



Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks: insights into TESOL teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds

Submitted By

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Abstract

This study has been undertaken using an interpretive methodology in order to examine the socially constructed views of Saudi EFL teachers and their decision-making with regards to the appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools. The study also examines the factors affecting the teachers' views and how they apply their beliefs in their classrooms. In addition, the study will also examine if the Saudi EFL teachers have any concerns about what they have been through and examined and accordingly investigates how they address their pedagogical decision-making in the classroom. Moreover, this study is interested in looking at EFL teachers as local teachers teaching a global language.

In view of the exploratory nature of this study and its context-specificity, the naturalistic orientation of interpretive and social constructivism as an epistemological stance were selected. The research design employed a concurrent mixed methods design using an adapted version of Cresswell (1996). In this study, the participants were Saudi Arabian EFL teachers from one city in Saudi Arabia teaching in all of the three public education levels (primary, intermediate and secondary). The data collected were both qualitative (interviews and open-ended questionnaires) and quantitative (close-ended questionnaires). For the interviews, 14 male and female teachers equally interviewed, whereas for the questionnaires 280 male and female participated. The data collection of both data qualitative and quantitative occurred at the same time during my field journey in 2009 in Saudi Arabia. I used the SPSS descriptive statistics for the analysing the quantitative data and used exploratory content analysis for the qualitative data.

The study findings revealed that the Saudi EFL teachers were not satisfied with the cultural content currently promoted in the Textbooks as they inappropriately contradict the local cultural values. Thus, they believe that for a better cultural content, the textbooks should therefore include a mixture of different cultures that do not mismatch with the local. And as they are controlled by some educational and social factors, they are limited to practice what they think is appropriate to apply in the classroom, therefore, their decision-making in this regards to some extent are to be controlled. In addition, the findings of the current study revealed that the Saudi EFL teachers show their openness to other cultures based on their global position as local Saudis teaching a global language.

The conclusion of the study has some suggestion and implications to improve the cultural content of the EFL textbooks as well as implications for the EFL teachers in general and their practices and decision-making with regards to the textbook. Furthermore, the study proposed a model for the appropriate EFL textbooks for each educational level and can be applied locally in the Saudi context and globally for other similar context around the world.

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List of Abbreviations

ARAMCO	Saudi Arabian Oil Company
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
ICA	Intercultural Communicative Competence
L1	The Source Language (Local)
L2	The Target Language
LM	Pseudonym for the city where the study was conducted in Saudi Arabia
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
KSA	Saudi Arabia