

**The Influence of Learning Arabic on the Intercultural
Competence of Speakers of Other Languages in Jordan**

أثر تعلم اللغة العربية على كفاءة التفاعل بين الثقافات لدى الناطقين

بغيرها في الأردن

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the Master of Arts Degree in English Language and Literature**

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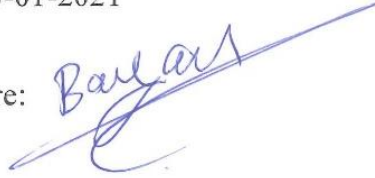
Authorization

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Thesis Committee Decision

This thesis entitled “The Influence of Learning Arabic on the Intercultural Competence of Speakers of Other Languages in Jordan”, was successfully defended and approved on 23/01 /2021.

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The image shows three handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is a large, stylized loop with a horizontal line underneath. The second signature is a long, horizontal stroke with a small loop at the end. The third signature is a large, stylized loop with a horizontal line underneath. The signatures are positioned to the right of the committee members' names.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to all the people who believed in me and encouraged me even when I second-guessed myself. To Saja who helped me contact the participants. And to all the participants who agreed to be a part of this study.

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The Influence of Learning Arabic on the Intercultural Competence of Speakers of Other Languages in Jordan

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the influence of learning Arabic on the intercultural competence of speakers of other languages in Jordan, with a focus on exchange program students who came to Jordan to study for a semester or longer. The study seeks to examine the impact of learning Arabic in making their intercultural communication more efficient.

Adopting a qualitative approach, the study bases its findings on a series of semi-structured interviews with 11 exchange program students who spent time in Jordan and got engaged with Jordanians in various situations.

Results have revealed that learning Arabic especially colloquial Arabic plays a vital role in the intercultural competence of the participants and make the communication process more sufficient. It also revealed that despite the fact English is widely spoken around Jordan, there is still a need to learn Arabic to facilitate intercultural competence.

Keywords: Intercultural Competence, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Colloquial Arabic, Diglossia, Lingua Franca

تأثير تعلم اللغة العربية على كفاءة التفاعل بين الثقافات لدى الطلبة غير الناطقين بها في الأردن

إعداد: بيان مفلح العجولين

إشراف: أ. د. سلام خالد المحادين

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة أثر تعلم اللغة العربية على الكفاءة الثقافية لدى الناطقين بلغات أخرى في الأردن. استهدفت هذه الدراسة مجموعة من طلاب التبادل الثقافي الذين قدموا الى الاردن للدراسة لفصل دراسي أو أكثر عبر اعتماد المنهج النوعي عن طريق إجراء مقابلات مع إحدى عشر مشاركا من طلاب التبادل الثقافي في الاردن.

وقد طرحت الدراسة الأسئلة التالية:

- 1- هل تعلم اللغة العربية ضروري لزيادة الكفاءة الثقافية لدى الناطقين بلغات أخرى؟
- 2- ماهي اللهجة العربية التي يجب تعلمها لزيادة الكفاءة الثقافية؟
- 3- ما تأثير انتشار اللغة الانجليزية على الكفاءة الثقافية؟

وقد أشارت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها على أن تعلم اللغة العربية وخاصة اللهجة العامية قد لعب دورا كبيرا في زيادة الكفاءة الثقافية لدى المشاركين وأنه على الرغم من انتشار اللغة الانجليزية الا انه لا تزال هناك حاجة لتعلم اللغة العربية لدى الناطقين بغيرها في الاردن. الكلمات المفتاحية: تعدد اللهجات، الكفاءة الثقافية، اللغة العربية الفصحى، اللهجة العامية، لغة عالمية.

Chapter One: Background

1.0. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

English is widely spoken in Jordan with many people particularly in the urban areas. According to Saidat (2010), the Jordanian population can be divided into three main groups on the basis of social and cultural backgrounds: urbanites, peasants, and Bedouins.

Urbanites reside in the major cities of the country in the north and middle geographical areas of the country. Bedouins are scattered in the middle, western, and southern geographical areas of the country. The peasants reside in the northern and middle geographical areas.

Misachi (2017) argues that modern Standard Arabic is the official language in Jordan, and is used in all official written documents and mass media. There are three main varieties of Arabic spoken in Jordan which can be classified under the categories of Urban, Rural, and Bedouin. The Urban variety is characterized by aspects of Arabic spoken by people who migrated from Hauran, Moab, and Palestine. He also adds that English has been the primary foreign language in Jordan since 1946. There are several minority languages spoken within certain communities residing in Jordan like Chechen's and Circassian's languages. Dweik and Mohammad (2019) concluded in their study that even though English is the most dominant foreign language in Jordan, participants showed loyalty to the Arabic language, Jordanian culture, and identity. Dweik and Mohammad chose a sample of 50 Jordanians to respond to a questionnaire to investigate the effect of the spread of English language as a lingua franca on Jordanian society and the languages commonly used by Jordanians.

As part of my job at the American University of Madaba, I am working closely with several exchange students who were spending a semester or a year studying in Jordan. The vast majority were enrolled in regular courses in various areas of specializations, none of which require them to learn or know much Arabic. Despite spending considerable amount of time in an Arab country, engaging with Jordanian students and professors, the vast majority of the students were not inclined to learn Arabic. Based on anecdotal evidence gleaned from several conversations with them, the researcher came to the conclusion that students were of the opinion that almost all Jordanians spoke enough English to make learning the language seem almost non-essential to foreigners. This thesis stemmed from my attempt to examine, through rigorous scientific methods, how intercultural competence/ intercultural communication has impacted by the failure-or interest- of these students to learn the language of the host country, in this case, Jordan. A number of interviews will inform my findings and shed light on some of the social and political issues that surround immersion in a culture, but not its language.

