

TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR IN THE GULF REGION: CAN THE EFL/ESP PROGRAMS MEET THE EXPECTATIONS?

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Abstract

Regardless of how much money the Gulf countries governments are pouring into the field of education, the teaching of English as a foreign language is still facing too many hurdles. Outsourcing the EFL/ESP business seems to be a temporary solution for many universities and educational institutions, yet the whole process and the concept of relying on others to carry this mission brings more challenges than long term benefits. Therefore, the outcome is still weak compared to the expenditure, and the learners' proficiency in English remains insufficient and below expectations for both male and female individuals in the Gulf region. This study is an attempt to answer the following main questions: (1) what are the challenges that the Gulf countries face in teaching EFL & ESP? (2). How can the Gulf countries governments overcome these challenges? The study will also look into the planning of outsourcing the EFL/ESP business, the preparation of teachers, motivation on the part of the learners, and the assessment techniques and to find out if those factors are among the major problems that render EFL/ESP programs unable to meet the expectations and deliver as expected.

Keywords: EFL Challenges, Teaching English policies, English in the Arab world, English in hospitals