

Abstract

A major component of the process of learning a foreign language is encountering the culture associated with it. Such a learning process cannot only focus on linguistic aspects of language, as socio-cultural values may importantly come along, whether in textbooks, teaching materials, or classroom discussions. Therefore, through individuals' teaching and learning involvements, their worldviews might be shaped. To explore this issue, the present research focused on an Iranian context of EFL education to study the potential naturalization and reproduction of certain cultural attitudes and lifestyles in such a context and the consequences of such reproduction. The setting of the study was an English language institute in Karaj and the participants include 62 learners of English as well as 10 teachers. There were two main sources of data, namely classroom observations and interviews. Overall, 200 hours of ten classes at different levels were observed and/or recorded during two terms over a period of four months and the two groups of participants were interviewed. Based on a grounded theory perspective, the bulk of observation and interview data was explored through coding procedures and the emerging patterns were categorized into different themes and subthemes. This overall thematic structure depicted images pertinent to the research problems regarding the possible reproduction of lifestyles in English language education and its consequences. Overall, it was understood that the educational context of concern may lead to the normalization of aspects of lifestyles associated with the foreign language. Taking the long process of language learning into account, the changes made in individuals' perspectives and attitudes through this process may gradually enter their lifestyle and result in some degree of underestimation of learners' home culture and lifestyle. Although students' rootedness in their culture cannot be denied and many students show various extents of adherence to their own lifestyle, the study illustrates that prolonged involvement in the discursive contexts of English language learning like the setting of this study contributes to the subtle modification of learners' lifestyle tendencies. Implications of such understandings for policy makers, material developers, administrators, teachers, and learners involved in EFL education are discussed.