Future Teachers, Future Perspectives
The Story of English in Kuwait

Submitted by
Reem Al-Rubaie

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Abstract

In Kuwait, the English language is increasingly gaining importance signifying globalisation and internationalisation of the local culture and linguistic environment. Alongside the positive effects of the wide-spread usage of English there are negative tendencies which emerge onto the scene. This thesis is concerned with the educational aspects of such influences where it explored trainee teachers’ conceptualisations of English as an international / global language, and examined the implications of current views of English for teacher preparation in light of the most recent methodological trends such as global English delivery, expansion of teacher knowledge base, the introduction of linguistic rights and instructional policies to educational stakeholders, and the merging of language and culture in English language teaching. Through questionnaires and in-depth interviews the study found that the relationship between the local and global in Kuwait is a complex issue with social, educational and political implications. Multiple functions for English and its status within the local context were voiced and consequently alternative futures for Standard Arabic as the main source and medium of local literacy and language of academia against the background of rapid Anglicisation emerged. The results may attract the attention of Kuwait’s educational theorists and practitioners, and the hopeful outcome would be to inspire teachers to engage in critical thinking and challenge their realities; and encourage Kuwait’s educational policy makers to find a balance between the source and target languages/cultures, as well as bring to the foreground local expertise and knowledge.
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