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Dr. Kathem Qattous

Applied Science Private University - Amman – Jordan

‘Rules’ as a cultural dimension of ESP

ABSTRACT

The paper proposes that there is a cultural content even in what appears to be a culture-free ESP program, and that this cultural content is expected to provide the non-native target population learners with values that are different from those that are in the receiving environment. The research shows how an ESP program can have a Western cultural perspective that provides Western values. It suggests that when Western writers write ESP programs for non-native English learners, they inject implicit Western cultural dimension whether they like it or not. **'Rules'** is a cultural value that American writers injected in a Vocational English Language Training program they designed for Saudi employees working for ARAMCO (The Arabian American Oil Company). It aimed to enable the worker trainees to adapt to a highly industrial environment involving the highest technology in the world, where they have to work safely and effectively in gas/oil production work sites. This represents a process of *socialisation* into the Western concept of 'Rules'.