so it's kind of, you know, we are negotiating. So, I came to know about this and how this thing is affecting the classroom methodology and all the other factors that contribute to, you know [...] because English language is not just only about, you know, communicative competence, but intercultural communicative competence. And we have to recognize the contributions of non-native speakers, because we should not demean their contribution, because English language is about culture also. So, we can contribute, like, not only the West people, but from all over the world. So, yeah, I came to know about all these things too. Also English as a global language, world Englishes, so many other things.

Researcher. Yeah, thank you. Thank you. What about you, Participant B7? What do you think?

Participant B7. Yeah, for me personally, it helped me broaden my mind. Like, I personally didn't know about, like, I hadn't thought about what about the English in China or what about, like, how they speak English in Singapore or in India. So, personally, that's true. And as a teacher, I think it also helps, because now I believe, I know I have the power to bring that, those ideas and that knowledge to the students and, like, help them broaden their minds as well. So, that's good.

Researcher. That's amazing. Good to hear this. So, what about you, Participant A7 and Participant A6?

Participant A7. The thing that I'm so surprised is that the majority of English speakers coming from the non-native speakers. So, that means English, somehow it reflects the culture. So, and, you know, the varieties of English also. So, I think, you know, English should reflect the cultural identities. That's it.

Researcher. Thank you. what about you, Participant A6?

Participant A6 (6:15). I believe that this session [project] has genuinely affected like my previous beliefs and everything because we were having a discussion at [Professor's] class as well. During that time I had [before VETSDLT], I was in favor of native speakers that they would know better. But after interacting with different people here [during VETSDLT], I genuinely believe that there are different kind of English, and everybody has a different pattern to teach English. So it does not

necessarily [mean] that a native speaker would possibly know much more than us, or we would know less than them. So yeah, this has kind of affected my belief in this way.

Researcher. Good. Thank you, guys. The next question is how the project affected your beliefs about varieties of English specifically. In the cartoon the lady says “So I’m like, doesn’t anyone speak proper English anymore?”, and it has a lot to do with the idea of standard English, as we discussed in the in the project. So, what are our thoughts about the varieties of English after the project? Had you ever heard this, or only during the project?

Participant B7. Yeah, like, I’ve never heard like in the pictures anyone saying like proper English, because we would have to discuss what is proper English. And yeah, I guess like following the grammatical rules in appropriate vocabulary, but again like standard. So yeah, the varieties of English [...] I always had in mind, like, the Australian variety, the US variety right [...] but not like anything farther than that. So, that’s what the course [VETSDELT] helped me to know.

Researcher. Thank you.

Participant C3. Well, actually, I knew about this, the rightness of English before. I thought I should follow standard pronunciation [...] I should follow British pronunciation. I should follow American pronunciation. Now I think we should embrace our own pronunciation [...] I should not follow a particular pronunciation, so as long as we pronounce phonemes well, so that is what we should do.

Participant A12. Yeah, if I talk about myself to be honest, I wasn’t aware of these things like global English, World English, ELF, you know, English as medium of instruction, all these things [...] I just came to know through this course. I came to know about particularly when I attended these sessions about English varieties, different varieties. So, thank you so much.

Researcher. Thank you.

Participant A6. I too knew that there are varieties of English, but I still always had a question, why do we have varieties of English initially, because languages like English as a language is source of, you know, communication between people. So, in this sense, I’m not sure about this like how it has affected my belief in a way.

Researcher. As I said, no right or wrong answers.

(a participant joins the focus group)

Participant B8. Yes, in my case.

Researcher. Sorry, I didn’t see you. How are you? Good to see you.

Participant B8. I’ve never heard about the global English and the standard English. I’ve always thought that it’s better to teach the standard English, because it’s the way that you will understand better the English, but if you [...] no one talks the standard English, so it’s better to focus on the global English, because it analyses [emphasizes] more the communication and it gives more importance to the meaning than to the form.

Researcher. Totally agree with you because in Brazil we also have this belief about English that we should only teach American or British English. I think it’s pretty much the same all around the world, isn’t it?

Participant A6. Yeah, even in India because teachers follow this pattern to only British English rather than the American or other English [variety], you know.

Researcher. What about you, Participant A7? Would you like to say something?

Participant A7. To me the standard English is everywhere in a textbook, in movies, in songs [...] Personally, I have come from the expanding circle, so English is not my second language. But I’m trying to speak British English. Not only me but all of my Vietnamese friends [...] however, I still think

that the varieties of English should be valued because language is the bridge of culture and of every people [...] can communicate with each other.

Researcher. Thank you. Next question is how the project affected your beliefs about the native speaker model and the teaching and learning of English. In the cartoon “speak cat in 4 weeks” the guy says “meow” and the cat replies “Bah! Listen to his accent!”. I think we get a lot of that when we speak English. I think we were too much about our accent because we tend to take off native speakers. So how is it for you? Yes. Would you like to begin, Participant B8?

Participant B8. I don’t know if this is the meaning of the question but is how you can include your L1 when you’re teaching English. You mean that? When you’re teaching English before I thought that it wasn’t good because you have to only speak in English when you’re teaching. Nowadays you can include your L1 to help the meaning of the L2. So just not to confuse them, you can help yourself with the L1 so they will understand better.

Researcher. Thank you.

Participant B7. I understood the question in a different way. But knowing about this, I felt relief. People had the same beliefs regarding native speakers. Because I think when you are studying a language, you have a lot of pressure from teachers to follow the accent, follow the intonation. Even in the speaking, you have marks for that. So you always have a part where you are greatest, where you have the great intonation, whether it’s American or British, but you cannot show that you have an accent. And that was a lot of pressure. It can cause anxiety for many students. It was a big relief to feel that there are more people who think the same way. For me, a language is just communicating, and you can speak it with great proficiency or not. But that depends on you, whether you want to follow the culture or anything like that. But it’s basically for communicating, so as long as you can communicate, there’s nothing else. That’s it.

Researcher. Great. Yes. What about you, Participant A12?

Participant A12. Yeah, I remember when you gave us the article by Holliday to read on native-speakerism. I just came to know about that. Native speakers are considered the ideal ones to teach English. But this native speakerism, this concept has been originated in the West. But even its adoption and its resistance has [...] we can see it’s widespread all over the non-native [countries that English is not a first language] cultures itself. Even though some genuine native speaker teachers will be there who doesn’t just serve as commodities to those people who consider native speakers a model, the best. But it’s not like that [...] non-native speakers only get affected by this term, but native speakers are also being affected by this term. Because we always see native speaker is like [...] they are the superior model, so we just keep ourselves from them, like [...] maybe they know better or something like that. But even though they generally are good teachers, but it is sometimes in the mind of people [a belief]. They are just native speakers. And maybe just because they are native speaker, they get the job. We don’t think that other way, maybe because of the [...] they are good teachers. They know all the methodologies that are adopted in the classroom. So sometimes it’s not only the native non-native speakers who are affected by this term, but it drastically affected native speakers, too. So, it goes both ways. And also, I just realized, like there are so many other, you know, non-native teachers who have contributed to English language. So just because of this model, we can’t ignore their contribution to English language. So, it is about interculture. We have to see that way, too.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A12. What about the rest of you guys? Participant C3, you would like to add something?

Participant C3. Well, I guess it is better to be a non-L2 teacher to teach specifically TESOL, because L2 teacher knows their problems [...] L2 learners’ problems. Not native teacher [...] in my way of thinking, regarding what we discussed. So, yes, if I’m not talking about the teacher of English, to become TESOL teacher, it is better to become a L2 teacher, I guess.

Researcher. Okay. Participant A6?

Participant A6. Yeah, so whenever, you know, people are trying to recruit some person for a job, they would always have a belief that a native speaker would have a good fluency and good command over a language, and they would rather choose a native speaker over a non-native speaker. But I

think it is a misconception, because a non-native speaker can do better, because Marina as well asked me this question in the Viva as well. And she put me into the situation [...] But even answering to that question as well, I think we should always choose qualification over tendency to know how the person speaks, because qualification would matter most when it comes to teaching a student, rather than a person speaking a language in general.

Researcher. Yeah, great. What about you, Participant A7? Would you like to add something?

Participant A7. Yeah, so from my observation, I think that the L1 teacher, you know, they dominate all the English classroom settings. So many students and many parents, they have a preference for the native speaker because they look for the standard English and they consider them as a role model [...] but sometimes, I think it's right to a certain extent. However, you know, this makes some people [...] they don't feel confident when they speak with a non-native speaker, because as I share in my feedback to answer the question [surveys], I don't feel confident when I speak English with a non-native speaker. But I feel more comfortable when I speak English with a native speaker. This is just because the native speaker, I think they don't really, you know, they don't really focus too much on their standard English.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A7. And what about, guys, intercultural awareness? Since we were dealing with different, you know, cultures, background cultures, different languages, so how was it, you know, to communicate in English with different cultures? Was it easy? Did you have any misunderstandings? Who would you like to begin this time?

Participant B7. Me.

Researcher. Okay, Participant B7.

Participant B7. Okay. Yeah, sometimes because of the accents, it may be a little bit more difficult to understand, but because you're not used to the accents [...] and even with native speakers, if they are from London, it's not the same as if they are from Scotland. Of course, you will have a little bit of trouble understanding that the first time. But apart from that, maybe it was the connection as well, sometimes. But it was nice. It was very interesting to hear about their histories, their stories. Because sometimes I was talking in the groups with people from Brazil and they were talking about, like, the American variety because they were closer to the United States, so they would always have that as the model. So, it was interesting to know the difference in the countries, like the models and things like that.

Researcher. Thank you. What about you, Participant A12? I think you mentioned previously about this intercultural awareness. How did it you go for you during the project?

Participant A12. Well, you know, I attended one session with you and Participant A13, and there I heard this quote, "[peripheral] voices must be heard, not to be assumed". So sometimes when we read something in the textbooks, it's not that much [...] we can't understand from the textbook, the culture of different countries. But when we are in virtual exchange, we are meeting the real people from different cultures. We come to know something about them, as you know, it happened in one of [Professor's] class about something about Italy [...] and one of our friends, she told us something about Italy. Maybe she has just gathered it from the Internet sources or something like that. But one moderator was there, she was attending Zoom meetings, so she corrected, like, it's south part of Italy because she was from Italy. So what I see is like we can't get the exact knowledge from the textbook until or unless we just have this real connection with the people from different backgrounds to virtual exchange or some other medium. So then, while talking to people from Spain in our breakout rooms, I come to know that they consider native speakers as role models. They prefer to, you know, hire native speaker teachers to teach English. But in India, it doesn't happen like this way because we can't hire so many native teachers there in India because English is like the other language, you know, official language in India, like Hindi and so on. So, yeah, so there's a different thing that we can come to know through this virtual exchange. So, it has awareness [...] so this thing really we need to teach in the classroom also just about intercultural awareness.

Researcher. Thank you. I think I'm moving more to the next question because the plan was one hour and we have already, you know, 25 minutes. So, I think I'm moving to the next question. I'm randomly

asking the question [anyone could give opinion], okay? The next one: native speakers, teachers are ideal English teachers and play a better role than to L2 speakers to teach English. Do you agree with this? In this cartoon the guy says, "Are the new teacher?", and the lady answers "Yes, I am". I don't know about your context, but it's like this in Brazil. How's in your context? What do you think about this: L1 and L2 English teachers? Participant A7, would you like to contribute this time?

Participant A7. Yeah, this is a quite long, long question. So, as I mentioned before, actually, I think native speaker with standard English, you know, is good for a student, especially when they when they approach to the communicative approach and they as they are exposed to English in the classroom. But somehow, I think, it doesn't mean that all native speaker teachers are ideal for English teacher. I think is, you know, native speaker teachers with experience and qualification can be ideal for non-native speaker [better than] non-native speaker teacher. Yeah, as a model to [...] because the L2 teacher can learn something about the native teachers. That's what I think.

Researcher. Thank you. And you, Participant B8. Do you know think is a difference between L1 and L2 English teacher? What's your opinion?