1.1.1 Exchange Programs in Jordan:

The history of exchange programs in Jordan dates back to the 1950s, with students coming to Jordan to study Arabic, teach at special needs centers, or as part of the peace corp (Barnet et. al., 1995). Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, there was renewed interest in learning Arabic, which is a much-sought out language by the US foreigner department due to the shortage of Arabic speakers (Taha, 2007).

Bilingualism itself is a channel for developing relationships and global understanding to secure peace (Taha, 2007). There have also been a number of social, cultural, and career-related factors that have led to the increase in the number of Europeans and Americans who

are interested in learning Arabic and educating themselves about Arabs and their culture, including the fact that learning Arabic may help them better understand the reasons behind the serious and dangerous events happening in the Arab world (Dasani, 2015).

People learn Arabic for a variety of reasons, such as gaining language skills that are useful in more than 22 Arab countries, developing on-ground expertise in critically important countries, and gaining insight into the second-largest religion in the world and a deeper understanding of Arab culture (Bean, 2015).

In light of what has been presented earlier and based on the diversity and the richness of Jordanian society and culture, this study examines the impact of learning host language on non-natives' intercultural competence and the various reasons which motivates non-native speakers of Arabic to learn Arabic.

1.2 Statement of the Study:

Intercultural competence is an emerging concept that appeared due to globalization. It has become unavoidable in intercultural communication. This study is a qualitative account of the influence of learning Arabic on the intercultural competence of speakers of other languages in Jordan.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- To investigate whether learning Arabic is essential for non-native speakers to achieve advanced levels of intercultural competence.
- 2- To investigate which variety of Arabic should be taught to non-native learners to help them develop a better understanding of socio-cultural practices.
- 3- To investigate the role of English as a lingua franca on non –native socio-cultural practices regardless of if they're positive or negative.

1.4 Questions of the Study:

The goal of this study is to answer the following questions:

- 1- Is learning Arabic essential for non-native learners to reach intercultural competence?
- 2- Which variety of Arabic should be taught to improve socio-cultural practices?
- 3- What is the effect of the spread of English as a lingua franca on non-native socio-cultural practices, be it negative or positive?

1.5 Significance of the Study:

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there are limited studies on the effect of diglossia on non-native learners of Arabic and almost none on the nexus between language and culture in Jordan. These previous studies utilized a quantitative method while this study uses a qualitative approach by conducting semi-structured interviews. In addition to the above, very little research has explored the link between intercultural competence and language learning. In light of the previous discussion, the contribution of the present study is to investigate the influence of learning Arabic on the intercultural competence of a group of

exchange students in Jordan. This study may add to existing literature and provide material for other researchers interested in conducting a study on this topic.

1.6 Limitations and Limits of the Study:

There are two main limitations that need to be addressed regarding this study. The first limitation is related to the population of the study as the population surveyed for this study does not include all speakers of other languages in Jordan. The results of this study are limited to the sample and instruments of the study. These results cannot be generalized to apply beyond the sample and instruments used in the study. It represents the views and responses of the participants. This study is conducted in Amman –Jordan during the 2019-2020 academic year.

Some of the limits that the researcher may face include finding participants that have been staying in Jordan for the minimum required time needed to learn Arabic.

Their reason for staying in Jordan could be to study or to work, may not necessarily require them to learn Arabic. All the interviews were conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic in Jordan in July 2020. These unusual circumstances prevented the researcher from conducting face to face interviews. The researcher relied on Zoom app and Facebook messenger to conduct the interviews.

1.7 Definition of Terms:

Arabic: Southern-Central Semitic language spoken in a large area including North Africa, most of the Arabian Peninsula, and other parts of the Middle East. Arabic is the language of the Qur'ān and the religious language of all Muslims. (britannica.com, 2019). **Operationally Arabic:** it is the language of the Holy Quran. It is the official language in the Middle East. It is a cornerstone in every Islamic ritual.

Culture: Zimmermann (2017) defines culture as the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, including their shared language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts. **Operationally Culture:** it is a set of characteristics of a particular group. It is the beliefs and values of societies. Each country has different cultural activities and rituals.

Diglossia: Nordquist (2018) defines it as a situation in which two distinct varieties of a language are spoken within the same speech community. The term diglossia (from the Greek for "speaking two languages") was first used in English by linguist Charles Ferguson in 1959. **Operationally Diglossia:** a linguistic situation where you have more than one variety of a language each variety has its areas of usage.

Lingua Franca: Nordquist, (2019) defines Lingua Franca as a language or a mixture of languages used as a medium of communication by people whose native languages are different. **Operationally Lingua franca:** the use of a language as a means of communication for speakers from a different linguistic background.

Cultural practices: The shared perceptions of how people routinely behave in culture and values are shared ideals of a culture (Frese, 2015). **Operationally** it is the embodiment of a tradition or custom within a particular culture.

Intercultural competence: The ability to communicate effectively when individuals are involved in the interaction does not share the same culture, ethnicity, language, or other common experiences (Samdperil & Gunther, 2016). **Operationally** it is the ability to communicate successfully across different cultures.

Intercultural communication: a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings (Lustig & Koester, 2007). **Operationally** It's communication across different cultures and social groups.

