

Language, Gender and Utility: The Impact of Foreign Language Learning on Young Jordanian Female Students

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ABSTRACT

Research on foreign language has long focused on the main motives (instrumental or intrinsic) of learning the language. Much research has also been dedicated to best practices towards the acquisition of a foreign language. However, there has been little research that delves into the impact that learning a language has on its learners. In this paper, we explore how studying a foreign language at university could affect particular aspects in its learners. We seek to explore the effect (if any) of foreign language acquisition on knowledge, culture, life style, future prospects and technological and social media usage among young female Jordanian students. This paper utilizes a quantitative research approach. A survey was distributed to female students at the faculty of foreign languages at the University of Jordan. The data collected was then analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. Results show that changes in life style is considerable and immense. Jordanian female students experience these changes and they are fully aware of all the differences between their culture and that of others'. They are the new intercultural generation who is capable of acquiring new horizons in life, and who are able to maintain their identity alive. Results affirm, as well that their future prospects are significant and that studying foreign languages did have an impact on the choices they make in life. Female students are able to use their abilities to participate in creating a better capacity of understandings.

Keywords: foreign languages, young women, Jordan, impact, motivation.

Introduction

A basic survey of the literature on learning a foreign language will bring up a plethora of articles surrounding the practicalities of how to teach and how to learn a foreign language. In addition, there is information about how using a second language affects our brains while we are using it. Moreover, much research has focused on the motivation of learning a new language. However, little exists about how learning a language can affect individuals outside of its instrumental uses. This is what has motivated us to take on the topic of how learning any foreign language can affect cultural outlooks and lifestyle trends. While observing these impacts, we are particularly interested in exploring the gendered dimension of learning a language. As the domain of learning languages has long been associated with females, we thought that investigating the impact of learning a foreign language on young female students would provide a useful start. This article poses a number of research questions as follows:

- *What impact does learning a foreign language have on knowledge and culture of its learners?*
- *What impact does learning a foreign language have on life style of its learners?*
- *How does learning a foreign language influence the future prospects of its learners?*
- *How does learning a foreign language affect technological and social media use of its users?*

These research questions are then reformed to address a number of research objectives that we tried to meet in order to

- *Explore the dynamics of learning a foreign language among young female Jordanian students.*
- *Investigate the gendered aspects of foreign language acquisition of young female Jordanian students.*
- *Investigate the intercultural approach lived by this new generation of young female Jordanian students.*

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- *Question the role of languages in technology use and its effectiveness in a new lifestyle.*

Literature Review:

In the field of language and human behavior, much interesting research has been done relating to how learning a foreign language affects decision-making. A study done by Boaz Keysar, Sayuri L. Hayakawa, and Sun Gyu An found that participants showed a reduction in decision making biases and were not influenced by the framing effect when using a foreign language (2012, p. 661). The authors theorize that these results were due to the “greater cognitive and emotional distance” speaking in a foreign language provides (Keysar et al. 2012, p.661). A similar study done by Costa et al. studied participants’ responses to moral dilemmas in a native and a foreign language. They found that participants were more likely to make utilitarian decisions in a foreign language than in their native language. The authors theorize, similarly to Keysar et al., that this has to do with greater emotional distance when speaking in a foreign language. They state that “most likely, a foreign language reduces emotional reactivity, promoting cost-benefit considerations, leading to an increase in utilitarian judgments” (Costa et al. 2014, p.5).

Reconnecting the fields of gender and language learning, Dr. Karen Feery provides a comprehensive overview of past and current literature on the subject. She begins by noting that much of the research devoted to the topic has centered on language usage instead of language learning (Feery, 2008, p.32). She then traces the history of the field, from emerging feminist critiques and the Deficit Framework in the 1970s, to “Dominance Models and the concept of speech communities in language” in the 1980s, to the “Difference Framework and the Community of Practice Approach” from the 1990s to present day (2008) (Feery, 2008, p.32-34). Feery also identifies two streams of research into gender and language learning: gender-related performance differences and social factors influencing language learners. She says that researchers usually explain differences in these areas by one of three ways: “a biological stance, a cognitive-psychological approach [or] a socialization theory-based approach” (Feery, 2008, p. 38-39). After providing an overview of current research offering different perspectives and theories on the study of gender and language learning, Feery concludes by noting the complexity and importance of gender and language learning and calls for further investigation into the social aspects of the field, with the goal of offering a “more holistic view” of language learners (Feery, 2008, p.47).