Participant B8. Well, I personally believe that it is better to have a non-native teacher than a native speaker because we sometimes hire native speakers just because it sounds more [...] it sounds cooler in order to the listening or we think that it would be perfect in the language. But sometimes when we speak our language, we make mistakes, and the teachers that are specialized in English as a foreign language, for example, knows how to teach the subject for the students in order to them to acquire better the English. So if I had to teach Spanish, maybe I wouldn't be able to do it correctly. But since I am an English teacher, I know how to do it because I know where to start and where to finish, and in Spanish no. So I think the big difference is in here because we are giving so much importance to the native people or the standard language. And we really have to focus on the part where the student learns [...] good the language.

Researcher. Thank you, Christina. What about you, Participant A6? Do you think there is a difference between L1 and L2 English teacher?

Participant A6. Yeah, there is a difference. There's no doubt on that but considering that L2 [teacher] cannot teach English is wrong. I think if L2 speaker is teaching English in a particular way, that means the person has a knowledge to deliver the class. And it really is a huge misconception that we consider native teachers as the first person to teach English rather than the non-native one. It should highly based on the qualification rather than the part of the place where the teacher belongs, I think so.

Researcher. Thank you. The next question is pretty much about the same topic. It's about legitimate competence of L2 English teachers. What do you think about this? We have here a story of this lady saying that she felt prejudiced in the job market because she isn't an L1 English teacher. What about this topic, legitimacy as being an L2 English teacher? What is your opinion? Can you start, Participant A12, this time, please?

Participant A12. Yeah, I just would like to narrate the incident from my own life during the lockdown. You know, I applied on an online website. I would not like to mention the name of the website. And there, you know, because I'm an English teacher and I was back there in India [...] was Maths teacher too. So, they told me that they would prefer native speaker to teach English, but we can hire you to teach Maths. So yeah, I can feel because it was an international, you know, app too, you know, which allows us to give tuition to the people all over the world. So, it was like, you know, you can teach in Canada, Australia, or different part of the world where English has been spoken. So, I personally feel that because they say, okay, because we consider native speakers to teach English. So yeah, I can feel like, yeah, maybe in some part, we feel prejudice and all because we are not native speakers of English. But people are being aware because [...] awareness is necessary. We need to aware people because non-native speakers are outnumbered. So, because every time you can't just hire that, I have told you already native speaker to teach English. So, we need to be flexible in hiring. And yeah, so I have also gone through the same experience.

Participant A6. Yeah, adding to that, Participant A12 and I have faced the same, you know, incident while, while pursuing a teaching job online. But I think things are changing now as well. Because

when I came here, I applied for teaching job, I've got some good, you know, good amount of what can we say [...] consideration from schools here in [university] that they would not [...] they would choose our qualifications rather than the native speaker. But yeah, Participant A12, you're right, because I've experienced this, like people believe, not here [Coventry], but people usually believe that a native speaker would be the perfect person to teach a particular language.

Participant A12. Even when I came here in Coventry, I was like, you know, a little bit scared to apply for teacher's job. But I got cleared, you know, the interview and all [...] they hired me for teaching job. And I was surprised because I wasn't hired as an online tutor globally, but in the UK, I was hired as a teacher. So yeah, it was quite an amazing experience.

Researcher. Yeah, good news at last (laughs). What about the rest of you? Have you ever faced any discrimination? Yes, Participant C3.

Participant C3. Yeah, I would like to add something into what Participant A12 said. Because I think people have mistaken fluency and pace. So, some, they don't know exactly what is fluency, what is the process, okay? [...] language, register, style, grammar, syntax, everything [...] and your voice articulation, everything. But many people have mistaken pace and the speed as the fluency. And some studies have proven that non-native speakers and teachers are better than native teachers. Some studies [have] proven [...] and according to figures in 2021, there are 398 million native speakers speak in English, while there are about 790 non-native speakers speak English. So it is a global language. So as I said, because native speakers, they think they know English. And when non-native speakers, they are looking at the language from inside and out [...] they have the better view. So they learn from in and out, from sketch. That is my opinion.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant C3. What about you, Participant B7 and Participant B8 in Spain? So have you ever suffered any kind of discrimination in the market job? Or have you ever heard of any colleagues that suffered prejudice because they were English teacher?

Participant B7. Me personally, I was working in an academy [language school]. I couldn't give private lessons because I wasn't native. And so they hired me for like being a receptionist. And in case, someone couldn't go to class or had to miss some class, then I could give the class. And while I was there for a little bit and the native teachers [...] I became friends with some of them. And they hadn't taught ever. They just came from London, Ireland, and they came here like [...] holiday or they were studying here. So they got like an extra job, but they didn't have any teaching experience. And for me, it was very frustrating because I wanted to teach, but they couldn't. They couldn't let me teach.

Researcher. That's really bad. What about you, Participant B8?

Participant B8. I've never been discriminated, but it's true that they give me the lowest levels to teach. I was in an academy [language school] and the native speakers get the highest. For example, I am teaching A2 and they are teaching B1, B2, C1. So I could not teach C2, but I can teach a B1 or a B2. So that's the thing. They prefer native teachers to do the levels.

Researcher. Yeah, I don't know in Spain, Sri Lanka, India, but in Brazil we have some bilingual schools and usually they hire native speakers to come to Brazil to teach English. And usually they get more, you know, higher salaries than Brazilian teachers [...] when the Brazilian teachers are hired. So it's a big discrimination. Yes, in Brazil we get that too. What about you, Participant A7? Have you ever felt discriminated as an L2 English teacher? Have you ever worked as an English teacher?

Participant A7. Yeah, so as I mentioned before, I just agree that L2 teachers can learn something from L1 teacher regarding their culture and their essence. But I think L2 teachers should receive an equal academic position if they are qualified and competent with proper qualification and experience. Because as [Madeline?] shared [...] she said that some native speakers without any qualification, they can jump into the career and get the job. So I think it's not fair. Yeah, and apart from that, I don't know in other places, but in my place [Vietnam], native speakers, even when they have a teaching qualification or not, they still receive a higher salary compared to the locals. Yeah.

Researcher. Yeah, as I said, the same in Brazil, unfortunately. How did you feel about communicating in English using digital technology? Have you ever experienced anxiety? You know,

speaking English and using technology during the project. It was okay? How was the experience? Participant B7, please.

Participant B7. It was fine. Perhaps some problems with the connection and sometimes the noise. For example, I had my dog barking once and I couldn't understand anything for a little bit. So those are problems that you have at home. But for everything, yeah, it was fine.

Researcher. Oh, great. What about you, Participant B8?

Participant B8. I think it's good. But I prefer when people are older, because with [...] for example, children, they get to be distracted, and they can't focus. But communicating with older people is like if I have you in real life in front of me. For me, it's the same. So it's really good. It's familiar, I mean.

Researcher. Okay. Thank you. Participant A12?

Participant A12. As Participant B8 said, I'm also familiar with using online technology because I was a teacher there in India. So Zoom meetings [...] I prefer this online teaching. Well, because we can, you know, show [...] in India, we don't have those smart boards in every class. Sometimes they don't work. But when we are giving online teaching, so, you know, we can share the video, we can share so many material online. So, you know, it interests the students and it catches their attention. Yeah, sometimes people don't give attention to, yeah, that is the thing, because in a class of 40 students, we can't have access to each and every person. We can't make them turn on the videos. So there are many flaws also. But in this, I really appreciate the role of mediators, especially in the breakout rooms, because sometimes when we were not able to open up our ideas and all these things, so mediators were keep pushing us and giving us some hints how you can just say something, you know. So, it was good.

Researcher. Thank you. Nice. And you, Participant A6, how was your experience of communicating in English using technology during the project?

Participant A6. Yeah, it was really good. I really liked the experience because you cannot meet everyone in person, but you can exchange cultures using technologies, digital technologies, you know. Even before back in India, we used to have this session with Japanese students as well, where we used to connect with them and try to know their culture and their methods of studying English or other languages as well. So, I think this technology is kind of aiding our knowledge because we don't have to meet everybody in person. We can just exchange our cultures digitally and try to know about them in a more simpler way.

Researcher. Thank you. And did you see any difference between this online and face-to-face communication using English for yours? Pretty much the same thing? Any difference? Participant A7, please. Do you see any difference between face-to-face communication compared to online? Is it the same?

Participant A7. I think I didn't encounter too many problems with the, you know, with the online or the face-to-face settings. I think it's the same. But to me, the online learning settings is much more convenient. It's more flexible. But I think the matter is about the internet connection and the learner's, you know, the learner's autonomy. Yeah. So, to me, actually, I didn't encounter too many problems. But another [...] but I think another problem is about how to [...] you know, how to manage everything [...] how to hold or participate in activities. Yeah, that's it.

Researcher. Good. What about you, Participant B7? So, did you think that there is a difference, big difference, between this online communication using English compared to, you know, face-to-face?

Participant B7. It's pretty much the same. Yeah, I was going to say the same thing. For me, they were the same. And perhaps maybe when we were together, like, well [...] it's more comfortable to be at home, of course. But if we get to meet, it will be more comfortable to just have one Padlet and then write everything there. So, I think if we are together, it's more, you can actually talk more or be like more together with the rest of the people. But it was fine. Yeah [...] no difference

Researcher. Okay. Do you think that your participation in the project will affect your teaching, practicing now or maybe in the future? If so, how? Participant B8?

Participant B8. Yes, because we got a lot of new knowledge that we can put into practice in our teaching. For example, we [...] for me, now I am not really focused on the standard language since I know it's okay that my accent from Spain or I can use my materials from Brazil, wherever. So, yeah, that changed my mind.

Researcher. Good. What about you, Participant A12?

Participant A12. Yeah, well, I got an idea because my friends are from different backgrounds in my class. So maybe in future when I go back to India, I can also, you know, organize a virtual exchange or something like that for my students. So, yeah, it is really good and interactive session. So we can, you know, we can have intercultural dialogue with our friends. So it's good. So I would really like to adopt it [VE/COIL] in my further teaching.

Researcher. Yeah, great. And you, Participant B7?

Participant B7. Yeah, for me it has changed. I'm also studying Portuguese in the Portuguese book [...] We have a lot of information now about the Brazilian [...] part of the Portuguese. We also study like some, like how is it in Africa, a lot of culture and things like that. So it was very interesting having like this mindset now. And I think that's a good idea to implement in the English class, like see how it's in every part of the world, how they speak English, why [...] And so like a little bit of culture gathering.

Researcher. Oh, great. And you, Participant C3?

Participant C3. Yes, actually. Yes, we conduct it in a very interactive way, especially the Padlet. It is a good tool to communicate at the same time. And then mixing [different groups] for different countries, it is a good opportunity to get to know other cultures as well. So I guess, yes, it will definitely affect my teaching.

Researcher. Thank you. You, Participant A6? Do you think your participation will affect your teaching practice? No?

Participant A6. Of course it will. It has affected my own teaching practice in a way, like while talking about the virtual exchange, even like Participant A12 said, we can, whenever in future I try to teach English or I try to teach any subject, I will let my student also be part of virtual exchange to let them know that there is a differentiation between the languages. But that does not mean that we are wrong or we are learning something wrong. To build a bridge, I would surely use this as a source of knowledge for my children.

Researcher. Very good. And you, Participant A7?

Participant A7. Yes, it affects significantly to my teaching practice. I think after this, after the webinar [VETSDELTA], I can, you know, I come to a realization and it's really broadened my mind. And yeah, I think I will [...] I have to read more and try to learn, you know, learn more teaching methods so that I can practice in the real classroom settings.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A7. As final feedback, I would like, you know [...] it's open for you to talk about the topics that we covered, varieties of English, beliefs [...] I would like to know your opinion about Aula and the other resources that I used during the project, you know, Form, breakout room [...] your feedback in general on the project, please.

Participant B8. I really enjoyed the whole project. I think it's really interesting, really well organized [...] since, first it begins with the varieties of English, so you get in touch with the context. Then the beliefs and then how to teach it. I couldn't be able to be at the last session, I think, because I had some problems with my computer, but I'm sure it was good to do. And for me, it was really well organized. And the most important thing is that you get in touch with the concepts and the contents. I mean, you understand the thing that you are talking, and I like that you have to read an article before the session and then you discuss the article. And also, it is really good that you introduce, you always introduce a little bit the thing [intro and presentation of topic] before the groups [breakout rooms]. So, you remember what you have read in the article, and you are able to discuss better. And for me, that's pretty much everything. Well organized, really good. Maybe for the next project, I will have like a

minimum of participation in the small groups, talking with the mediators and say, “okay, this person has to participate minimum twice or three times to get a qualification or something” because in some rooms, there were people that never spoke. So, just to facilitate the interaction and that’s everything.