Discourse: How language is used socially to convey broad historical meaning. It is language identified by the social conditions of its use, such as who is using it and under what conditions (Henry & Tator, 2002). **Operationally** It is language spoken or written in light of its social context.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

2.1 Intercultural Communication: From Social to Cultural Identity:

Globalization has made intercultural communication (IC) inevitable, with the internet playing a major role by opening up horizons of communication and allowing anyone to upload any document which then becomes available to others from all cultures all over the globe. Intercultural communication is also a key factor in many fields like business, medicine, and education.

Business is perhaps the field that is probably the most affected by intercultural communication with the emergence of multinational companies and global companies. Doing business without cross-cultural communication is virtually impossible and fraught with many problems which explain why most organizations focus on the value of cross-cultural communication processes, efficiency and competence, and cost of doing business (Targowski & Metwalli, 2003).

The term intercultural communication was first introduced by American anthropologist Edward T. Hall in 1959 in his book *The Silent Language*. It was initially used for applied purposes rather than theoretical considerations with a focus on training. Hall (1959) addresses at length some of the challenges faced by American diplomats and development personnel whose intercultural skills had to be improved to enable them to function properly aboard. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was an increasing interest in IC, chiefly from a psychological perspective.

It is widely agreed that the first systematic attempt at theorizing IC was William Gudykunst's *International and Intercultural Communication Annual* (1983) which brought together a number of researchers in the field to discuss how people from different cultures communicate and make cultural sense of each other. This was followed by Young Yun Kim and Willam Gudykunst's edited volume *Theories in Intercultural Communication* in 1988. The volume expanded the fields of inquiry to include insights from cultural schools of thought, psychology, sociology, and ethnography.

Byram (1997) argues that the concept of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) at a core of foreign language teaching and a way to improve the quality of language learners while considering the role of cultural issues in language learning and teaching.

According to Croucher et. al (2015) ICC “evolved in different ways in different countries” (p. 72). The authors argue that ICC is predicated on the notion of identity which has its roots in both traditional and modern paradigms. Their overview of approaches to identity in ICC reveals an earlier theorization that perceives identity as a source of conflict and anxiety that communicators attempt to reduce and minimize in cross-cultural contexts (Hall, 1959). Because Intercultural communication occurs when interacting participants represent a different communication system, differences may occur in verbal and non-verbal communication that can give rise to conflicts that may generate feelings of confusion, tension, and embarrassment. For example, people from Nordic countries tend to speak more directly than native English speakers, who tend to use polite language. Scandinavians in the UK have reported offending English people by failing to say 'please ' and 'thank you' enough (Sarwari & Wahab, 2018).

The other more recent approach to identity is more culturally oriented and attempts to situate identity within both psychological and social factors (Merion & Tileaga, 2011).

Based on the understanding that the goal of IC is to increase understanding of culturally mediated communication phenomena, theorists have sought to draw upon insights from social identity theory (McKinley et al, 2014), the notion of cultural identity as a discursive phenomenon (Moriizumi, 2011), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1982), and Ethnolinguistic identity theory (Giles & Johnson, 1987) to examine more widely how ICC functions within the complexity of all those variables. ICC is very closely associated with Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC), which is loosely defined as a mode of behavior that is both appropriate and effective in any given context (Spitzberg, 1988). Shuang (2014) posits the existence of three processes necessary for realizing intercultural competence; the affective, the behavioral, and the cognitive, and while earlier studies of IC focused on the nation-state as the boundaries of inquiry. This was predicated on the assumption that difficulties arise when speakers belong to two different language communities. But over the past two decades, there has been a shift to examining cultural contexts that exist within the same language community such as intercultural competence in the field of education, online interactions, race, ethnicity, religion, and gender (Dervin et. al 2012, Sommer, 2014, Wagener, 2014).

This thesis tackles ICC within the context of a second language and will, therefore, examine some of the issues surrounding ICC when knowledge of the second language is quite minimal or entirely lacking.

2.1.2 Bologna Process and Exchange Programs:

In 1792, French educator Mar-Antoine Julien wrote to King Louis XVI of France asking him to create a worldwide commission on education composed of educational associations from various European states. He aimed to cultivate peace among nations and capitalize on the opportunity that sharing ideas and growing mutual trust among educators presents. In the mid-19th century, Jullien's plans came true as representatives from Germany, France, England, and the US designed a plan for a permanent organization to be responsible for managing international education that came into practice in 1876 (Cadd, 2012). At the end of WWI, international student exchange programs were introduced. They were created to promote understanding among nations and to prevent conflicts that had led to the onslaught of the war (nwse.com).

In the last decade, the number of students pursuing academic opportunities in foreign countries has increased steadily. By 2017, more than 5 million students were studying outside their home countries (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). International education enriches host countries' educational, cultural, and linguistic values. It also provides students with global contact, cultural understanding, and prepares them to enter an international environment (Yu & Moskal, 2019). In the early 2000s, higher education policies in Europe were transformed by the launch and evolution of the Bologna process (Ravinet, 2008). The Bologna Process is a mechanism designed to promote intergovernmental cooperation between 48 European countries in the field of higher education.

It is designed to create coherence between higher education systems across Europe to facilitate the mobility of students and staff and make higher education in Europe more inclu-

sive, accessible, and attractive worldwide. It is considered as a key to build trust for successful learning mobility and cross-border academic cooperation (European Commission) . It is characterized by its flexible and informal nature and its powerful and swift results (Ravinet, 2008). Exchange programs and Internationalization are key components of the Bologna Process, which explains why the EU Education Area was created to allow for smooth transitioning between universities when students study in any European country. By allowing both staff and students to spend time abroad, these programs hope to foster a sense of unity and European citizenship (Papatsiba, 2006). Other researchers believe that these programs have had little impact on European citizenship despite their popularity (Van Mol, 2018).