As Feery and others note, one common topic across much of the literature in this field is the exploration of language learning as a stereotypically “feminine domain”. While this idea has not gone unchallenged, its effects continue to permeate parts of academia and many language-learning environments. In her paper, Barbara Schmenk directly tackles this issue. She begins by critiquing the commonly used “difference approach” to studying language learning and gender. Schmenk, and others, consider this problematic because it assumes gender is a fixed phenomenon, while in reality it is dynamic and constantly constructed and reconstructed based on context. Schmenk argues that generalist assumptions, or “gender stereotyping”, surrounding the concept of gender in the language of the classroom can affect learning. Therefore, studying these stereotypes more closely may be the key to better understanding the gender dimension of language learning (Schmenk, 2004, p. 514-515).

To this end, Schmenk states three stereotypes about language learning that impact the field: “(a) the claim that gender is a differentiating variable, (b) the claim that language learning success is causally linked to a person’s gender and (c) the observation that girls and women worldwide tend to study languages more often than boys and men do (Schmenk, 2004, p.517).” While individual experience and/or data often lend support to these beliefs, they do not tell the whole story. In reality, the relationship between gender and learning is complex and convoluted. For example, in regards to belief (c) above, if one looks at the belief from the perspective of gender stereotypes, instead of ascribing its existence to internal variables, one discovers a larger picture - an interesting connection between gender and power. Language learning as a “feminine domain” effectively flips the power structure and elevates “stereotypically feminine attributes, which are usually claimed to legitimize women’s subordinate positions in many societies” (Schmenk, 2004, p. 521). In this way, the stereotype of language learning as a “feminine domain” could be a self-fulfilling prophecy in that, as

Schmenk explains, “the choice to study a typically feminine subject would - ironically - enable women to escape traditional gender stereotypes” (Schmenk, 2004, p. 521).

Another variable to take into account when studying the gender dimension of language learning is cultural context, specifically in relation to previous language learning experience. This is explored in a study done by Larisa Nikitina and Fumitaka Furuoka. Nikitina and Furuoka interviewed 107 students (60.7% female and 39.3% male) learning Russian at a university in Malaysia, with the goal of exploring the differences, or lack thereof, between language learning beliefs of males and females (Nikitina and Furuoka, 2007, p.3). The study revealed minimal gender-related differences in language learning beliefs. Nikitina and Furuoka believe these results are due, at least in part, to participants’ previous language learning experiences. They explain that “as a result of growing up in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society, such as Malaysia, all participants in this research spoke several languages and dialects and had extensive language learning experience” (Nikitina and Furuoka, 2007, p.9). Furthermore, growing up in this society may “have formed open, positive and practical attitudes towards language learning”, explaining some of the uniformity in answers between the genders (Nikitina and Furuoka, 2007, p. 11).