Researcher. Yes, I really appreciate it, Participant B8. And I totally understand your idea, but sometimes we can’t push people. We suggest them to talk, to participate, but if the person doesn’t want to, you know, we can’t push too hard.

Participant B8. I understand that.

Researcher. Thank you for your feedback. Really appreciate it. What about you, Participant A12?

Participant A12. As Participant B8 said, it was well organized and especially the articles that you gave us beforehand to read. So, it, you know [...] it gives us the idea of what we are going to have in the upcoming session. So, I always read the article and make some notes and it was not only helpful for the, you know, virtual exchange, but it was helpful for my Viva also, because we are having the same course, theories and methods. So, it was good. And especially the Padlet where, you know, you have assigned one scribe and one mediator, one spokesperson. Yeah, I agree. There were some people who doesn’t want to speak and we can’t push them to speak. But anyhow, it was good session because maybe it’s the first time they are feeling shy not to open up. But when you are assigning them in the small groups in breakout rooms, it gives us the confidence to speak. And thank you so much because when we are...

Researcher. That’s the idea, Participant A12. Because people sometimes they are, you know, afraid or shy to talk about in front of a lot of people. So, when you go to a small group, sometimes people feel encouraged to give their opinion.

Participant A12. Yeah. And some of them will just keep doing the correcting their hairstyle and saying, “oh, am I looking good enough?” [laughs] So, sometimes people are conscious about how they look and how they are going to speak. So, maybe because of that. But overall, it was very good session and interactive session. And we really come to know about different people. And these tools that you have used, they are quite wonderful: Pablet, Zoom, breakout rooms, and the Microsoft Forms. I remember I wasn’t able to give the feedback for one of that. I don’t know. I’m facing some error. Each time it is, you know, it’s just reconnecting the last one. I don’t know. I’ll try to do the post-survey session again today, the post-survey form. I’ll try. But I couldn’t do that yesterday. I was trying. Anyhow, maybe some glitch. Thank you.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A12. And you, Participant B7. Your final feedback on the project. You know, please just be honest. You don’t have to talk about nice things. You can give suggestions. It’s okay.

Participant B7. For me, it was my first project. So, I don’t know what is like a typical thing to do. But I really liked the short presentation [intro and presentation of topic] before the questions because that way you could remember what you have read and everything. It was also good to have some papers to read beforehand because you already had like some ideas that you could later discuss. And the only thing I would do [...] because the first day I was very, very lost and I didn’t know where I had to write everything. I took like words and then I had to copy it. So, I was very lost. So, maybe explain or put the link beforehand of the Padlet so everybody knows. But yeah, that was it. Like the first day I was very, very lost about what did I have to do. But that’s it. Like overall, it was very good. And also about the participation. Maybe like change the rooms. So, we are not like in every session talking with the same people. We can meet other people from other countries. Because for example, in my room, we were basically Spanish. And then they weren’t very participative. So, yeah, it was a little bit difficult in that sense. But overall, very good.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant B7. Great feedback. Thank you. Participant A7, please, your feedback.

Participant A7. Actually, to be honest, it’s really, really amazing to me. And I feel so lucky when I can join this during the course. To me, I think one of the most enjoyable aspects is the article that you gave me before the meeting. Because I think I learned a great deal from them. And it’s really

enlightening and interesting. I have never experienced this knowledge before. But now I think, you know, it has changed my mind, especially, you know, the beliefs, the attitudes, and some concepts about the varieties of English. It makes me feel more confident, make more confident when I study English, study my master's degree, and my future job, when I work as a teacher. I know that, yeah, I deserve to be, you know, I deserve to be an English teacher, even when I am not a native speaker. Thank you so much.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A7. Thank you. And you, Participant A6?

Participant A6. Yeah, like Participant A7 said, this session [VETSDELT] has really, you know, built our confidence, knowing that even being a non-native speaker, we can be a good English teacher. The sessions were really good. I really appreciate the topics which you have chosen, because everything was related to what we were studying. And it was kind of getting easier for us to, you know, build our knowledge regarding the same, whatever we are studying. So, I really appreciate your effort, and whatever you provided has really aid a lot in our studies, and it will help us in future as well. So, thank you.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant A6. And last but not least, Participant C3 [laughs].

Participant C3. Well, actually, this was my first experience that was with this, in this kind of scenario, with different countries and with different people. I see very nice people. So, on the one hand, I feel very happy to be able to interact with you guys. And on the other hand, I feel very sorry because I could not participate in all the days for events, because those were during my working hours. And so, one day, there was a technical issue. So, to talk about how you handle the programmes, or the fact that you're using breakout rooms and those are very useful. So, if I get the chance next time, so definitely I would sacrifice everything and definitely I do my best to join. I wish you good luck.

Researcher. Thank you. So, I'll stop recording now.

Appendix I. Transcription of Focus Group 3 (Cycle 2, Stage 3b) – 12 April 2023

77 minutes

Researcher. Yeah, I think it's recording now, right? Yeah. Okay guys, so thank you so much for participating in the focus group. I know that you already worked a lot during the project, so thank you so much for your availability and your participation during the whole project. The aim of this focus group, as I said, is to talk about your experience during the project. I have some guide questions, and there is no wrong or right answer. I just would like to hear your opinion about the project and, of course, your experience, okay? The first question: I'd like to know if the project affected your beliefs about English and ELT in general. Were you affected in some way by the project by the topics that we covered, or not? Of course, you have to be honest and feel free to speak the truth, okay? No right or wrong answers. Who would like to go first?

Participant E5. I would like to go first.

Researcher. Okay, Participant E5, here you go.

Participant E5. All right, I'm so excited about this topic, not just because of today, but because, like, in a few days we're going to have like a viva, and this is one of the questions that will be asked. Actually, I would say that VETLSDELTA has affected my previous beliefs about English generally. I'm from a second language speaking country that is Nigeria and we [...] the language of instruction in schools is basically English language and we were brought up even from childhood to believe that there is a certain way to speak, there's a certain way to put words together and we were also brought up to believe that the best way to go about it was to follow the standard of the native speaker, which what they showed us was like the British speaker. So, in a way, this course has opened my eyes to see the realities of it, that it's not basically about like how you speak or how like you put words together. The most important thing is that you should be comprehensible, people listening to you should be able to get the meaning of what you are trying to put forward and not for you to follow a particular standard. And also, in terms of teaching as well, the experience has opened my eyes to like being in the shoes of my learners, you know, prior to this time when you give them tasks and you see that some of them are shying away from it, you don't really know like what they are going through. I mean some of our groups we've had, like in the groups that I've been into [...] I've seen situations where some people like want to express [...] they are eager to express their opinions, some people just want to remain quiet. I mean that's what happens like in a typical classroom setting where you have some learners that are willing to participate in the class and some learners not willing to participate. So that has like opened my eyes to seeing like new perspectives as to how teaching of English language can be. And also, in terms of use and ownership, you know, I just felt like [...] oh, English, you know [...] like we jokingly say English is not my language, you know. I've realized now that it's not [...] I too own the language and so I have like the authority to use it. The most important thing that should be at the back of my mind is while I speak "Do people understand me?". What they think, like, can they really get the meaning of what I'm trying to put forward. So, this experience has, for me, I would say it has really been mind-blowing and I also like had like the opportunity of speaking to speakers from other places as well, listening to different accents. Sometimes maybe I have to listen well to be able to get what some people say but now it's not as like it was in the first experience I had. You know, after like two or three contacts now, I would say I've gotten better being that I've been exposed to other like [...] accents as well.

Researcher. That's great. So, who else would like to share your experience?

Participant F6. Can I go?

Researcher. Yeah, please.

Participant F6. First of all, I totally agree with Participant E5. I think she made some great points. So, I'm not going to talk about the same things but other than that, also this project reassured me that the problems that we face to face in our country, where English is the second language, more like a foreign language, the problem we face is not only limited to our country, it's limited, it's from everywhere, every world around the world. It's not us that, you know, has a problem with the accent, speaking perfectly and blah, blah, blah, blah. It reassured that this is normal and everybody's facing it.

It also taught me that not speaking in the, let's say, British or American English way is true and the others are wrong. No, that's not true. It taught me that in English can come in every, let's say, variety. **Researcher.** Great. Nice. So who else would like, you know, to talk about experience [...] if the project affects your beliefs or not?

Participant F7. I can go.

Researcher. Okay. Yeah, here you go.

Participant F7. First of all, I definitely agree with Participant F6 and Participant E5 as well but other than that, I would like to add something. Firstly, I had the same belief in the people, with the people in this project. Like, a great accent doesn't mean that you need to have British or American accent and something like that. And I definitely agree with the other issues and it's changed my beliefs than before, actually. That's it.

Researcher. Okay, thank you. Someone else? Participant F16?

Participant F16. Yeah. Yeah, I was gonna [...] Well, to be honest, Participant F7, Participant F6 and Participant E5 already said everything that I had in my mind. But to me, the most important thing that this project affected was realizing that in my country I wasn't alone. Because whenever we had the meetings, people from China, people from Brazil, people from other countries, they all shared the same problems that we had in our country. So, that made me open my eyes about the problems that are global. These problems are global rather than just in our country.

Researcher. Okay. Participant I8, would you like to share something?

Participant I8. Yes, good evening. Well, first I want to share something with you about one of our members here. She couldn't enter, Participant G4, she couldn't enter the meeting room and I shared the link with her. But now it seems that there are two Participant I8's in the meeting.

Researcher. Oh, no problem. Yeah, I can see it. No problem.

Participant I8. Yes. Okay, so back to the question. First of all, it was really nice to hear different opinions, different angles regarding learning and teaching English. And one thing which inspired me was about some teaching methods and ideas, how to encourage students to listen and accept different varieties of English and to be more open to listen to other listeners and not to hold those stereotypes in terms of native speakers. So, I think this was really an eye-opener for me.

Researcher. Oh, that's really good. Great. So, the second question. What about your beliefs about global English or world English? Have you ever heard before the project about these concepts, or it was the first time? So, how was your experience about the exposure to global Englishes? It's really impressive because we were exposed to a lot of different English during the project. How was your experience?

Participant F6. Can I speak?

Researcher. Yes.

Participant F6. Before this programme [VETSDELT], of course, I've heard of accents and different Englishes. I've heard of this. But once we entered this programme and we started to get really in there, get into the detail, I realized that English is not only one thing. It's expandable and it's absorbable. For example, if you take English and take it to the other side of the world, it will absorb. It will absorb their culture, their daily life, and anything you can think of. It's absorbing. There is no one English. English expands and absorbs everywhere it goes.

Researcher. Good, good. So, Participant G3, would you like to say something? I know she's here [...] Yeah. Participant E1, would you like to share something?

Participant E1. Yes, I think what I felt that [...] I mean, all the L2 learners from different sides of the world [...] I mean, they have the same problem and same opinions about global Englishes. So, it's not

just only one country or only one person feeling in a particular way. So, it's the same with everyone. So, I could relate to other people from other countries and that taught me a lot.

Researcher. That's good. Participant E4?

Participant E4. For me, I find it very interesting that there are a lot of varieties of English that I can learn from since I joined here. So, it's interesting to add more knowledge about their language as well. So, one day I could use that to teach my students as well.

Researcher. Great. And did you have any difficulty in understanding your peers during the project regarding their English? Was it okay?

Participant E4. Yeah, their English was okay. I mean, it's still English. I still understand them.

Researcher. Yeah, that's good. Would you like to share something?

Participant F16. Yeah, well, to both my answer to the second question is exactly the same one as the first one. So, but I want to share something about the last thing you asked. To be honest, I didn't have any problem understanding others because of their Englishes because in current times, we have been exposed to other Englishes already. So, it wasn't a problem. But the main problem was internet connection all around because some people had difficulty in internet. Their voices were a bit [...]

Researcher. That's the problem with virtual exchange, the connection.

Participant F16. Exactly. That was my only problem. It wasn't an English problem.

Researcher. Yeah, yeah. Thank you. Someone else would like to share something about, you know, global Englishes. Is it difficult or not to understand the peers?

Participant F7. I can add something.

Researcher. Go ahead, please.