The students interviewed during this study are part of USAID-funded programs that became increasingly popular after the rise in the number of students studying abroad, influenced by the Bologna Process.

2.1.3 Language and Culture

There are many views on the relationship between language and culture. Thinkers like Wittgenstein, Saussure, Foucault, and Chomsky discussed the relationship between language and culture. However, the most famous linguists who studied the relationship between language and culture are Sapir (1962) and Whorf (1956), who introduced the concept of Linguistic Relativity (Genc & Bada, 2005; Werner, 1997).

Sapir (1921) argues that culture and thought are language dependent on account of conveying the implicit meaning and inherited patterns of life. The core of this concept is that an

individual's understanding of the world depends on the categories and distinctions found in their native language. What is acceptable in one language may not be acceptable in another. Competence in intercultural communication is the ability of an individual's understanding of key issues involved in the communication of language in culturally different contexts.

Language has been seen as a part of culture and a form of accumulated knowledge in the culture. Language is a means to develop and transmit the culture as well as to communicate within the culture. The language people use for every day communication is proved in culture where the language is shaped by and at the same time shapes culture. To communicate within a social group means not only to speak and exchange thoughts but also to learn, think and believe in a given way of interacting in a cultural context. Pourkalhor, & Esfandiari (2017)

Language is a main component of culture along with values, beliefs and norms as well as customs; language is a product of culture, transmitted from one generation to the next in the socialization process (Hamers&Blanc,1989).Language is considered as the main tool an individual uses to internalize culture and the major vehicle for cultural transmission (Hamers&Blanc,1a80;Seeyle,1993). Culture forms beliefs, conveys ideas, and shares knowledge on customs and values. All of these characteristics are communicated through language which is an integral part of culture (Taga, 1999).

According to Adorno (Adorno & Adorno, 2001) " language is a part of a culture and a culture is part of a language, the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the other without losing the significance of either language or culture." (p. 165). Intercultural

competence is recognized by educators and employers as a positive trait. Employers want their employees to become skilled negotiators in intercultural work-related situations while educators believe that learners should be prepared to live in a multicultural world (Sercu, 2004). According to Jenkins (2005) “language plays two roles as being both a means of communication and a carrier of culture. Jenkins also discusses the role of English and globalization as being the two main reasons to teach culture as a fifth language skill along with listening, speaking, reading, and writing”.

Scherzer (2006: 24) remarks, "It is a discourse that creates, recreates, focuses, modifies and transmits both culture and language and their intersection. Redkin & Benikova (2016) argue that culture is a social phenomenon. They believe that the connection between language and culture is inevitable as language is an important element of any culture and culture personalizes language. An individual's success in learning any language is based on a set of social factors engaged in the learning process (Omar, 2017).

The process of learning a second or foreign language not only requires an individual to practice linguistic forms but also requires him to become familiar with the culture of target language in order to interpret intercultural communication Ali, Kazemian,& Mahar (2015). Language and culture are linked in three ways: semiotically, linguistically, and discursively. Languages do not determine our cognitive patterns or our emotions (Kramsch, 1993, 2014)

2.1.4 Diglossia and Intercultural Communication:

Anyone studying almost any language will come across the term “diglossia”. This term was first introduced by Ferguson (Ferguson, 1959) to refer to a language situation where

an individual has two distinct varieties of the same language which they use side by side. One of these varieties is referred to as the “high” variety which is used for official purposes such as in media, education, and public speech. It is acquired through the formal educational process. The other variety is referred to as the “low” variety which is used by communities for ordinary conversation. It has no grammatical rules and is acquired through the normal process of language acquisitions. Ferguson (1971) explains that there are three main problems learners face in learning a diglossic language which are present when an individual is either learning two languages in one, facing a dialect choice problem, or are forced to choose from a wide range of varieties and the existence of intermediate forms of the language (Bender, Cooper, & Ferguson, 1972; Ferguson, 1991, 1996).

Palmer in 2007 argues that if an Arabic learner wants to integrate into an Arabic-speaking community, they must first learn the appropriate variety of Arabic spoken by that community. He also states that spoken Arabic dialects are not taught or even mentioned in many research studies. Language is an essential element in social and educational life (Palmer, 2007).

Students are, therefore, required to acquire an academic language style to understand the intended knowledge necessary for their field (Gök, 2008). Some researchers have studied the difference between classical Arabic (H) and other varieties (L). Al-Busaidi (2015) reveals that there is a big gap between Spoken Arabic dialects and Standard Arabic, which is a major obstacle for people who wish to interact using Arabic (Fatma Y Al-Busaidi, 2015; S. Al-Busaidi & Al-Saqqaf, 2015). Another obstacle that learners of the Arabic language face arise when they try to communicate in Arabic as they may face a lack of opportunities for

practicing the language they learned in the classroom. (Redkin, Benikova, 2016).

2.2 Empirical review of literature:

2.2.1 Diglossia and Intercultural Communication:

Abu-Irmies (2014) investigated the degree to which colloquial Arabic can be integrated into high school Arabic classroom while using Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) instructions. Using a survey which included qualitative and quantitative questions asking participants about the use of spoken Arabic in the classroom, Hirsch concluded that colloquial Arabic is an integral part of Arabic language for speaking and listening and it should be used alongside (MSA) in high school classroom settings, especially when instructing students who have had little dialect exposure and are unable to achieve high levels of proficiency without acquiring spoken Arabic skills (Al Suwaiyan, 2018; Kouihi, 2019).

