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THE REPRESENTATION OF ARABIC CULTURE IN TESOL/TEIL

Abstract:

This article reports on a mixed-method research into cultural representation of Islam in an English language textbook series being used at a Saudi Arabian university. The current study utilized Ideology Critique Methodology and was framed within the Critical Research Paradigm. The research used a structured questionnaire, followed by open-ended questions administered to 30 purposefully chosen language teachers. The study attempted to ascertain, in the light of Muslim teachers' perceptions, the representation of Islamic (and Saudi) culture, the extent of an international cultural outlook, and presence of any culturally inappropriate or offensive material in the contents of a most popular English language textbook series. The study also evaluated the pedagogical benefits of employing learners' culture (source culture) in the light of Schema Theory of learning. The study endorsed the idea of appropriation of English according to variable contexts and opposed predominance of western culture in TEIL at the expense of local cultures.

Keywords:

EIL; Intercultural communication; Islamic culture; Saudi Culture; Schema theory; TESOL

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