Participant F7. Okay. Actually, it's a short saying. I think global English is... How can I say? There are some things about that, local English versus global English. First of all, I was thinking like that my accent is worse. And for example, other people around the world, Indian, Scottish, English accent, they are better. The very best accents must be English, American accent and something like that. But when I attend this programme, attend this project, I really changed my mind. There are no wrong English accent or no English culture or something like that. As Participant F6 said, English is absorbable. Really, I agree with that idea. So, I think we should consider about all varieties of English. We shouldn't think that there is only one English because there are lots of it. That's my idea.

Researcher. Oh, great. Thank you. Participant I8?

Participant I8. Yes. Well, it made me realize that since English is a global language and we are all global citizens, it's quite natural for all of us to bring our own contribution in terms of what we might bring our culture and some social cultural experiences from our native culture. Native country will be also blended into English. And I guess this is something normal. We don't need to be ashamed or we don't need to consider ourselves that we are inferior to the native speakers. Because indeed, this is the beauty of the language, the fact that we can all contribute to it and improve it.

Researcher. Oh, great. Yeah. Totally agree. So, the next question. How the project affected our beliefs about the native speakers? It's a topic that we talked a lot. How do you feel about the native speaker and the non-native speaker of English teachers? How do you feel about this? Participant E5, would you like to go first now?

Participant E5. Yeah, let me go. I was just thinking about it, like, recently. You know, there's this thing, just like I mentioned earlier, about like the native speaker being a model for all of us. But I've just realized, especially like through this project, that I too am a model. It doesn't like really matter if I'm a native speaker or not. The most important thing is that I'm able to pass across what I need to

pass across if it's to people that I'm interacting with, if it's my colleagues, if it's my learners, I'm able to be a model for them. So, I feel like the project has opened my eyes to seeing that even the native speakers too, they are already, let me use the word, they have their own challenges as well. And so, they are not perfect, just as I am not perfect as well. So, I feel like in teaching English language as well, that can be something that can be shared in every classroom to know that the learners are expected to just like feel free to know that we are all in this together. I mean, there's no one model that we're looking up to. What we are looking up to is ourselves and how to get better and how to communicate out there and put what we need to put across to people that are listening to us because the end goal is for us to produce like communication. We should be able to communicate and receive feedbacks as well. So, that's my opinion.

Researcher. Great, Participant E5. Participant E2, are you there? Would you like to say something?

Participant E2. Hello. Yeah.

Researcher. Would you like to share something?

Participant E2. Uhm [...] actually, yes. [...]

Researcher. Okay. Your connection is breaking up [...] your connection is breaking up. Participant E1, I think you were about to say something, weren't you?

Participant E1. I said that I always believe that native people, I mean, they're not better speakers or better users than us just because they're natives. It doesn't mean that. So, I believe that anyone, if they have good knowledge of the language, they are good users. So, I do not like to discriminate between native speakers and L2 learners [teachers].

Researcher. Good. Would you like to have a go now, Participant E2? Now we can see you.

Participant E2. Yes, I would like to have a go. Okay. For the teaching, I believe it [...] it doesn't [...] it doesn't all say is that native could teach. I think it requires an approach and theories and also some [...] how would you explain it to the students by having [...] that's what I'm trying to say.

Researcher. Okay. So, the next question is about the intercultural awareness and communication. How was speaking [...] communicating with people from different cultures, because we know depending on who we are from, you know, communicating is different. So, how was your experience dealing with people from Spain, Brazil, Turkey, China, so on?

Participant F6. The first time, in the first meeting, it was a little bit hard for me to understand some of the accents because I wasn't used to them. But after a few sessions, I started to understand my friends as well. And then, also I made a friend from this programme. After I entered this programme, I realized that the [...] there is no one culture. I mean, we all [...] we already know it, that there is no one culture. But interacting with those people that have different cultures, both taught me a lot and both improved me a lot.

Researcher. It was interesting to see, you know, in the icebreaker [...] I was reading all the things that you shared about yourselves and about your cultures. It was really interesting to see how complex and different we are, right? It's really amazing. Who else would like to share something about the intercultural awareness? Participant I8, would you like to say something?

Participant I8. Yes, sure. Well, for me, I think it was really interesting to focus on the ideas and on the [...] you know, the new perspectives I could hear from others. I didn't focus that much on the accent or I didn't focus that much whether they are speaking correct English or what kind of accent they are having, because I was truly interested to learn something from my colleagues, to learn, to get other angles and to learn something from them. So, it was like an eye-opener. The fact that most of us shared some same ideas and we see things and problems from the same perspective, it was really interesting.

Researcher. And did you think that you have to adapt, you know, your style of communication to deal with these different peers in some way?

Participant I8. Not really. Maybe when I saw that my peers were not understanding what I was saying, maybe I would slow down a little bit. You know, I had to some extent, I think I had to see their reaction and their feedback so I could adapt my speech. But that wasn't a problem, because I think this is, all the teachers have to do that, right? So, I think we are being preparing to deal with that for our classrooms.

Researcher. Yeah. Participant F7?

Participant F7. I can say something. I definitely agree with my friends. Culture is something absorbable, like English. There is no one culture, as Participant F6 said. We can change our [...] and how can I say? [...] while interacting with other people, other persons, we change our culture. Actually, we can add some items from other cultures to our own culture. So, I think English makes it more easy for me.

Researcher. Okay, thank you. During the project, we talked about native-speakerism, which has the idea that the native speaker are better English teachers than non-native speakers. What do you think of this idea of native-speakerism in general?

Participant F6. Can I go? I have a story about this.

Researcher. Yes.

Participant F6. Back when I was in high school, I had a teacher who was a non-native speaker, English teacher, and she was a great teacher. She was qualified for literally anything, any grammar class, any skills class, speaking, writing, anything, and she was really good at her job as well. But then our school decided to hire a native speaker teacher, which was, I think she was from Russia, but her first language was English, and then she was transferred to our school, and then she decided to give us some classes. We started to take her classes, and our productivity went slowly down and down and down because she was a speaker, but she was not a teacher. So, it's not about you being native, it's about you being the teacher. You might be able to speak English very well, you might be native, like you might be even born into the royals, okay? [...] and speak English flawlessly, but that doesn't mean you can't teach English. So, while hiring us teachers, I think us being not native shouldn't be even considered. The only requirement should be, "Can they teach? Can you teach? Are you qualified?". You should go with this, but in today's world, unfortunately, especially in my country, unfortunately, we look for native teachers. We don't look for their qualification. "Can they teach? Can they manage a classroom?", we don't look for those things. We just say, "oh, she's native, boom, you're hired". And then the student, of course, doesn't learn the English, and their [parents] like "why can't my child learn?". It's because that teacher might be able to speak English flawlessly, but that doesn't mean that teacher can't teach flawlessly. We should totally, I mean, let's say, wreck that belief and construct it in a way better way.

Researcher. Yeah, good point. Participant E4, would you like to add something?

Participant E4. Yeah, I mean, it's good if, let's say, the teacher is a native speaker, it's good, but it doesn't mean when you're a native speaker, and let's say you're a teacher and also a native speaker [...] we know our students more because we know our students, you know, we know them more, you know, the locals more, what they need, what they prefer, we know them. And I think, in my opinion, if let's say, we still think that native speaker is good, how about the native speakers [...] the native English speakers teach us, you know, we learn from them also. So, at least we got something from them, and we can, in the end, use it in our classroom. It's like a working together kind of thing. We learn from them, and then, in the end, we learn, we got something, and then we can teach students.

Researcher. Great. So, we have some people here that haven't said anything. Participant G4, are you here?

Participant G4. Yes, yes.

Researcher. Would you like to say something?

Participant G4. So, I think, I don't agree with the former speakers, because native speakers speak good English. That means they can become good teachers, because a good teacher needs more

qualifications, because they need not only English language knowledge, also need pedagogical knowledge, and moreover, they need good character, a decent character, so as to they can teach students to be a good person. So, I don't say native speaker is better than non-native speakers.

Researcher. Thank you. The next question is about this idea of lack of competence, you know, regarding non-native English teachers. What do you think about this? Do you think that we, as non-native speakers, lack competence to teach the language?

Participant E5. I'd like to go first. I mean, the question is, who is the non-native speaker that we are talking about? Yes, it is true in some way that there are some non-natives speakers that lack the competence, that's true. But because one person lacks the competence does not mean that we have to generalize it and say that all non-native speakers lack legitimate competence. I mean, there are several examples of how, like, somebody that has been put in the shoes of being a native speaker cannot even perform it. I'll give you a typical example. When I was in the university, like my undergraduate days, we had this classmate of ours who was topping the class. I mean, his grades were just up there. But guess what? We were studying linguistics. He couldn't even speak English. Neither could he even, like, teach what he knew. So, the truth is that you can be a native speaker and not be able to pass across what you have, and you can be a non-native speaker as well and not be able to pass across the information. So, like a speaker said earlier on [...] yes, there are some non-natives speakers that lack legitimate competence, but that does not mean that every other person lacks legitimate competence. The most important thing is, if this is a teacher that comes into the room, let's be able to test, let's ask ourselves the questions of, "Is this person competent or not?", "Can this person get the job done? and "What has this person got to offer?". So, those are the kind of things I would like to hear, rather than just, like, "Oh, she's a native speaker". I mean, my dad once got a job without even having to go through and interview because they felt he's good or he's lived in Britain, and then that's it. I mean, he found it ridiculous. I too also find it ridiculous. So, because somebody, like, is okay from England or from America, you give him the job without even testing to see whether the person is good. And then there's somebody out there that's competent enough, but just simply because the person is a non-native speaker. You just sum it up to say [...] this person lacks legitimate competence. I mean, I just feel like it's a thing that is society-bound [...] something that society has, like put in place. Let me put it that way to just see that this is it. But in reality, it's not actually so [...].

Researcher. Great. So, Participant F16.

Participant F16. Hey, well, I was going to say I disagree with this with [...] a passion because it's so untrue. A native speaker doesn't mean that they are more competent than non-native speakers because it doesn't define your English level. You can be a native speaker, but you can lack competence to teach because you didn't use the language like you didn't have the opportunity to use it in an advanced way. So, you can have you can like competence even if you're a native speaker. I'm a native Turkish speaker and I don't think that I'm competent enough to teach the language. So, in my opinion, the only thing that needs to be considered is the person competent in teaching the language rather than speaking. It's because everyone can have a competent speaking ability in English, but not everyone has the competence to teach.

Researcher. Really good.

Participant I8. May I say something, please?

Researcher. Sure.

Participant I8. I think I agree with this. Native speakers are not necessarily, you know, the jack of all trades. Doesn't mean that they know everything about the language just because they are natives. And in terms of teaching, I think the word teacher equals pedagogical skills. And learning and teaching a language requires a lifelong process because the society is changing, the learners are changing, and the language is also changing, adapting constantly. Therefore, teachers always have to adapt and learn new things. That's why if you [...] if there is a native speaker, but they don't necessarily go into this process of pedagogical learning, they might not necessarily have the skills to be good teachers. While second language or non-native teachers, they might constantly improve their skills and learn and adapt their skills. Therefore, there might be better teachers just because they are trying to improve their skills and keep up with the society and with the teaching profession.

Researcher. Good point. Great. The next question is about the discrimination that non-native English teachers encounter on the job market. Have you ever faced this situation during your life? Or have you ever heard of some colleagues facing discrimination for not being a native English teacher?

Participant F7. To my knowledge, in my country, there are lots of advertisements. Like, there are lots of native teachers, native English teachers in our school. So, “You need to come here and take some lessons from us because we have native speakers. We have native English teachers. That is why you can learn English very fast”. For example, in two months. This is really true.

Researcher. Same in Brazil.

Participant F7. We cannot learn English in two months because English is a big ocean and we are just crossing on the shore. Even native speakers cannot teach. And being a native speaker, as my friend said, doesn’t mean that they can teach easily English because we are maybe [...] How can I say? Non-native speakers. But we are learning right now how to teach, what to teach. They can speak more fluently, more accurately or something like that. But for example, they don’t know how to teach vocabulary. They don’t know how to teach grammar, how to teach for skills like speaking, writing etc. And but all hirers don’t care about them. They all think like if you are a native speaker, as Participant F6 said, you’re hired. That’s it. So there are lots of discrimination, not only about one thing. That’s my idea.

Researcher. OK, Participant E4, now you can go.