Al-Qufaan and Al-Faouri (2012) conducted a study that investigated the effect of colloquial Arabic in teaching standard Arabic to speakers of other languages. The researchers examined language duality in terms of its effect on the learners, the importance of teaching standard Arabic, and the problems learners might face while learning MSA.

The researchers chose a sample of non-native Arabic speakers who were students at the Jordan, Yarmouk, and Al-ALBayt Universities at different stages of acquiring their degrees. They aimed to reveal the effect of colloquial Arabic on learning (MSA). Their results showed

that learners need to be familiar with colloquial lexical items as that will help them learn Standard Arabic even if words from both varieties have a different meaning.

Aladdin (2013) carried out a study on demotivating factors that impact Arabic language classrooms of non-Muslims Malaysians and concluded that the lack of opportunities to communicate in Arabic presented to these learners was a major factor in demotivating them along with their poor speaking skills (Aladdin, 2013). The data was obtained through both the distribution of an open-ended questionnaire to 207 students learning the Arabic language at a public university in Malaysia and from conducting semi-structured interviews with twenty subjects using qualitative data analysis methods.

Alsrhid (2013) carried out a study to investigate the difficulties that foreign students from the Arabic learning program commonly encounter. The researcher used a descriptive-analytical method (Alsrhid, 2013). He reviewed 30 studies and concluded that students face difficulties related to writing and identifying different versions of Arabic letters. Students also face difficulties in learning some sounds like “Hamza, Ha.” Etc., and also face difficulties in writing from right to left since that is not a common format using when writing in other languages.

Dweik and Al-Shallakh (2015) conducted a study at two Jordanian public schools to identify the difficulties that non-natives face when learning Arabic (Dweik & Al-Shallakh, 2015). The researchers sent a questionnaire to fifty-three non-native students and concluded that non-natives face difficulties in learning Arabic because of the different varieties of Arabic that exist. Haron, Ahmad, Mamat, Ahmed, and Rawash (2016) interviewed 14 Malay Arabic learners to investigate the challenges they faced as they were learning

Arabic. They concluded that learners faced internal challenges related to knowledge and skills and external challenges related to the lack of a supportive environment and the lack of opportunities for them to speak Arabic.

Chapter Three: Methodology of the Study

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology and instruments used in this study. It also discusses the population and sample of the study, and describes the instruments, along with their validity and reliability, data collection, and analysis. It illustrates the procedures followed to achieve the goals of the study. Responses to the interview were typed and recorded upon obtaining the respondent's permission to record their responses. They were all transcribed and analyzed by the author. The researcher conducted all the semi-structured interviews in Madaba, Jordan during July 2020.

Table 1 Participants' demographic Background

Gender	Males	1
	Female	10
Nationality	Norway, Nigeria, Italy, the United State of America.	
Level in speaking Arabic	Beginner	1
	Intermediate	10
	Advance	0
Reasons for coming to Jordan	Interested in Arabic culture	1
	For education purpose	10

Participants impression about Arabs, Muslims, Jordan and Arab culture after coming to Jordan.	Good	11
	Bad	0
Where do you live in Jordan?	Jubeiha, Jubeiha, Jabal, Amman, Jabal Amman	

3.1 Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of speakers of other languages, who are visiting Jordan to study or for other purposes. Eleven participants took part in this study from four different countries; they were interviewed to provide the researcher with the information needed to answer the questions of the study. The average age ranges are from 20 to 60. The participants came from different parts of the world to engage their study in Jordan universities. Their country of origin is as follows: five from Italy, four from USA, one from Nigeria, and the other from Norway. The researcher contacted nine of the participants through their Arabic teacher in Jordan from the program language buddy which is a part of CET Academic Programs in Jordan which is an intensive Arabic language and Internship program for American University students in Amman, Jordan, one participant through SHABABEEK center which is a center that teaches only colloquial Arabic and while among the participant there was a student in the University where the researcher works. The participants came from countries with different cultural backgrounds and this gives this study a real understanding of the perception of other language speakers about Arabian culture. When an international colleague's member starts learning Arabic, it is crucial to get support from colleagues and to

have an atmosphere that creates opportunities for using Arabic at the school or the workplace. As an inspiration, center for internationalization and parallel language use has created a language buddy program, which makes it possible for staff members who are learning Arabic to get linguistic support and guidance from their Arabic speaking colleagues.

The researcher reached out to possible participants by sending an email to SHABABEEK center and contacting Arabic teachers in the program language buddy at Jordan University.

Table 2: Number of Participants and their gender, age, country, and level of education

Country	Participant	Gender	Age	Level of Education
Italy	Participant A	Female	23	Bachelor
USA	Participant B	Female	21	Bachelor
USA	Participant C	Female	23	Bachelor
Italy	Participant D	Female	24	Bachelor
Italy	Participant E	Female	25	Master
USA	Participant F	Female	20	Bachelor
USA	Participant G	Female	22	Bachelor
Italy	Participant H	Female	24	Bachelor
Italy	Participant I	Male	30	PH.D
Nigeria	Participant J	Female	20	Bachelor
Norway	Participant K	Female	66	Bachelor

All details relevant to the purpose of the visit and social status will be provided in the data analysis section.