Related to the observed gender difference in language acquisition are the attitudes and motivations involved with learning an additional language. There are many reasons one might be motivated to learn a language, whether it is for instrumental reasons like grades, travelling/living abroad, status, or consuming foreign media. Or for rather intrinsic reasons like a personal love of the language or desire to integrate into that foreign culture for personal or value-based reasons. The literature shows that while these motivators tend to be similar between men and women, attitudes about the language itself and the acts of using the language are not. In an example close to Jordan, Rula Diab examined the political and socio-cultural factors involved with foreign language studies. The findings show that male students in Lebanon were more likely to cite professional and extrinsic reasons as to why they wanted to learn English. For the women respondents, they viewed speaking English well as a symbol of being in a higher class and status (Diab, 2000, p. 185). Both of these are considered extrinsic motivators for learning a language, however, the data also suggest that the women respondents often have further intrinsic motivation in addition to positive attitudes for learning a foreign language. This is particularly the case for English. In a study by Salim Abu Rabia, female Arab immigrant students in Canada were more both instrumentally and intrinsically motivated to learn while more deeply integrating into Canadian society (Abu Rabia, 1995, p.37). They stated that the personal and professional opportunities are more open to them in a more Western cultural context. These opportunities, they believe, have given them a deeper understanding of themselves and increased self-esteem. The opposite held true for the male students (and fathers of the female students) who, similar to the male Lebanese students from Diab’s study, were only interested in English for instrumental and professional reasons. The male Arab immigrant students stated that the Canadian cultural context clashed with their own cultural values and previous lifestyles and were less intrinsically motivated to learn the language. These trends can also be observed in Jordan; Hamad Aldosari of King Khalid University in Abha, Saudi Arabia performed a quantitative analysis based on a questionnaire for students of English as a foreign language (EFL). The questionnaire asked about the motivations for learning EFL. The results showed that, while both sexes desired to learn for instrumental reasons, women displayed more tendencies in motivation towards learning EFL. The women students’ attitude toward English specifically motivated them to listen to English more than the male students. They state this is because English promotes progress, sophistication, and cosmopolitan views (Aldosari, 2014, p.4). Women’s increased motivation and attitude about foreign languages, especially English, suggest that they are interested in experiencing a lifestyle outside of their own.

In a world that is much more connected and conscious of others, attitudes about a foreign language should be taken further into account in regards to the relationship between gender, culture, and language acquisition studies. There does exist some literature about cultural attitudes, language learning, and gender, but it mainly investigates the effects of those variables on the learning of language. We are much more interested in the opposite, that is, how does learning a foreign language affect us as human beings? Do we become more open to others? Are we more willing to navigate in our society differently than if we did not learn a language? These answers and more are what we seek to explore by asking female

language students at the University of Jordan.

Methodology:

The experiment conducted in this research generated quantitative and qualitative results. The survey has been validated by specialists and it was distributed to a small number of students to question its utility. The final version was then distributed (in paper form) and answered by the majority of the female students at the faculty of foreign languages. Details of the experiment and methods used to analyze the results are explained below.

The experiment

The experiment was conducted with the help of 125 female students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Jordan. The female students majored in Spanish, French, German and Italian. The students answered 57 questions separated into four different sections.

Each section discussed a different angle of the research. The *first* theme is female perceptions towards studying foreign language and its effect on their culture and intellect. This theme aligns with research objective: *“To investigate the intercultural approach lived by this new generation of young female Jordanian students and intercultural awareness and sociocultural acquisition”*. The *second* theme is female perceptions towards studying foreign language and its effect on their social communication and life style. This theme aligns with research objective: *“To explore the dynamics of learning a foreign language among young female Jordanian students”*. The *third* theme is female perceptions towards studying foreign language and its effect on their future aspiration. This theme aligns with research objective: *“To investigate the gendered aspects of foreign language acquisition of young female Jordanian students”*. The *fourth* and last theme is female perceptions towards studying foreign language and its effect on their usage of technology and social media. This theme aligns with research objective: *“To investigate learning a foreign language on female usage of this language on different application on social media and technologies”*.

Methods of Analysis

As mentioned earlier, the results generated from the questionnaire were quantitative. These results were obtained through descriptive statistic analysis. The questionnaire that was filled by the students was designed using a Likert scale between 1 to 5. This indicates that (five is strongly agree and one is strongly disagree with a midpoint of three indicating no value or no opinion) (Hair. J. F. et al., 1999). Using this scale helps researchers in understanding, escalating and foreseeing the performance and perceptions of the students (Graland, 1991).