Participant E4. In Malaysia, we have two types of schools, actually. One is a government schools and another one is international school. I just say the international schools are a bit better. I have to say, you know. So if you were to work in that kind of school, if let’s say it’s between me, an English teacher, a Malay English teacher and a native speaker who is just because she’s native, I think you will know who will get the job more. Usually teachers like me, they tend to send us to a more, I have to say, a government school or a rural school because they want the best of the best. So, in order to get the best of the best, especially in English, then they will hire mostly native speakers. And it’s not just me, because my friend also had the same problem is between her and there was another native speaker and she didn’t get the job. And she even though her qualification is a bachelor in TESOL, but she didn’t get the job. So, in the end of the day, she had to find another school. So, she managed to get a Chinese school. But bottom line is that if you were to work in that type of school, you know, the international good schools, you might not get the job if you were like me, even though, I mean, even though in my own country, you might not get the job. If let’s say you’re a native speaker with no teaching experience whatsoever or you’re trying to teach, you might get it. So that’s the discrimination that I can think of so far.

Researcher. Thank you. Participant E1, would you like to add something?

Participant E1. Yes, I think it’s the same in my country, because when I was doing my IELTS exam, I mean, they will make sure that your examiner is native speaker. So, I mean, non-native speakers might not be hired there.

Researcher. I’m sorry to hear this. So, someone else, would you like to share something about this, about discrimination? No? Okay. So how did you feel about communicating in English using technology? Did you experience any kind of anxiety during the project?

Participant F6. Can I go?

Researcher. Yeah, please.

Participant F6. I think the Internet is one of the best tools to communicate when it comes to projects like this, because we can’t just fly everybody out and meet somebody, some or some, let’s say, point. Not everybody can come. So, the face-to-face option is out of the table. We are left with Internet. This programme [VETSDELT] [...] this programme being on the Zoom is a lot easier than the normal programmes that were face-to-face. And as for the last part of the question, “Did you experience any anxiety?”, maybe it’s because I have my self-confidence is not that low. So, I’m pretty confident about speaking either in English or Turkish. Plus, the environment was so welcoming that no anxiety. I don’t

know [...] there were no triggers, let's say, because, for example, you, Carlos, Marina, our moderators, everybody was so welcoming that even if you made a mistake, everybody, I mean, it didn't even matter. So, nothing, all the programme, during the programme, it's probably because of the people, because of our friends, moderators and you, Marina, there were no anxiety triggers, at least for me.

Researcher. Okay, that's good. Anybody else?

Participant I8. May I, please?

Researcher. Sure. Yeah.

Participant I8. Yeah, I totally support that. No anxiety at all because everyone was friendly and patient. And we all had our chance to express ourselves and to communicate with others. So, and in terms of technology [...] digital [...] using the digital technologies, I don't think it was a problem because in the past three years, at least in China, we had been doing a lot of online teaching and online learning. So we all somehow got used to that. It was not a problem at all. The project, I really enjoyed the project and I didn't have any negative or anxious experience.

Researcher. Good, good.

Participant E5. Participant I8 said she was patient. I thought I was the patient one [laughs]. That's just a joke. I mean, just like was said, I feel like the past three years, especially starting from the COVID year, has kind of drawn attention to the use of technologies when it comes to different purposes and different uses. So I feel the anxieties all went away then. And for me, it was more like excitement, the excitement of who I will see, who I will meet, like the experience of experiencing other cultures, other people, like: "What they sound like?", "How do they feel?" like [...] "What are their thoughts about the topics ahead?" [...] So I feel the experience was more like initially, or "What am I going to get?" and then it turned into like a joyful experience out of like a whole lot of things that you have to learn. And not only that, I feel like the sessions too were good, especially in terms of how we interacted. So it kind of, if there was anything in the mind of someone to say, "Okay, maybe I was anxious", it kind of had a way of dousing it, just like the first speaker spoke about like how people related and how people like approached us. It made everyone to relax and feel like, "Okay, you can". I mean, the first day I was really quiet, but like when we went into it, I could see that. I mean, you can speak, you have been given the opportunity. Why not use it?

Researcher. Yeah, it's part of the process, right? When you get to know someone for the first time, it takes up a little time until you get comfortable in communicating speaking your mind. Anybody else?

Participant F16. To be honest, I didn't feel any anxiety because this is my comfort zone. This is where I am most of the time. I love spending time online. I play games, I talk with people on an online setting. So, I don't have any anxiety, but I could see that most people had anxiety because like Participant E5 said, at first, a couple of sessions, only a couple of people were speaking, everyone, the rest of them.

Researcher. Inside the breakout rooms? Because I wasn't there [...] me and Marina, so we couldn't see it.

Participant F16. On breakout rooms, people had their cameras not open. They didn't have their microphones open. They didn't even talk at all. But they opened up in time because of the mediators tried to like give them a chance to talk. A chance to talk. I couldn't speak because I just woke up. Well, other than that, the other thing that I already said before, because of its technology [...] because not everyone has the same opportunities about the technology. Some people had some issues with Internet. Some people had some issues with computers, etc. So other than that, it was a really fun experience for me.

Researcher. Oh, that's great. Participant E1, would you like to say something? Did you get any experience, any kind of anxiety? Was it okay for you?

Participant E1. Actually, first time I was also very nervous. I couldn't remember. Then I think it was easier for me. Now I'm quite confident. I mean, I'm not nervous anymore.

Researcher. That's good. Anybody else? Would you like to share something? Participant G4?

Participant G4. So, I think the advancement of digital technology is really helpful to connect people together. So, I really appreciate this chance so that we can exchange ideas with all these people together. So personally, I feel a little bit nervous in the first sections because I don't know how to organize my words, express myself. Because sometimes my mind goes faster than my mouth, you know. So sometimes I may produce some wrong words to express myself. But later, I think it's better for me to speak up because chance is very precious.

Researcher. Totally agree. Thank you. So the next question. What do you think about the experience of interacting in English on the project compared to face-to-face or real communication? Did you see any difference? Participant E4, you're mute. Are you saying something?

Participant E4. I find it interesting, actually. I find it very fun to be interacting with others and listening to others' point of view about certain topics. It kind of opens my mind and I'm more open-minded about different topics that I used to be quite close-minded before. And it's just very interesting to be interacting with everyone online. But it would be nice to be interacting with all of you face-to-face, to get to know all of you, not through a laptop, but, you know, through actually meeting each other. I think we would get along quite well.

Researcher. Yes. The idea of virtual exchange is that [...] not everybody can travel, you know, physically. That's why we came together online to share ideas. That's the idea.

Participant F7. Firstly, before I attended this project, I was like, "Oh, my God, it will be a formal communication environment" because we are going to talk about English, have to teach English and some issues about that. But you really were [...] how can I say? [...] you were really nice to us. And we were like talking to our friends, talking to our friends and family and something like that. I didn't get any bad or negative experience. And it was actually the same for me. And being in a digital programme didn't change anything for me. It was all good.

Researcher. That's great. Nice to hear. And do you think that your participation in the project will affect your teaching, practicing in the future? You know, being exposed to different Englishes and different accents. Do you think this will affect your teaching in the future?

Participant E5. Yes, I would say yes. I mean, I'm looking at it from the perspective of even the arrangements of VELTSDOLT. We had like enough time to interact with people. I think that's one of the things I would say I really, really liked about the sessions. I mean, even though the lecture part of it was important, it also gave us the opportunity to explore what we have gotten in the main lecture. So I feel like going forward, even for my own teaching, that is one of the things I would like to inculcate into teaching. Get the learners to do more of the interaction, to do more of the like. I mean, we do the interaction part even in other online like platforms, too, but not as much as what we did during the VELTSDOLT. So I feel like it will affect my teaching and not in a negative way, but in a positive light.

Researcher. Good. Anybody else?

Participant F6. First of all, when I start teaching in like, I hope so, two years. First, the first thing that I will have as a rule in my classroom will be we will accept anyone, everyone as who they are. It doesn't matter where they're from, which accent they use. It's not going to matter to me, plus to my students as well. And we will be accepting, let's say. And then after everything we've talked about it here, the discriminations and this and that. If I have a chance in the future, I will be fighting against those, let's say, discrimination. Let's say, I have a job interview [...] the other candidate is native, but I'm not. I will do my best to show that not only being a native speaker is being a good teacher. I will show them that I am the good teacher. I am the best. So you don't have to hire the native ones just because they think they teach better. And also, as for my teaching strategies, I will have my, for example, like these virtual exchange programmes. I will make sure to encourage my students to join

them as well in order to learn different cultures, different, different world Englishes. So, they expand their minds and they don't grow up like the discriminative people, you know?

Researcher. Nice. Anybody else?

Participant I8. I'd like to say something. I think that I will encourage my students to, when they interact with other people, to listen to ideas, to listen to viewpoints and knowledge instead of listen to the accent and hold any kind of stereotypes that if someone has a particular accent, that person is not, does not have valid points. And second of all, I think it is very important to include in your teaching, to include different speakers, different materials taken from various corners of the world. So in this way, speakers will be [...] will have this idea to be open to listen to others and not have stereotypes and not criticize either others just by their accent or just by the country they are coming from.

Researcher. Excellent. Very good. Anybody else? Would you like to add something, Participant E2?

Participant E2. So after I have experienced and listened to, like, other points of view from teachers [...] from the teacher from many countries.

Researcher. Okay, thank you. The last question. The Virtual Exchange was organized in four topics: varieties of English, beliefs and attitudes, native-speakerism, and teaching English as a global language. And we also used some online tools like Padlet, Socrative, Zoom. So, I would like your feedback from the whole project. What do you think we should change for future Virtual Exchanges? You know, include or exclude anything?

Participant F6. I think the project was well planned. You guys didn't lack anything. And you guys used Web 2.0 tools like Padlet, Socrative. It was [...] I think it was amazing. Forms, feedback forms, that's the thing that I liked the most, because that means you care about our experiences as well. And plus, let's say, especially for you, Carlos, you were always so responsive and nice to us whenever we texted you or mailed you. I think that's a lot [...] I think that's [...] that's something to say thank you.

Researcher. Thank you.

Participant F6. Other than that, the execution, I don't know the whole planning, but the execution, I think, well, meant well, pretty good. Because even though we had some little [...] little technical problems, like, you know, sharing the screen and these little things [...].

Researcher. Even my computer, because [...] you know, we were carrying out VE in another building [...] the connection wasn't good. So, yeah, I had a lot of problem with connection.

Participant F6. Yes, but those are, those are the things that can happen. You cannot prevent them [...] nothing to be fixed about them. So, overall, I think this was one of the best virtual exchange experiences that I've had. Because, plus, everybody was so friendly, so understanding. And I think about the activities as well. They were always pushing us to think, to create, to do, to take action. They weren't like, read this, read this, come. No, you were like, read this, analyze it, let's solve some questions. I have, you guys always had quizzes. I know it was full. You know what I mean? It was full. And there was no, you know, lacking anything. So, thank you. I think you guys did a great job.

Researcher. Thank you. Thank you for the nice feedback. Anybody else?

Participant E5. Yeah, I would like to speak. I think I also agree that the experience was a wonderful one. I would say from the start to finish, like, the sessions, I enjoyed every bit of it. The breakout rooms were awesome. I like the fact that there was always somebody to, like, mediate the rooms. That was something that was good. I also liked the quizzes that were brought in, because it shows that you don't just, like, listen to the lectures and then forget what you have learned. You are pushed to think, you are pushed to explore. I mean, people like me that like to succeed in things, I was really happy, like, to get through that task. The only thing I would like to add is just [...] if I want to rate this programme, I would say it was a 99%. Now, I feel like the 1% is for the people that had anxieties, which is not, I would not say it's on the part of the planners. I would say it's on the part of not just the planners, but for every one of us. So, there was this wonderful thing that we did when the project was

about to start. We were asked to go on Padlets to put things about ourselves and all that. I feel like going forward, maybe something like that could be reviewed. Like maybe the first session should have like something that has to do with like [...] it might not necessarily be an introduction because some people will not still want to speak, but we could have something like, "Okay, out of all these profiles that have been put together on the Padlet, can you make a friend, like meet a friend, exchange numbers?". And that when the other learners are saying that "I'm not the only one here, like I'm not the only one that is a non-native speaker". I feel like people got anxieties because they just felt every other person is a native speaker and every other person is good at speaking. So if we could inculcate something like that to get everybody to warm up, to get everyone to experience somebody, it might not be every one of us, but at least somebody that is different [...] It could be even you just like you put us into the breakout rooms, it could be possible to put people into breakout rooms and then all they need to do like maybe for one or two minutes is to interact with each other, get to know each other and then we could do a task that says, "Okay, what can you say about this person that helps other learners to do away with their anxieties and is like a warm up to get into it?". Because I feel so bad for an experience as rich as this, somebody will miss it because he has anxieties or something. So that's my thoughts.