3.2 Instruments of the study

The interpretive approach of qualitative research was chosen for this research design. The results of the interviews were tabled and analyzed systematically along thematic lines. All information provided by participants made up the primary source of data for the study. The researcher, based on availability, chose twenty semi-structured interview questions that provided answers to the study's questions. The researcher chose semi-structured interview to allow the participants to express freely any additional thoughts or information that might enrich the analysis.

3.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The cornerstone of the study is the interview method since it allows the researcher to ask more questions relevant to the argument which the researcher is working on (Al Shenqeeti, 2014). The interviews were based on learning Arabic language; culture by speakers of other languages. The researcher interviewed a selected number of speakers of other languages who lived in Jordan for a considerable amount of time.

All interviews were open-ended and semi-structured. The researcher asked the interviewees to choose the date and time that suits them best. In the beginning, the researcher introduced herself and gave a summary of her research and its objectives. She then asked the interviewees various questions related to their social and linguistic background, reasons for learning Arabic, and situations where they needed Arabic.

At the end of the interview, all interviewees were asked if they believe that learning Arabic would have helped them improve their intercultural competence.

Semi-structured interviews provide data that the structured interviews could not provide. They give the researcher the ability to ask more questions and to notice the respondents' reactions whilst responding to the questions.

3.2. 1.1 Validity of the interviews

Validity: Interview questions were introduced to a panel of experts to ensure their suitability and to decide whether they will be enough to achieve the intended aims.

3.2.1.2 Reliability of the interviews

Reliability: All interviews are recorded, transcribed, and documented. A transcript of all the interviews is included in the appendix.

3.3 Procedures of the Study

To conduct the study, the researcher performed the following steps:

1. Collecting theoretical and empirical studies that are related to the subject.
2. Setting up the objectives and questions of the study that are related to the topic.
3. Preparing interview questions and a questionnaire.
4. Checking the validity of the suitability of the questions.
5. Checking the reliability.
6. Detecting the answers in the spoken interviews and write them.
7. Explaining the problems found in these interviews.
8. Drawing out the conclusions.
9. Proposing recommendations for further studies.
10. Indexing references according to APA style.
11. Add appendices if possible

Chapter Four:

Social Practices and Impressions towards Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab culture:

4.1. Introduction:

This chapter aims at introducing the first part of this study based on the semi-structured interviews conducted with speakers of other languages from four different countries (Italy, USA, Norway, and Nigeria). This chapter provides an outline of the interviewee's background in terms of age, level of education, the time they have spent in Jordan, and the languages they speak. This chapter also sheds light on the reasons why speakers of other languages learn Arabic and to discuss the driving force that made speakers of other languages show interest in learning Arabic.

4.2 Impact of Learning Arabic on changing former misconceptions about Arabs:

Table 3: Social Practices and Impression of Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab Culture.

#	Social Practices and Impressions of Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab culture:	Positive		Negative	
		Fr.	%	Fr.	%
1	Impact of Learning Arabic on changing former misconceptions about Arabs)	9	81.8	2	18.18
2	Impact of learning Arabic on changing participant's opinion about Arabic:	10	90.90	1	9.09
3	Learning Arabic (MSA vs. Colloquial respectively)	4	36.36	7	63.63
4	Situations where participants needed Arabic	5	45.45	6	54.54
5	Positive aspects about Arab culture and Jordanian culture	9	81.8	2	18.18
6	Negative aspects about Arab culture and Jordanian culture:	2	18.18	9	81.8
7	The role of learning Arabic in increasing the Intercultural competence of the participants:	10	90.90	1	9.09

Responses in table (3) show that the majority (81.8%) of participants have positive impressions of Jordan, Muslims, and the Culture. This means that they have an interest in learning Arabic and learning more about Jordanian culture. More than 90% of participants agreed that Jordanian people are friendly and of good character, and almost without exception, decent, honest, respectful, and polite. They also described Jordanians as being very generous ;they like to greet one another and make small talk to break the ice. When meeting a Jordanian individual for the first time; showing interest in their culture will make a good impression.

About 18.18% have formed some negative impressions about Arabs and Muslims due to some of the challenges they have faced in the country, especially the language barrier. People form impressions by combining information with prior knowledge found in their long-term memory. The participants reported Jordanians were more receptive and welcoming when Arabic was used to communicate with them. This positive attitude is supported by findings of Palmer's research (2007), according to which most of the respondents felt they were more trusted and more easily able to integrate into society using spoken Arabic. Before coming to Jordan about 81.8% of the participants had a good impression of Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab Culture because most of them had already met Arabs and Muslims, although to varying degrees.

Getting exposed to a culture or a country prepares the individual for what he/she is going to face and provides him/her with the information needed to deal with various situations. "I have always known Arabs to be fun, crazy which I like. I am a Muslim, so I had a good impression." (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020). Participant

D responded that she was motivated by the people's attitude, the Arabic language, and the dressing code of women in the society which is new to her compared with her home country.

This cultural aspect gave her good high impressions about Jordan and Arabs. On the other hand, two participants stated that their impression about Arabs was influenced by typical stereotypes. “But of course I had also some typical stereotypes in my mind about Arabs “(Participant A, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020) “and the stereotype was that Arabs are racists” (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020). These stereotypes can be attributed to the representations of Arabs in the media (Amz, 2014). Since the 1956 Suez crisis, western media, Americans specifically, have portrayed Arabs in a very negative light. Since the 1990s negative stereotyping of Muslims and East Asians by western media has increased xenophobic sentiments towards these communities (Wu,2002).