The results were analyzed using *descriptive statistic*, including the mean, mode and standard deviation for each separate question. In order to compare the different angles against each other another test was used which is the *T-test for significance*: It is commonly used to determine if two sets of data are significantly different from each other (Coolidge, 2012)

Results and Discussions

The answers for the questionnaire yielded interesting results. As explained before, the questionnaire was divided into five main sections. The first section was about demographics, the second section about the influence of foreign languages learned on culture and thinking, the third section was about the influence of foreign languages learned social interaction and life style, followed by the fourth section discussing the influence of foreign languages learned future prospect and with the final section discussing the influence of foreign languages learned on technology and social media. Table 1 summarizes the answers of all female respondents to the questionnaire.

Table 1: Female students' perceptions on four different aspects

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree
Technology and social media	37%	38%	10%	12%	3%
Future prospects	32%	33%	16%	14%	5%

Life Style and social interaction	32%	43%	7%	13%	4%
Knowledge and culture	37%	43%	11%	8%	1%

The table shows a high percentage of respondents to agree and strongly agree to detailed questions with a percentage ranging from 65% (i.e. future prospects aspect) to 80% (i.e. knowledge and culture aspect) of the total answers. It was observed however that neutral percentage for the effect of studying a foreign language on future prospects is the highest with 16%. This can be justified as this can be a tricky aspect for female students deciding whether studying the foreign language can contribute to any future plans. It was also observed at the life style and social interaction that a high percentage of disagreement with slightly over 13% probably due to some questions inquiring about dress codes.

Considering that some of the themes being studied may overlap, Pearson's correlation is measured as shown in Table 2. The table shows that there are strong correlations between the different themes with the lowest correlation score of 95% between the future prospects and life-style and interactions aspects.

Table 2: The correlation between the four aspects

Correlation				
	<i>Technology</i>	<i>Future</i>	<i>Life Style</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>
Technology and social media	100.0%	-	-	-
Future	98%	100.0%	-	-
Life Style	97%	95%	100.0%	-
Knowledge	99%	98%	97%	100.0%

In this research we hypothesize that:

H₀: The effect of studying a foreign language on the four different aspects of technology and social media, future prospects, lifestyle and social interaction and knowledge and culture is significant.

To examine the significance of the results, performing a two-tail t-test between each two aspects show almost identical significance scores at t-value of 99%. These results indicate no significant difference between the questionnaire results; therefore, H₀ can be accepted.

Demographics

Table 3: Demographics for Sample

Demographics				
Age	18-22	20-22	22-24	24+
Count	3	73	31	4
Percentage	3%	66%	28%	4%
Year of Study	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Count	0	2	15	93
Percentage	0	2%	14%	84%
Mother Language	Arabic	English	Spanish	other
Count	107	1	0	3
Percentage	96%	1%	0	3%
Time used on Smart phone	< an hour	1-3 hours	3-5 hours	>5 hours
Count	7	31	27	48
Percentage	6%	27%	24%	42%
Type of social media used	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	Twitter
Count	95	55	45	20
Percentage	44%	26%	21%	9%

The table above displays the demographics of the questionnaires' sample. The numbers show that 66% of the female students' age range was between 20 and 22. That is, they are in their third to fourth year of study. These results align with the year of study question as a total of 98% of the students are in their third and fourth year. The number also show that a majority of the students have Arabic as their first language (i.e. 96%). When asked about the time they spend on smart phones and social media, 51% spend between 1 to 5 hours compared to 42% who spend more than 5 hours using their smart phones. While 44% of respondents focus on Facebook, 47% relay on Instagram and Snapchat, with a minority using Twitter.

Knowledge and Culture

The questionnaire results on the knowledge and culture aspect show a variation in the sample in each question where some questions were answered by the students, others were left empty. Nevertheless, the number of respondents per question remains reasonable ranging from 115-125.

The questions reported a positive impact as an average of 80% of the answers indicated an agreement with the statements of the survey. On the other hand, some interesting results were obtained from the questions numbered 2, 8, and 12. These answers affirm what Byram argues about regarding the importance of a comparative approach in languages that can lead to understanding ourselves and the world around us (Byram, 1997a). In questions 2 and 8, there are strong agreements of 94% and 93% respectively. In contrast, question 12 shows a diverse set of results, where answers were distributed almost evenly expect for the strongly disagree option. The results indicate that studying a foreign language has almost an even effect on female students studying topics related to women's studies and gender.