Researcher. Great point, Participant E5. Thank you for your feedback.

Participant F7. Actually, Participant E5 didn't leave any subject and more subject to talk about, but I can add something. Actually, it was a great, perfect experience to take a part of this project. It changed my perspective, my point of view and improved it a lot. That's what I'm trying to say.

Researcher. Thank you. Participant I8, would you like to share your experience? Do you have any suggestions? Would do something different?

Participant I8. Yes. Well, I agree with what the other speakers just mentioned now. I think what I like the most is that the balance between the lecture and also the interactive part. Also, I like that we had some in each session, we had some quizzes, we got to use some different kinds of tools. Also, I like that when we had to go into the breakout rooms, sometimes we were mixed together with other participants, so maybe every week we got to meet new people. This was a good thing because you could listen to more speakers and more ideas, but at the same time, maybe I could notice that some participants might have felt intimidated because it's not easy to interact with someone new and to change. You got used to someone and the next week you need to interact with other participants. For me, it wasn't a problem, I really enjoyed that, but I could notice that some of the participants felt intimidated and maybe anxious to speak. So maybe that would be my suggestion to find ways. Maybe as Participant E5 said, it would be better to have the opportunity to make friends or to interact more with others. Maybe in this way, people won't feel so anxious and intimidated to speak.

Researcher. Yeah, actually, we got this feedback from the last cycle of the project because we had fixed groups and most of the participants said it would be best to mix the participants every session [...] have different groups work together and make friends, to hear different opinions [...] that's why we tried a different approach this time around.

Participant I8. Yes, I really like that, and I noticed that we were mixed very carefully with people from different places. It was really nice. We appreciate that and I think it required a lot of planning and a lot of hard work, so we thank you for that.

Researcher. Thank you. Who else would you like to say something?

Participant F16. Yeah, well, I agree with everyone, so everyone said all the things that I was going to say already, so I don't have much to add. But like Participant I8 said also, I really enjoyed having different people on each week. It was really fun to interact with different people all around the world. It was really a nice experience for me. I really enjoyed it truly.

Researcher. Participant E2, would you like to give us your feedback?

Participant E2. I would like to give a feedback. I really love the breakup room, how we assigned the participants or who's going to be the speakers, who's going to be the one who takes notes on the when the participants sharing an idea and who's going to be the one who's like posted on the Padlets.

So, I really love how we assign things and then we communicate through the breakout room. I really love that part. And also what I love the most is this that you have the post activities to summarize the ideas, like [...] if we actually understand the whole main core of the session or not.

Researcher. Thank you. Participant E4, would you like to say something?

Participant E4. I was just going to ask something.

Researcher. Okay, yeah, sure.

Participant E4. Is there any possibility that this exchange programme can be in face-to-face? Maybe in the future.

Researcher. Well, another approach to virtual exchange is work online first and then try to meet in person. I think, next week, some of the Spanish students that participated in the last cycle will come over to [university] to meet us, to visit the university. So that's one idea. But since we're dealing with people from different parts of the world [...] this time around China, Brazil, so on [...] sometimes it's impossible to meet in person. But yeah, that would be a possibility, of course.

Participant G3. I would say something. And personally, I think this project is very rewarding, and, even though, I have very little kids around me and I'm trying to make it every time, because I found I learned a lot from this project and personally, they changed a lot of my beliefs about the teaching, English language, since I've been teaching for many years, more than 15 years. And so, because I missed so many chances to talk about the questions, I would have put anything I want to say. So, and so for the beliefs part, I think, you know, it changed my beliefs about the world English. And I used to, I mean, when I was a student, I used to think about English as only one English, standard English, British English, American English. And we prefer to go to the native speaker teacher's class. And we were so excited like 20 years ago to go to the native speaker's class. But now I find it's changing because, you know, in our country, especially in big cities [...] they have so many good resources to learn standard English. So they have very beautiful accent, pronunciation is good, and they met so many people from different countries. So they were excited to, you know, to follow the first language of the native speakers. But, you know, still in small cities, like in remote cities and the countryside, maybe they were still excited about the native speakers. And for me, it's changed some beliefs about teaching in the near future. I guess it will change a lot of my teaching ways, like I'm going to, you know, to encourage my students to be more confident to accept our Chinese English. So, they the first accept our own variety of English, right? And that's more important. And secondly, I will encourage them to speak to English speakers from different countries, like all of us from Russia, Turkey, and any places you know, so they will have more benefits from knowing different culture, knowing more, you know, varieties of English. And thirdly, I would like to add more resources about varieties of English, like, you know, even like the research articles about the variety of English. And also, maybe some videos about, you know, where people from different countries rather than only standard English. That's what I benefit from this project. And by the way, I want to say thank you to Carlos, too. You are so responsive every time. Thank you so much.

Researcher. Thank you. Participant E1, please.

Participant E1. You know, when I came to the UK, I was very scared. I was scared that I will meet new people and they will not like me. So it was very, I mean, scary for me at first to meet like this, talk to everyone in a group where everyone is from a different country. But now I'm really enjoying it. And thank you for giving me this opportunity because it's I think it's a once in a lifetime opportunity to talk to people from all over the world in a platform like this. So, thank you.

Researcher. And that's it, guys. Thank you so much for coming, spending this extra time with me, with us, with the project, giving your feedback. Thank you so much. I hope we can keep in touch. We can do something in the future. And if you need me to have my contact, I'm available and thank you so much for being here and for your participation. I'll stop recording now.

Appendix J. Transcription of Focus Group 4 (Cycle 2, Stage 3b) – 19 May 2023

49 minutes

Brazilian partner. I think this is a great moment to share ideas, opinions, critical thinking, and reflect on the experience, but I think some of them will feel more comfortable when speaking in Portuguese.

Researcher. Yeah, just send the link again because she asked me.

Brazilian partner. Okay, so I really want you to continue on the conversation you were having with Participant H11 because I think this is very important.

Researcher. Okay, just a second. It's hard to find an email here because there're a lot of emails. Okay, let's enter the link.

Brazilian partner. There were some studies, even in Teletandem here in the beginning, talking about presence, telepresence, and this is really amazing. I was telling them that I can see Participant H17 from the front and from the back, you know, on the cameras here because this is such a small lab [...] but this is another perspective of studies.

Researcher. First of all, I would like to know your opinion about the VE [VETSDELT]. How did you feel during the whole project? You know, if you think it was positive, negative [...] I would like to know your opinion [...] if you didn't like anything, you can be honest, you know, and speak your mind. Who would like to go first?

Participant H11. First, I'm saying that I really expected meeting with North Americans and when I come to this meet and make contact [...] I don't know if this is right [...] make contact with other cultures is really interesting for me because I didn't know much about Arabians and Chinese culture. So, I think it's really fun and it's really interesting and important for us to make this exchange cultures.

Researcher. So, you're saying that during the exchange that you had opportunities to know more about your colleagues, you know, the people that you were interacting with [...] like you said, the Chinese, Arabic, etc. So, you know, did you have opportunity to talk to them? I can't hear you, Participant H11, I think you're mute.

Participant H11. Okay, yes, I didn't understand, but Participant H2 helped me. No, I didn't have this contact without the meeting [before VETSDELT], but I think if I had, it's really fun. I wish I had.

Researcher. Okay. Who else would you like, you know, to give opinion about the project? Someone else would like to share?

Brazilian partner. You can call their names.

Researcher. Okay, as [Brazilian partner] said, if you're not comfortable speaking English, you can speak in Portuguese, because I would like to hear your opinion. So, either in Portuguese or English is fine.

Participant H7. I can talk a little bit about my experience. I thought, like, it was really interesting, a good interesting, because I got to know a guy from Ivory Coast, and I wouldn't ever think of speaking in English with a person from Ivory Coast, you know. So, it made me have a different perspective on English speaking. I think it's always amazing to speak in English with a person whose native language isn't English, you know. So, I think it's a very enriching experience. It makes me realize that the communication purposes of the language are so wide, and so wonderful, and I really liked it. I wish it was a longer experience, you know.

Researcher. That's nice. Who else would like to give your opinion about the project? Let me see the order here. I think the first one [...]

Participant H14. I can talk. I agree with the girls. I thought it was very interesting, and I wasn't expecting to talk to people that English wasn't the native language, and it was interesting to see how,

like, they have the same problems with the learning English, and with the questions about how to teach English to other people. So, it was a good experience.

Researcher. That's really nice. So, what about the rest of you, the other guys? So, here, Participant H7. I think Participant H7 already spoke. Did you, Participant H7?

Participant H7. Yeah, I did. I just did.

Researcher. Okay. Then Participant H16, please.

Participant H16. In my opinion, it was very difficult because [...] and I don't know [...] a native English native [...] and I try to understand about English and native English or non-native [...] but I try [tried].

Researcher. So, did you have difficulty understanding your colleagues during the project, you know, their English? Was it okay for you?

Participant H16. I think it is difficult for me because I have difficulty [with] English, and it is the idea and about it. [switched to Portuguese] I don't know how to say that in English. The topics [...] the topics were difficult.

Researcher. Did you think the subjects were complex to talk about in English? You know, in the breakout rooms?

Participant H16. I think it is very difficult because [switched to Portuguese] I wasn't in my comfort zone. So, I just observed, listened, and tried to understand.

Researcher. Okay. Thank you. The next one I think is Participant H17. So, please, Participant H17.

Participant H17. Can you hear me now?

Researcher. Yes, I can.

Participant H17. Okay. So, microphone problems here. So, just like I was talking about with Carlos before the record starting, I am more a pragmatic person. So, I like more the theoretical material. So, our discussions about the circles that we learned about [...] and those linguistics information that we share together was very nice. I never had a COIL like this that we share those theoretical materials. This was very important to me, and I liked very much this COIL [VETSDELT] because discussing those materials is important for us Brazilians that are learning English.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant H17. So, who's next? I think Participant H2, would you like to say something?

Participant H2. Yes, I like it [...] the meetings, because I got to [...] like, reading the text and during the discussions [breakout rooms], I got to think about things that I've never thought about before. I also, like [...] my biggest problem was not English itself, was the technology. I learned how to use Zoom by computer during the meetings. Also, when I was chosen to be the one that would make a summary of everything in one minute [speaker], I didn't thought I would be able to [...] but I didn't think I would be able to, but I did. I like this part too.

Researcher. Did you have any technical problems or any difficulties during the project? Actually, we know in the laboratory there in [university]. [...] I think some days you had no connection problems, right?

Participant H2. Yes, but I also I don't have a computer myself, so I don't know really much about how to use it. I do everything by my phone, but I liked the experience. I also like to talk about with Chinese people and know about their [...] how can I say this? [...] their system of education works and everything.

Researcher. That's really interesting. Thank you. I think the next one is Participant H13.

Participant H13. I think it was a very positive experience meeting new people and new culture and knowing that it's not wrong to have an accent or difference to speak English. It was very interesting.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant H13. So, I think the next is Participant H10.

Participant H10. I don't have the opportunity to participate about... [switched to Portuguese] I'll speak in Portuguese because I get nervous. I didn't have the opportunity to attend all sessions, but I really liked the other cultures and their notions of education and teaching, like, how to teach English, not just from a native perspective. It was very interesting.

Researcher. That's really good. I think the next is Participant H12. Participant H12?

Participant H12. Hi. I found this experience very positive. It was nice to know about other accents and other [...] and the same challenges about learning and teaching English from the other side of the world. So, it was very rich experience. What I found the challenge [...] a challenge was to discuss the subject in English with other people in the other side of the world, because sometimes the communication was, you know [...] But it was a good challenge. I think we all have good experiences to tell. It was very nice.

Researcher. I think the next one would be Participant H9, who has another perspective, because she was a mediator. So, what's your opinion, Participant H9? Can you hear me?

(Another participant with the same name starts to talk)

Participant H8. The experience is very nice, but when we talk [in] English, I'm very anxious. So, the conversation with the [...]