Arabs have been presented as bad, terrorists, silly, naïve, arrogant, nervous, rich, and stupid in Hollywood movies (Qumsiyeh,2003; Nittle,2016; Little,2008) The media has portrayed Arabs as a political, economic, and security threat. Since 9/11 attacks in the United States and other acts of violence by terrorists have created a climate for increasing anti-Muslim attitudes in many countries (Amnesty, 2012). Research suggests that attitudes towards Muslims and Arabs became more negative after 9/11 attacks because of the association between Muslims and Arabs, and terrorism. This has led to growing prejudice against the Islamic religion and towards Arabs, Muslims, and Arab culture.

Participant F got connected to Arab, Muslim, and Arab culture through interacting and socializing with Arabs and Muslims while growing up in her home country. This interaction played a significant role in forming good impressions about Arabs, Muslims, and Arab culture “I had Muslim friends before coming and grew up with people at my high school from the Arab world, so I knew more about culture and religion from that background! I think my impression has always been positive. I believe people around the world are fundamentally the same, and I believed that I would find that to be true in Jordan. “(Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020). On the other hand, participant G believes that religion has an influence on culture, everyday practices, and social norms. “That there is a heavy religious influence on culture, everyday practices, and social norms. I had the impression that Jordan was much more progressive/liberal and open than other Arab/Muslim societies.” (Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020).

Language and religion are the central elements of any culture. They are inseparable and intertwined. Some committed Muslim men express their religious devotion by growing considerably long beards and wearing short thobes 'garments'. Jordanians often keep certain pieces of furniture or ornaments in their houses or offices that signal their faith. For example, when visiting Muslims' houses, one is likely to see some Islamic antiques and wall artwork, such as pictures of Al-Kabah and some verses from the Holy Quran written in beautiful Arabic calligraphy. You might also see copies of the Holy Quran and some prayer rugs.

There is no doubt that Islam has affected the cultural and social norms such as curiosity about other cultures and experience living in a country that is different culturally played a

main role in forming other participant's impression: "I always think that in the world we are all the same, but simply everyone is different in culture, language or religion.

"Before arriving in Jordan I was so curious to find out how we lived in a country that I believed culturally very different from mine "(Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020) . "since I was studying the culture and the religion at the university I had no prejudice, I was just very curious" "(Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). Participant number eight remarked that hailing from an Arab and Muslim background has played a major role in having a positive impression about Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab culture. It has been proved by several studies that first-generation immigrants are keen to stay connected with their origins and raise their children (second generation) to relate to their roots. "Coming from a Muslim background and having a mom who is Arab, I had a pretty positive outlook on Arab culture." (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020).

Participant J admitted that she had negative impressions about Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab culture. She did not have any previous knowledge or knew any Arabs or Muslims, prior to coming to live in Jordan. All the information she had was from historical knowledge she has, and it is safe to say that these sources do not reflect the best side of Arabs, Muslims, and Arab culture. "I heard many negative things growing up but I tried to keep an open mind going in and I knew that in reality, I did not personally know any Arabs or Muslims before coming to Jordan. "(Participant G, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020).

4.2.1 Impressions about Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab Culture after Coming to Jordan:

About 99% of the participants said that their impressions had become more positive during their stay in Jordan. “No! I was right in finding a lot of people very similar to me, I learned more about culture and religion and specific things, but I left with an equally positive impression just knowing more people.” (Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020). “No, it didn’t change. It confirmed the idea and the impression I had from before. So, I would say that my impression changed in a better way!” (Participant A, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020).

Other participant revealed that this experience has given her the chance to learn more about culture and religion and deepen her understanding towards Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab Culture ;“ There were some things that were more conservative than I anticipated, and certain behavioral trends occurred that I didn’t anticipate. “(Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020).

On the other hand, the participant who was curious about the experience of living in a very culturally different country said that after living in Jordan and learning about the culture she found many things in common between her country and Jordan: “No, I still think the same thing but I think there are many things in common between Jordan and my country” (Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). The participant, who had a negative impression about Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab culture revealed a complete shift in her impression and attitude towards Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab culture, she developed a positive attitude towards them.

This shift in her impression would reflect the impact of getting exposed to the culture; “Yes, coming to Jordan made me fall in love with Arab culture and I became friends with many Jordanians, both Muslim and Christian “(Participant G, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). The participant, who thought that Arabs were racists, admitted that she did not witness a single incident of racism while living in Jordan, adding that this confirms how prejudiced and unfair stereotypes could be “My impression has changed about racism. I have never experienced it.” (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020).

4.2.2 Impact of learning Arabic on changing participant’s opinion about Arabic:

90% of the participants believe that learning Arabic has played a major role in changing their opinions about Arabs, Jordan, Muslims, and Arab culture. Most of them said that language played a major role in changing their impression or validating it. “Of course I do. Studying Arabic was the best choice I’ve made in my life.” (Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020).

One participant said that learning a language can make a person passionate about the whole world; “I think yes! Because Arabic language is part of this culture, so it helps you to be passionate about this whole world!” (Participant A, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020) . Another participant revealed that language helped her learn more about the meaning of culture and cultural differences" Yes, I think that the more you know about the culture, history, and customs of a country, the less likely you will have prejudices or believe in wrong things “(Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020" .

Language and culture are interwoven. A specific language usually points out to a particular group of peoples. When you interact with another language, it means that you are also interacting with their culture and the language they speak. It is difficult to understand one's culture without accessing its language directly.

