

Near East University

Graduate School of Educational Sciences

Department of English Language Teaching

**THE ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS TOWARDS THE
IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING CULTURAL ASPECTS WITHIN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE CLASSES IN NORTHERN IRAQ**

MASTER THESIS

NASIH JABER ALI

Nicosia – 2013

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MASTER THESIS

Nasih Jaber Ali

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. ASLIYE DAĞMAN

Nicosia – 2013

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Nasih Jaber Ali titled “The Attitudes of Teachers and Students towards the Importance of Teaching Cultural Aspects within English Language Classes in Northern Iraq” and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

The Attitudes of Teachers and Students towards the Importance of Teaching Cultural Aspects within English Language Classes in Northern Iraq

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This study explores the attitudes of teachers and students towards the importance of teaching cultural aspects (CA) in English language classrooms at the University of Kirkuk in Northern Iraq. To this end, the study examines whether: firstly, teaching CA within English classes assists the process of language learning and secondly, whether CA should be taken into consideration when designing text-books. To achieve these goals a number of research questions were designed.

The sample of the study consisted of 130 university students and 25 university teachers at the English language department at Kirkuk University in Northern Iraq during the academic year of 2012-2013. Two separate questionnaires were designed for students and teachers in order to collect the relevant data.

Results of this study indicated it is necessary to incorporate the teaching of CA into the English language classes. Both students and teachers feel that studying cultural aspects in English classes is effective in improving their intercultural awareness and enhancing students' motivation. The role of culture in English Language Teaching (ELT) should therefore be taken into consideration by syllabus designers.

Keywords: Culture, cultural aspects, cultural awareness, foreign language teaching.

ÖZET

Kuzey Irak İngiliz Dili Sınıflarında Kültürel Öğelerin Öğretiminin Önemi Hakkında Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri

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Bu çalışma, Kuzey Irak'ta bulunan Kerkük Üniversite'sinin İngiliz dili sınıflarında kültürel öğelerin öğretiminin önemi hakkında öğretmen ve öğrenci görüşlerini incelemektedir. Bu amaca ulaşmak için birincisi kültürün dil öğrenimine katkısı, ikincisi de ders kitaplarının tasarlanması aşamasında bu olgunun göz önünde bulundurulmasının gerekliliği sorgulanmış ve bu bağlamda çeşitli araştırma soruları geliştirilmiştir.

Söz konusu araştırmanın örneklemini 2012-2013 öğretim yılı boyunca Kuzey Irak'ın Kerkük Üniversitesi'nin İngiliz Dili Bölümü'nde öğrenim görmekte olan 130 öğrenci ile aynı kurumda görev alan 25 öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Hedeflenen verilerin toplanılması için araştırmaya katılan öğrenci ve öğretmen grupları için iki ayrı anket tasarlanmıştır.

Yürütülen araştırmanın sonucunda elde edilen bilgiler, kültürün dile katkısını ortaya koymuş olmakla birlikte bu olgunun derslere dahil edilmesinin gerekliliğini vurgulamıştır. Hem öğretmenler, hem de öğrenciler kültürel öğelerin İngilizce derslerine dâhil edilmesinin öğrencilerin kültürel farkındalıklarını arttırmasının yanı sıra onların motivasyonunu da olumlu yönde etkilediği yönündeki görüşlerini ortaya koymuşlardır. Müfredat belirleyen mercilerin kültürün dil eğitimindeki etkisini değerlendirmeleri gerekmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür, kültürel öğeler, kültürel farkındalık, yabancı dil öğrenimi

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