Researcher. You can speak in Portuguese.

Participant H8. [she continues in English] foreigners [...] when we speak with foreigners, we have more experience. So, culture is different. I can see it's different [...] accent. Yes, I think so. I like, but I don't like speak [in] English very much.

Researcher. So, you're more of a quiet [introvert] person, right?

Participant H8. Yes.

Researcher. What about you, Participant H9?

Participant H9. I think it was really a challenge for me, because I had to make [inaudible] in a different way. It was really different from Teletandem, because we made more reflections, but we don't have questions. I think the most difficult was to make everybody comfortable to speak at the same time to write, because all the time, I always remember them to write, but they weren't so comfortable to talk when they forgot to write. So, I think it was a really, really good experience, because we talk in [about] some points that we don't see all the time at the graduation, but at the same time, it was a challenge for me in this point. English was a little tricky sometimes, because as everybody [...] I forgot some words, and the others was better than me at this point, but it was really good. The other thing, I always forget how to say the name of the participants. This is a problem that I have. So, all the time, I was trying to call somebody, and the names are related to France, and I was like, "oh my gosh, I'm going to say the name wrong, and this person will be really [...] really mad with me". But I tried my best to do everything. So, I think this is my perspective. I really like all the texts. It was really great to read texts. They are short, and they are good. They go straight to the point. That's why I really like all the texts. I think it was really good for the students, because it was not a difficult English, or fancy English. So, they could really read the text in a more easy way [...] in an easier way. I think that's it. Thank you.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant H9. Nice feedback. What about you, [Brazilian partner]? Because you were there participating, right?

Brazilian partner. Let Participant H4 go first.

Researcher. Okay. There you go, Participant H4.

Participant H4. For me, it was a great experience. But I am a shy person, so I don't talk very much. I had some difficulties to understand. How do I say? [...] I have some difficulties to understand the variations of English, but I enjoyed it.

Researcher. Good to know. Thank you, Participant H4.

Brazilian partner. I have to say that I'm extra proud of them, because Carlos, for you to see all of their faces, or part of the faces [...] this is already a great, great accomplishment. You know, they are shy [...] they have their struggles. This is really, really a challenge for them. And what it shows here is that they are open to be exposed, because they show their faces, and they show their challenges in learning English, and talking to you over there, you know? So, I'm really proud of them. So, some things I would like to point out. So, I would like to thank you and Marina, because we really struggled here to meet you, because of the schedule. So, it was not during my classes. I had to bring the students, and borrow them from another professor's class, but it was really worth it, you know? And it was, for us, it was last minute, but I feel very happy we did it, you know? This is what we, as educators, we must do. We must face the challenges, and try to search for the best opportunity for the students. So, that's what I saw when we talked for the first time. A great opportunity for our students [...] and to meet. And also, from perspectives, we don't see it here [VE projects], because we are 500 kilometers from São Paulo, for example. We don't meet foreigners in the street, in the corridors of the university. So, this is a great point from this experience. It's extra hard, because we struggle with technology, and we also struggle with the students' anxieties. Some of them skipped some sessions, and also today, because of this [anxiety]. It's a lot of exposure, and we have been facing very difficult times at university after COVID, because of this, you know? These students, they had some semesters in remote learning, and so now they have the chance to get back to university. So, I always try my best to bring such opportunities here, you know, for them. So, this is a great point, and I want to thank you and Marina for this, because it was really nice. What else I would like to say? Because it was last minute for us, I wish I had time to work on the theory, on your texts, and to prepare their readings together with them during my classes, so that I feel that they would have more content to go to the sessions, and they would feel more comfortable when using the language, and at the same time discussing theory, and these points that stand out when learning a language about accent, about culture. So, I wish I had time to prepare them better for this. I wish I had the time on previous classes, for example, but it was not possible. They didn't mention this, but it was really challenging to go through the forms, because the first one we did together in class. The previous one [...] we did this together, and it was really challenging for them, number one, to understand the question, what they were supposed to do, and also recall on their critical thinking to go through them. So, it was really a struggle. I was screaming at them all the time, and I would say, "Come on, let's do it. We have to do it. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. It's important for Carlos, it's important for the experience. Let's do it", you know. They didn't say it, but they were kind of resistant to do it. And I think that's also the reason that they didn't, in my opinion, they didn't do their best when writing on the Padlet, when leaving their opinions, because it was hard for them, you know, considering language, and also considering a theoretical background to expose their ideas there. So, I apologize, the feedback forms, you know.

UK Supervisor. No, no, no. I'll stop you here, [Brazilian partner]. I'll stop you here. Don't apologize, I think they did brilliantly, and I think they did their best, and, you know, it's all relative best and worse, so don't apologize. We're so grateful to you all because we had lost a partner, and you came to our rescue, so, you know, we're really, really grateful for that. I mean, to express my gratitude, I got a British artifact [...] got the biscuits for King Charles III. I would like to offer you a virtual royal biscuit.

Brazilian partner. This is so amazing [laughs].

UK Supervisor. I know they got all these, perhaps in 20 years' time, this box will be very expensive. Because I'm at home, I'll show you my beautiful garden, just to make it friendly. You see my garden?

Brazilian partner. That's amazing.

UK Supervisor. I got a pond full of fish. I got 14 big Japanese carps, which my mother wanted to eat, but I told her she couldn't. They're my pets. Anyway, what I wanted to say, building on a bit, Carlos

[...] can I ask something about the anxiety? Because really, I was a bit taken aback. I suppose you dealt with it at the beginning, and I wasn't here, because I was taking care of my lip, after having smashed the seat belt on it. I've never done it before. You know, it's always the first time when you're dry, you just smashed on my face, but anyway. So I was thinking, really, I can see perhaps the connection is not always good, and the consciousness of the English is, you know, this complex of the bad English, is something we all have when we are L2 speakers. But you shouldn't, you know, you shouldn't worry about that. So don't apologise for your English, and there are so many different types of English, you know. It's okay, as long as the communication happens. So, we're very, very, very grateful to you all. But I was a bit taken aback in this day and age, and post-COVID, by how anxious some of you were, and the fact that some of you actually had serious problems with the idea of coming and being with us. I hope [...] I hope that doing the project has made you realise that it's not all bad online because, you know, online has a very bad reputation, and a lot of universities don't accept online degrees, because they say they're second division [...] inferior degrees. But I thought that COVID had taught us that online can work, at least it worked for me. I prefer to work at home, so I prefer to work here, instead of getting calls from my students. I'm going back to the office of course now, but I much prefer being at home. But, you know, I was just a bit [...] so my question to you, which is not in Carlos's script. Sorry, Carlos, you know I'm disruptive. Why was it that despite COVID, and the fact you'd experienced being taught at a distance for a long time, you were still so worried about the online? Was it more the English, or more the online? That's I'm interested in, so if anybody feels like saying it. You don't [...] you can even write to me privately, if you don't want to say it. You can say it in Portuguese, or in any language you like, as long as it is Latin origin, or English, so if anybody wants to say something about that. Because, you know, I'm still not sure whether it was more the consciousness of exposure, of your English, or of the online, or both, both together. Anybody wants to comment?

Brazilian partner. I'm gonna discuss this question very briefly with them here.

Researcher. Okay, [Brazilian partner]. Go ahead.

UK Supervisor. No, [Brazilian partner], I don't want you to tell them what to say.

Participant H9. I think she [...] they didn't get the question.

Researcher. They didn't fully understand it, so I think she's translating.

UK Supervisor. Can and you repeat it in Portuguese, Carlos?

Researcher. Sure. [Brazilian partner], do you want me to translate it into Portuguese? I think she doesn't hear me.

Participant H9. Yeah, she isn't hearing you. She's just explaining it here.

UK Supervisor. So, if we're thinking common European framework, [Brazilian partner], where do you place your students? Where are they in terms of common... you know, the common European framework A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2?

Brazilian partner. I think they are like B1 going to B2.

UK Supervisor. Ah, okay. Well, that explains part of it.

Brazilian partner. Yeah, more B2 [...] more B2, I would say.

UK Supervisor. Well, I gather the ones who [...]

Brazilian partner. It's good. It's good.

UK Supervisor. But the ones who are more B1 are the ones who are probably most anxious.

Brazilian partner. Yes, that's it. So they are gonna say what we talked to here. Okay, who goes?

UK Supervisor. And you can say it in Portuguese, feel free. I will understand.

Participant H14. I can start. It was hard because of both things for me, but the hardest part is like the communication part [English] because especially in the morning, I get very anxious and I always was like, “Oh, I’m saying this wrong [...] they are not going to understand me”. So, I think this was the hardest part for me. But it gets easier after some interactions [...] you know, the first session.

UK Supervisor. Why do you think there are still people who did not come today because they were scared? Is it because, again, it’s the communication and the online together then, the two things?

Brazilian partner. I would say so, because some of the absent students this morning, they are really good at English, but I think they have this anxiety issue. So, some days they feel really into conversation, and they talk, but some days it feels like it scares them out, you know?

UK Supervisor. Okay. Interesting, okay.

Researcher. So, someone else wants to share?

Participant H2. For me, as I already said before, I think it was more of the online thing. Sometimes during the connection [...] once I bought my phone, because at our first section, I used the computer and I just couldn’t open the Padlet at the same time as I opened the Zoom. I almost didn’t say anything in the audio [...] I just keep writing. But as I was writing a lot, people didn’t have time to read it. So, I bought my phone and the connection kept falling down. I also turned the captions on, not because I would not understand, but because I think of people was most foreign speaking English [...] they talk a little bit slowly. And so, I turned the captions on because it would last longer reading on the screen than just the audio. And it was in the time that I was supposed to resume in one minute after the section [scribe role]. So, I was really anxious because my connection was falling down and I had to resume. I was like, “how can I resume something I didn’t even listen to?”. But I liked the experience really much.

Researcher. Okay.

Participant H7. Well, I can say that for me, at least the English-speaking part wasn’t the problem. It’s really delightful for me. I love it. But the exposure experience is really [...] it makes me anxious, you know, but that’s it.

Researcher. What do you mean when you say exposure? Do you mean being judged by your English, by your accent or something in that sense?

Participant H7. Yeah, like, getting to know other [...] perfectionism and getting to know different people and getting in contact with them makes me a little bit anxious. Exposing myself to this.

Researcher. Okay. Thank you, Participant H7.

UK Supervisor. Variety of reasons, actually. So, a bit of social anxiety as well. International social anxiety. Interesting.

Researcher. That’s a new term, Marina [laughs].

UK Supervisor. I’ll coin it as mine, international social anxiety [laughs].

Researcher. Recorded [laughs]. Okay, so who else would like to comment on this?

Participant H12. I agree with the girls. I pass for the same challenges as they said [social anxiety]. But another point about the online thing is we are not really used to use some platforms like Padlet or Zoom, you know. It’s not a really trouble, or a really problem, but I don’t know. Some people make [...] sometimes it makes a little [...] I don’t know how to say. I’m not confident to use Padlet. I don’t know why. It’s just an irrational thinking.

UK Supervisor. It’s uncomfortable you want.

Participant H12. Uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable. Yeah, I'm not [...] I'm uncomfortable to use Padlet or Zoom. I don't know why. It's an irrational thinking. It's a challenge that we are getting used to.

UK Supervisor. Well, I have written about COIL taking you out of the comfort zone of a traditional curriculum. You're expecting a lecture, a seminar, a workshop, a face-to-face idea. And then you get thrown into an online environment, which can make you feel dehumanized and make you feel it's not what you were expecting from a higher education experience. I'm asking you [...] I want to ask you for a favor, another favor, [Brazilian partner]. Many favors I've been asking for. We are bidding actually for a new project. If we were to be successful, which I don't think we will be because it's a very competitive project and a very small amount of money. But anyway, if we were to be competitive and [...] sorry, that's it. What we like to do is to see if it is true that COIL can help with breaking some barriers eventually, but also test and evaluate hypotheses we have formulated that it does empower [...] I'm talking to females here. I'm sorry, Participant H17, but I was just thinking about the female participants speaking whether it can help with some issues. From what I'm hearing, no, but it would be interesting for us to test hypotheses about anxiety and online and digital and also proficiency in English and all mixed together. Whether in the end, in those breakout rooms, you felt a bit more relaxed than you expected you would be. Or perhaps if you were still as anxious as you thought you would be, because we're trying various issues and theories. And the interesting thing as well, I don't know if Carlos has mentioned this to you, but you seem to be a very anxious group. And I wonder whether that has to do with the technology in your institution, because if things don't work, then you can't feel comfortable. You need a minimum level of safety to feel comfortable.