This aspect addresses the first research question: *What is the impact of learning a foreign language on knowledge and culture of the learners?*

Answer: *The results show that learning a foreign language has a positive impact on female students' knowledge and culture based on the different perspectives covered by the questionnaire.* They affirm that "integration of language and culture learning and by using the language as a medium for the continuing socialization of pupils is a process which is not intended to imitate and replicate the socialization of native speaker peers but rather to develop pupil's cultural competence from its existing stage, by changing it into an intercultural competence" (Byram, 1991: 19). Results show a real interest and desire to discover new aspects in language and culture among Arab female university students.

Table 4: Results for Knowledge and Culture Aspect

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample
1	I chose to study this language because of its universal importance	39	61	7	7	1	115
2	Courses offered by this language open new horizons of knowledge and culture.	61	56	3	5	0	125
3	I am learning this language so that I can understand films and songs well and to be able to read different books in the foreign language.	43	64	7	7	2	123
4	I consider that foreign language is my bridge for intellectual communication with the world.	54	54	7	5	2	122

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample
5	Learning this language has contributed to changing the way I think about the world and changing the stereotypical view of some cultural and societal norms.	61	46	8	5	0	120
6	I want to be part of the cultural groups that speak this language.	55	45	15	6	0	121
7	I feel that this language meets my intellectual and practical ambitions.	34	47	26	11	3	121
8	Learning this language has made me respect the cultural and intellectual diversity of the world.	61	50	6	2	1	120
9	Learning this language has changed my perception of women and men.	40	44	18	14	1	117
10	Learning this language has contributed to my research and scientific capacity building.	37	48	16	11	1	113
11	Learning this language has increased my desire to discover new horizons of culture through the advancement of external grants.	44	49	17	6	0	116
12	Learning this language has given me special interest in women's studies and gender.	27	44	24	25	5	125
13	Learning this language makes me feel a sense of belonging to the language and civilization of the country in which I learn its language.	37	55	12	13	3	120
14	I feel that languages have made me a global citizen and that cultural differences are no more than a social method that does not create fundamental differences.	37	56	21	4	1	119
15	My study of language has effectively contributed to my definition of the political,	35	55	14	15	4	123

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample
	economic and educational systems of the state in which I learn their language.						
	Total	665	774	201	136	24	1800
		36.9%	43.0%	11.2%	7.6%	1.3%	

Life Style

Life style can be considered controversial given that all answers were from female students in a conservative community. Although the questions generated positive answers with a total of 73% strongly agree and agree to the statement in the survey, the disagreement was the highest, (i.e. 14.8%) in average, compared to all the other aspects. Some of the interesting answers were found specifically in questions 16, 18, 19, 20, and 23. On the one hand, questions 16, 18, and 19 show a similar pattern of answers with high agreement percentages 95%, 87%, and 91% respectively. On the other hand, answers to questions 20 and 23 show different statistics.

Question 20 was the most controversial as the answers show the highest percentage of disagreement, and the lowest percentage of agreements with: 29% strongly agree or agree, and 63% disagree or strongly disagree. These results are expected in a conservative community such as the Jordanian one, especially when examining a sample that consists of pure female students, studying a foreign language, suggesting that the life style should not affect the dress code.

Furthermore, results to question 23 indicated high percentage of agreement with 92%. However, it is interesting to find that none of the students answered to strongly disagree. This indicates that all the female students who answered this question use some terms of the language they learned in their daily life.

This aspect addresses the second research question *What impact does learning a foreign language have on life style of its learners*

Answer: *The results indicated some controversial numbers in some questions; yet they remain expected, within the Jordanian environment. Female students find that learning a foreign language has a positive impact generally on their lifestyle based on the different views covered in the questionnaire.*

Table 5: Results for life Style Aspect

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
16	Learning this language helped me identify and communicate with the speakers.	59	57	1	3	2	122
17	I feel the distinction between my friends when I speak this language.	48	46	12	12	2	120
18	Being a girl who speaks a foreign language will increase my chances of success in my social life.	53	50	12	4	0	119
19	Learning this language has contributed positively to my character formation.	55	49	7	2	2	115
20	Learning this language has contributed in one way or another to changing the style of my clothes.	8	25	10	55	18	116

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
21	Learning this language has contributed to my participation in gatherings and active participation in cultural activities and official and private social events.	17	61	10	27	4	119
22	Learning this language has changed the way I speak.	34	56	11	17	4	122
23	I've included some terms in the language I use in my daily life.	51	70	2	8	0	131
24	Learning this language increased my self-confidence as a girl.	42	64	13	7	4	130
25	Learning this language helped me to organize my time and time well.	44	36	26	35	10	151
26	Learn this language in my music.	37	34	11	35	9	126
27	I follow some programs and series in the language I am working on	47	52	10	13	3	125
28	Sometimes I write in my pages on social networking sites in the language I learn.	34	66	6	10	6	122
29	I feel free when I speak this language and express myself well.	41	55	15	16	6	133
30	Learning this language has influenced my choices for my life partner and this has reflected my style of life.	30	31	2	30	10	103
	Total	600	752	148	274	80	1854
		32.4%	40.6%	8.0%	14.8%	4.3%	

Future Prospects

The questionnaire results on the future prospects aspect generated another set of interesting results among young Jordanian females and their future hopes, prospects and gains from their studies. The questions generated a positive impact as an average of 64.6% of the answers indicated an agreement with the statements of the survey. On the other hand, some interesting results were obtained from questions 31,33,34, ,41,42 and 44. In question 31 there is strong agreements with the statement among 91% of the respondents. This is crucial to this research as it is gender oriented and the females find that speaking a foreign language as females would enhance their career chances. Adding to that question 33, indicates positive results with 71% agreements in the ambition to pursue higher education. In questions 34 and 42, these questions give a fair distribution over the indicators of agreement, do not know and disagreement. Females tend to be more conservative about plans concerning traveling and in pursuing a career in media as it remains considered as an unconventional domain. In contrast, questions 41 and 44 show a diverse set of results, where answers were distributed almost evenly except for the strongly disagree option. The results indicated that studying a foreign language has almost an even effect on female students on their career prospects and their chances to work, study and excel in Jordan.

This aspect addresses the first research question: *How does learning a foreign language influence the future prospects outlook of its learners?*

Answer: *The results show that learning a foreign language has a positive influence on female students' future prospects based on the different perspectives covered by the questionnaire. Most of the students feel competent in learning and they aspire to have a prosperous future with new opportunities worldwide. Unfortunately, most of students do not see in the foreign languages a real potential to enhance their ability in writing. This is why they remain hesitant to use the foreign language they acquired in writing.*

Table 6: Results for the Future Prospects Aspect

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
31	Being a girl who speaks a foreign language will increase the chances of success in my career.	62	46	4	6	1	119
32	My choices have become more ambitious and I seek excellence after university thanks to my learning of this language.	62	46	8	5	0	121
33	I am seriously considering completing my higher education in the country of the language I study.	52	34	21	11	2	120
34	I am thinking of migrating to the country of the language you have learned.	35	22	22	21	11	111
35	I am thinking about looking for jobs in the country of the language you have learned or in any other country.	35	40	31	14	2	122
36	I would like to work in the field of translation to supply the Arabic library with various knowledge books in the foreign language that I have learned.	36	39	19	17	7	118
37	I have clear ideas to take advantage of the language I have gained in my daily life.	28	58	25	16	2	129
38	I want to create my own work and benefit from the language I have learned in marketing my own project.	27	51	29	14	1	122
39	I want to work in teaching to spread a new culture and language in Jordan.	39	35	24	19	9	126
40	I want to work in international organizations thanks to the language I have mastered.	52	40	19	6	0	117
41	I love writing and I think of writing short stories in the language that I work and taught.	10	31	27	36	15	119
42	I want to work in the media and foreign language will give me a real chance to compete.	40	37	16	21	9	123
43	I want to work in the field of tourism because it will keep me connected to a Western language and culture.	30	42	11	20	12	115