Brazilian partner. Yeah, this is a great point.

UK Supervisor. Connection was going down. It was going down for Carlos as well. So, Carlos and I were next to each other. I don't know if you noticed. So, my computer was working and Carlos's wasn't in the same room. So, technology is mysterious and beautiful. But anyway, so, if possible, I might [...] if we were to be successful with the bid, I might email you. Would it be OK if I email you for another project? Yeah, great. The ladies though, as again, Participant H17, sorry, only the ladies here, because it would be female oriented. The female gaze on COIL. Okay, so not even Carlos, but thank you.

Researcher. So, who else would like to comment on this, you know, feeling anxious during the project. Participant H17?

Participant H17. It may sound a boring answer, but I'm not and technology wasn't a problem for me. I guess it's OK to have online meetings. It's OK to use Padlet. It's not a problem. And I guess I am not afraid of my communication skills. I guess I am pretty confident about it. But I get anxious too. And anxiety for me is like an unconscious thing. And I don't know why I am anxious right now and all those COIL stuff, but it happens. I guess I can't explain, but I guess the main challenge was handling with my anxiety.

Researcher. Okay. What about you, Participant H9, as a mediator because you have you had a different role. Did you feel anxious during the project because of the fear of your connection going down and have to go back online? How was it for you?

Participant H9. Technology wasn't a problem for me because I gave classes in the pandemic [...] English classes. So I already knew Zoom, I already knew Padlet. Socrative and Microsoft forms were new for me, but it's not so different from others. So technology wasn't a problem for me. The technology here at the university got tripped me. Now I'm in the different room of them because we don't have computers for me in the other room. So that's a problem. But that's why I made the mediation at home. I wasn't with them because of this, because of the connection. I got anxious because I know my room on the Zoom [breakout room]. And I was anxious about it because I know what was my function there [mediator]. But at the same time [...] it's always more talking to me that "It's okay" and "to not get everything perfect". It's okay if you don't speak the perfect English or talk the names wrong. You are not perfect and you are trying to make the experience better for everybody. So I worked with myself at home after and before the sessions about it. So I made the step by step how I can make this mediation better. I work it in the week, "How can I say the name?"

How can I work this part of the test? How can I make the questions more fun for them to talk more?”. It was a problem to make them talk more. But I think they decided for me it wasn’t because English or because of connection. It was more about my role at the room.

Researcher. Thank you, Participant H9. Very interesting. And thank you for your effort. You know, you did great as a mediator. Thank you so much. What about you, [Brazilian partner]? Do you have anything to share with us? Because you were there close to them, you know, in person. So would you like to share something with us regarding their anxiety that you realized during the whole process?

Brazilian partner. Yeah, I was at all times trying to make them safe and comfortable, saying that they wouldn’t be judged, that the main purpose was communication. I was trying to do this here at all the time. And also pushing them to go through the tasks because I felt it was really important for you. It was very important for them. (14:53) I shared the texts with them, the articles you sent. But as they said, and as Participant H17 emphasized, this goes much beyond our hands and our control, you know. So I was all the time, come on, you can do it. And I was saying how great job they were doing. And trying to stay positive at all times, because I really felt it was really important. And of course, we get [...] I don’t get anxious, I get nervous about technology, you know. Because we try [...] here things are really difficult [...] this internet connection. Because we are a multi-campus institution in the state of São Paulo, our internet connection comes from a different campus, which is an hour from here. And so many things we cannot really fix locally. We depend on the other campus to fix. And so these are the struggles, you know. We struggle with technology concerning internet service, concerning the machines [...] we leave a machine working on a day, and the next day it doesn’t work. And so we don’t have much control on this. And this lab, as Participant H9 said, we also use for the Teletandem project. So the machines are not the most updated one. And we don’t have somebody locally to take care of it. So we depend on calling a department to come and fix things for us. So we do the job ourselves, you know. Me and Participant H9, we come, we turn the machines on. And then when the students come, we see “this is not working”. Fastly moves to another machine. And I think you saw this during the sessions because my name was on a lot of machines because I was connecting on my account and give it to a student. Because we need to hurry things, you know. If the session is on progress, we need the students to be involved and engaging. And we don’t want them to miss a thing, you know. So that’s why we are multitask people here. We help mediation [...] I teach. And we try to create a comfort zone here for them above all, you know. This is my main job here.

Researcher. Thank you, [Brazilian partner]. That’s really great. So would you like to ask something else, Marina? Because I think, you know, it’s over an hour [...] I think.

UK Supervisor. I mean, and if you were to be interested in doing more of this with us, [Brazilian partner], let us know. Mind you, we might not have a wonderful Carlos next year, but because he’s going back to [university]. But we can still work together while you’re in [university], Carlos.

Researcher. If you invite me, you know [laughs]. Yeah, sure.

Brazilian partner. So, I just would like to thank you. It was an amazing opportunity for us. And thank you. Count me in for next opportunities. And I promise I’ll try to make it work.

UK Supervisor. Thank you very much then. Bye-bye, everybody then.

Researcher. Thank you. Really great to have you on board this time around. Hope to see you soon, right? Have a great weekend. I’ll stop recording now.

Appendix K. Guidelines for E-Mediators

VETSDELT (Virtual Exchange as a Third Space to Decolonise ELT)

E-mediators will be assigned one breakout room (BoR) to facilitate dialogue, interaction and knowledge exchange. Following the feedback received in the first cycle, it has been agreed to vary the composition of the BoR groups each week. The e-mediator role involves:

- Participation in e-mediator training.
- Reading the ViVEXELT Breakout Room Guide available at <https://vivexelt.com/breakout-room-guide/>.
- Participating in the synchronous sessions in each of the four weeks of the VETSDELT project.
- Being punctual, ideally joining a few minutes before each session starts.
- Reading the allocated journal article for each session beforehand.
- Setting some ground rules at the beginning of each session (keep camera on, raise hand to speak, mute mic when not speaking) and explain what is expected for the set task.
- Allocating the roles of **speaker**, who will report back at the end of the group discussion, and **scribe**, who will post to the Padlet wall.
- Being mindful of one's presence on screen (e.g., head-centred) and supporting that of others (e.g., if someone is not visible).
- Facilitating interaction in BoR and encouraging all participants to speak (and preventing just one speaker from 'taking over').
- Answering participants' questions about BoR group reflection.
- Being aware of cultural and communication style differences.
- Being not intrusive and respecting the other party's perspective.
- Using the guiding questions for reflection. The project leader will post the questions on the chat and at the top of the Padlet Wall.
- Contacting Carlos or Marina (this can be done with a link in Zoom or WhatsApp) if there are any issues in your BoR and/or if you have any questions.

Appendix L. Session Checklist for E-Mediators



- () Set some ground rules at the beginning of each session (keep camera on, raise hand to speak, mute mic when not speaking).
- () Explain what is expected for the set task (discuss the topic and questions).
- () Share your screen (Padlet) with the students/participants so that they can see the questions and posts on Padlet.
- () Allocate the roles of **speaker**, who will report back at the end of the group discussion, and **scribe**, who will post to the Padlet wall, before returning to the main room.
- () Ensure the group reflection is posted on the right Padlet section before returning to the main room.

Link and QR code for Padlet: XXXXXXXX

If there are any issues in your BoR and/or questions, contact be done with the meeting host a link in Zoom or on WhatsApp.

Annexes

Annex A. Structure of the FutureLearn MOOC: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching

FutureLearn MOOC: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching		
Week 1: Learning Language: Theory		
Section 1: Welcome		
1.1	Welcome to the Course	Video (02:02)
1.2	Join the Online Community	Article
1.3	Using future learn and Getting Help	Article
Section 2: Introduction to Week 1		
1.4	Welcome to Week 1	Video (00:47)
1.5	How do You Use Language in Your Life?	Video (04:43)
Section 3: What is Language?		
1.6	What do We Know When We Know Language?	Video (02:40)
1.7	What is Meaning?	Video (04:26)
1.8	Task: What is Meaning? -Implied Meaning	Article
Section 4: What is Hard and What is Easy in Second Language Learning?		
1.9	How do We Acquire Meaning: The Bottleneck Hypothesis	Video (02:57)
1.10	Understanding 'the Bottleneck' of Language and Issues in Language Learning	Discussion
1.11	What is Hard in Second Language Learning?	Article
1.12	What is Easy in Second Language Learning?	Article
1.13	Implications for Teaching	Video (01:15)
1.14	Other Factors Which Affect Language Learning	Audio
1.15	Poll: What do You Think?	Exercise
Section 5: Summary Activities		
1.16	Video Update on the Week's Activities	Article
1.17	Reflection	Discussion
1.18	What's Next?	Article

FutureLearn MOOC: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching		
Week 2: Language Teaching in the Classroom		
Section 1: Welcome to Week 2		
2.1	Introduction to Week 2	Video (00:59)
Section 2: Classrooms as a Community of Practice		
2.2	Classrooms as Communities of Practice	Video (03:56)
2.3	Classroom Culture	Video (04:36)
2.4	Classroom Culture	Article
2.5	Task: Classroom Culture	Article
2.6	What's your Classroom Culture Like?	Discussion
2.7	Naturalistic vs Classroom Learning	Video (05:21)
Section 3: Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)		
2.8	Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)	Video (04:17)
2.9	What is a Task?	Article
2.1	Task: TBLT in Action	Video (01:24)
2.11	Review: Task TBLT in Action	Video (02:49)
Section 4: Content and language Integrated Learning (CLIL)		
2.12	Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	Video (04:47)
2.13	Task: CLIL	Discussion
2.14	Applying TBLT/CLIL and the Challenge of Innovation in Teaching	Discussion
Section 5: Summary Activities		
2.15	Video Update on the Week's Activities	Article

2.16	Reflection	Discussion

FutureLearn MOOC: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching		
Week 3: Technology in Language Learning and Teaching: A New Environment		
Section 1: Welcome to Week 3		
3.1	Introduction to Week 3	Video (00:47)
Section 2: Difference between Online Learning and F2F Learning		
3.2	Differences between Online Learning and F2F Learning	Video (03:28)
3.3	Is it Possible to Learn Languages Well Online or is F2F Essential?	Discussion
3.4	Online Learning and languages	Video (03:45)
Section 3: Teaching in a new environment		
3.5	Engaging with Online Learning	Video (04:58)
3.6	Teaching in a New Environment	Video (02:18)
3.7	Task: Identifying the Roles of an E-Tutor	Article
3.8	Task: Facebook Discussion with BC Tutors	Article
Section 4: Connectivism and Language Learning		
3.9	Connectivist Learning	Video (02:20)
3.1	Online Learning and Using Social Media in Language Learning	Discussion
Section 5: Summary Activities		
3.11	Video Update on the Week's Activities	Article
3.12	Reflection	Discussion

FutureLearn MOOC: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching		
Week 4: Language in Use: Global English		
Section 1: Welcome to Week 4		
4.1	Introduction to Week 4	Video (01:07)
Section 2: Global Englishes		
4.2	Introduction to Global Englishes	Video (02:17)
4.3	Historical Spread of English	Video (05:28)
4.4	Is the Spread of English a Good Thing?	Discussion
Section 3: English as a Lingua Franca		
4.5	English as a Lingua Franca	Video (04:28)
4.6	Task: Identifying Characteristics of ELF	Article
4.7	Controversies in ELF Research	Video (04:01)
4.8	Poll: What is your Attitude to ELF?	Exercise
4.9	Interview with an ELF Researcher	Video (03:13)
4.1	Feedback from Poll: Attitudes to ELF	Article
Section 4: The Future of English		
4.11	Implications of the Spread of English for Teaching	Video (03:55)
4.12	Native Speakers V Non-Native Speakers Teachers	Discussion
4.13	The Future of English	Video (04:48)
4.14	Poll: What do You Think is the Future of English?	Exercise
4.15	Responding to Questions and Controversies in ELF Research	Article
4.16	Feedback from Poll: The Future of English	Article
Section 5: Summary Activities		
4.17	Video Update on the Week's Activities	Article
4.18	Reflection	Discussion