Q.no	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
44	I feel that the future of this language is limited in Jordan and it is difficult to complete my career in my language field.	28	31	17	32	12	120
45	I plan to work in the humanitarian and voluntary field thanks to my learning and proficiency in this language.	36	46	20	14	13	129
	Total	572	598	293	252	96	1811
		31.6%	33.0%	16.2%	13.9%	5.3%	

Technology and Social Media

The questionnaire results on the Technology and social media aspect was the least debatable and generated predictable results. This is expected due to the fact that the sample examined was for females ages ranged from 19-22, who are highly exposed to technology and social media. The agreement level in total for the questions was 74.4%. The only question that gave a negative result was question 52 as the students indicated that they do not have a blog written in the language they have learned.

This aspect addresses the first research question: *How does learning a foreign language affect technological and social media use of its users?*

Answer: *The results show that learning a foreign language affect the technological and social media uses positively as the female students can use the language on different social media platforms to communicate, network, educate and practice their language. According to our findings, students are aware of using social media for communication. They are skillful and they have already started to domesticate social media, incorporating it into their daily lives (Alshabeb, A & Almaqrn, R., 2018:217). This phenomenon of emerging technology with learning abilities is considerable and more practical to students. They feel motivated to use their devices outside the classroom, as they help them to be connected to the language in question whenever they desire. They consider social media a permanent bridge that guide them properly to the communication. Nevertheless, social media has its own limitation and it can only be considered as an extra tool for education and language acquisition. Some of our female students appreciate the role that technology and social media play in making languages more comprehensive and accessible.*

Table 7: Results for the technology and social media aspect

Q.no.	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
46	I Use this language on my mobile and mobile applications	61	43	7	9	1	121
47	Mobile applications and social media help me learn this language	65	40	11	1	2	119
48	I Use this language to communicate with my friends on	35	50	12	23	2	122

Q.no.	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	disagree	Strongly Disagree	Sample size sum
	social networks						
49	Ads on social networks written in this language attract me	49	50	14	4	2	119
50	I'm attracted to educational pages on the social networks available in this language	60	48	8	4	2	122
51	Learning this language contributed to my participation in the groups and pages on the social media that permeate this language	49	42	13	11	2	117
52	I have my own blogs written in this language	15	28	7	55	15	120
53	I follow blogs written in this language	35	44	11	24	9	123
54	I find this language pervasive on social networking sites.	37	48	18	10	5	118
55	I can practice this language easily on the mobile phone	40	56	14	4	3	117
56	I can easily practice this language on social networking sites	42	52	12	11	1	118
57	I write my posts on social networking sites using this language	26	52	13	21	7	119
	Total	514	553	140	177	51	1435
		35.8%	38.5%	9.8%	12.3%	3.6%	

Conclusion:

This research aimed at investigating the impact of foreign languages on Jordanian female students through discussing different axes related to our optimal target. The first aspect focused on culture and its importance in performing new profile of the female students. Analysis and statistics have demonstrated that the percentage of female students who associate learning languages with their knowledge, culture and education is high and considerable. They affirmed that discovering new horizons of foreign cultures motivate them to change their thoughts, their perspectives in life and they trace new realities. Such results are highly informative as they provide real indicators of sociocultural changes in society as a whole.

Language, according to all theories, is deeply embedded in culture. We are in agreement with Chinese linguist Dai (1989:158) who sees in the magic of change through culture a means of interacting with other individuals and a means of thinking differently. We can here, affirm that results showed that foreign languages have strongly increased intercultural awareness and it helped to construct new perspectives related to modes of thoughts, sensitivities, intellectual skills and explanatory capacities (Hanvey, 1979). The impact of assimilating culture through language has provided our students with the essential tools to develop their different abilities in communication (Chenlu Liu, 2016). There for, they were able transform into more sociable beings who display greater tolerance toward others. It is really essential to affirm that female students feel a huge attraction and a strong motivation towards occidental cultures and they are eager to learn more out of the academic environment. Female university students are inclined to “form a part of what we can call a global culture that allows them to take part in different cultural, academic and common interest groups” (Beltrán Arias, 2015:364).

This investigation could give us a real image about the visible culture and its influence on significant traits on young female students’ lifestyle. They all recognize that their first contact with the culture was the classroom and there for, they could open up to the different social media and they could cultivate a new identity using a new language.

Results demonstrated that technology and social media imposed their rules and thus play an essential role in language interaction and lifestyle. They facilitate to students being in an adequate linguistic environment in order to closely be imbedded in real situations with native speakers. They allow our female students to explore new worlds, to share experiences and even to have more confidence as young cultured women. In the words of Faizi et al., who insists that “via social media, all language enthusiasts can get in touch with native speakers of a variety of languages. They can transfer their ability to real contexts.” (2014: 64). This confirmation meets with our target and with the results of our analyzed data that social media and technology enhance our female students’ skills and enrich their character as modern cultured women.

The final aspect that we have explored in our survey represented future expectations of those young female students who have chosen languages as a path for their lives. Results showed that girls are really eager to explore new experiences and if it is possible for them, most would agree to travel alone, to immigrate to a new country and live in cosmopolitan countries. Foreign languages created a new profile of Arab women who can understand differences, who can face new challenges through their ability to communicate in foreign languages. Women who see in acquiring new languages a real tool to change reality and a way to succeed. The influence of foreign language learning allowed more connection to the outside world and promoted more genuine interaction with others. These results assert a major interest in the realm of learning languages that lead to better practices in intercultural approaches.

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اللغة والجنس: أثر تعلّم اللغات الأجنبية على الطالبات الأردنيات

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ملخص

اتخذت منهجيات تعلّم وتعليم اللغات مؤخراً أشكالاً متنوعة اختلفت في أساليبها عن التقليد في الطرح وفي كيفية إدراج مستويات الاكتساب اللغوي والممارسات اللغوية لمتعلميها. وفي حقبة المتغيرات التي تشهدها وسائل تعلّم اللغات، يهدف هذا البحث بشكل أساسي إلى دراسة مدى تأثير دراسة اللغات الأجنبية من عدة جوانب على فئة لا يستهان بها من الطالبات الأردنيات. تسعى في هذا البحث لدراسة أثر تعليم اللغات الأجنبية في الأردن واكتسابها (إن وجد) على الجانب المعرفي والثقافي وأسلوب الحياة والأفاق المستقبلية بالنسبة للفتيات الجامعيات في الأردن، بالإضافة إلى رصد أهمية استخدام الوسائط التكنولوجية وشبكات التواصل الاجتماعي المختلفة في رفد الفتيات بالأدوات الضرورية للاكتساب اللغوي الثقافي. استخدم في هذا البحث التحليل المنهج الكمي والنوعي الذي تم من خلال استبانة عالجت المحاور الأساسية التي تم طرحها إشكالية بحثية حيث أظهرت النتائج مستوى الاندماج الفكري والثقافي لدى الطالبات واعتمادهن على اللغة الأجنبية الجديدة بؤرة للتواصل مع العالم وقاعدة أساسية لفهم المجتمع والهوية العربية الأردنية وجسر للتواصل مع الآخر وفهم موجداته. كما بينت الدراسة، من بين العديد من النتائج أنّ الطالبات يرين في اللغات الأجنبية المتعلمة مستقبلاً وتميزاً وظيفياً ينعكس بشكل إيجابي على خياراتهن في الحياة.

الكلمات الدالة: تأثير اللغات الأجنبية، الدافعية، الوعي الثقافي الاجتماعي، الجنس واللغة، التكنولوجيا والمرأة.

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