Another participant commented that learning the Arabic language prevented her from forming negative assumptions; "I think so because I could ask questions I had or was able to break down barriers and assumptions I have about Arabs/Jordan/Muslims and vice versa (maybe a Jordanian person also has reservations or assumptions about American culture" (Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). Another participant said that learning the language helps people to become more open-minded towards the country and its culture. "I think people who do not have much exposure to Arab culture and Islam, become more open-minded when they learn Arabic and visit an Arab country." (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020).

"Yes, sure I feel that learning a new language is a sign of respect towards the country, the people, and the culture, so a basic understanding of the language is a must." (Participant I, Zoom interview, July 15, 2020). "I think it has helped! It's harder to understand or learn from someone if I can't talk to them, and in general, it has helped explain politics and history to me, and given me more perspective. I think everyone that wants to engage with the Middle East should study Arabic". (Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020). Learning Arabic helps in appreciating the Arabic culture, practices, and products and in understanding the values that matter the most to Arabs such as hospitality, dignity, and honor.

One participant is not convinced that there is a link between learning language and forming impressions about cultures that speak that language. “No, I believe that language has nothing to do with impression. It is the mind that will help you with the impression ”(Participant K, zoom interview, July 18, 2020). The view of this participant can be attributed to her educational background in psychology. According to another participant, language did not have any influence on her impression about the citizens of that country, because forming good or bad impressions is not about speaking the language but rather about the attitude of the people. (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020).

4.2.3 Summary:

Generating a positive impression about a certain culture can be attributed to several reasons and almost all the participants had positive interactions with Jordanians. Multicultural knowledge should include not only the experience brought by exposure to cultures of different countries but also the experience brought by exposure to cultures of different nations and regions.

Chang et al. (2017), proposed that having a multicultural experience not only provides individuals with opportunities to learn new concepts and knowledge but often requires the establishment of innovative frameworks. Having a positive impression can certainly improve intercultural competence. It will equip individuals with the knowledge and tools needed to understand and behave efficiently in that culture. It will make them open-minded towards the differences.

The only participant who showed a negative impression towards Arabs, Muslims, Jordan, and Arab culture did not have any previous knowledge so is it safe to say that having prior knowledge of the new culture will generate a positive impression and increase intercultural competence among individuals.

4.3 Learning Arabic (MSA vs Colloquial):

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or Colloquial Arabic is one of the major challenges that students face when learning Arabic. In addition to the standardized version of Arabic, which allows Arab people around the world to understand each other, there are also many dialectal varieties of Arabic. Thus, even though they share the same grammatical rules with the Modern Standard Arabic, depending on the country and its region, there are other colloquial expressions in use. The MSA approach is based on the exclusive use of MSA as the language of instruction in Arabic classes. Most of the text materials developed for this approach used to place primary emphasis on the teaching of grammar and reading and continued to rely mainly on the grammar-translation method in the teaching of Arabic. Kouihi (2019)

However, because of the new developments in foreign language education in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the oral component of MSA courses began to receive increasing attention. It continues to be the dominant approach in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Colloquial Approach is based on the teaching of a specific Arabic dialect (e.g. Iraqi, Egyptian, Syrian), or a specific regional dialectal group (e.g. Levantine, Gulf, North African) for oral use. The instruction usually does not require any knowledge of MSA, nor does it require

knowledge of the Arabic script, since transliteration (Arabic words written in Roman characters) is used in most colloquial textbooks. The colloquial approach is suitable for the needs of those interested in the study of Arabic in one of its spoken varieties only. The approach has shortcomings such as the inability to read Arabic alphabet and the non-transferability of language knowledge to MSA or other dialects.

For this reason, the spoken varieties of Arabic language are not taught in schools or in language learning centers outside Arabic speaking world. Formal Arabic language cannot be used for communication purposes with native Arabs and this limitation is recognized by both teachers and students, yet it is considered less prestigious by second language learners (Schmidt et al., 2004).

One of the objectives of this study is to investigate which variety of Arabic should be taught to non-native learners to help them develop a better understanding of socio-cultural practices. When asking the participant about which variety they wanted to learn of Arabic. "I want to learn colloquial Arabic because I want to communicate with people according to the level of their understanding of the language. My son studied MSA. He has three years of university studies of MSA and he took some dialect courses in Amman. He met a native Jordanian and my son was talking in MSA to him and the man told him that speaking MSA would make people start to wonder where the speaker is from. It would be a big benefit to you to speak a dialect that gave me a sense that he felt the need to localize you. It is better to speak the language of the people rather to sound like a textbook." (Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020). "Colloquial, everyday language." (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020)

“Colloquial “(Participant G, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). “Colloquial for sure " (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020) "Colloquial. After 5 years of university, it’s enough to know MSA. Colloquial Arabic is the key of communication. "(Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020).

This participant spent five years learning Arabic at university. However, when she came to an Arab country and wanted to communicate with locals, she felt the need to learn colloquial Arabic. These statements reflect the importance of learning colloquial Arabic to communicate efficiently with locals since MSA is not used in daily communication. Kahtany (1997) Wrote,” Using MSA in a situation where the dialectical form is appropriate may expose the speaker to ridicule from his or her listener”."

"Both, but I learned more classic" (Participant H, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020) MSA may not be the variety used in daily interactions in the Arab world but that doesn't deny its status as the language of history, classical literature, and above all the language of the Holy Quran.

4.3.2 Situations where participants needed Arabic:

This section is dedicated to discuss the various situations where the participants needed Arabic:

"Yes, In Disi every day but in Amman not that much "(Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020). This participant chose to live with Bedouins in the Jordanian desert. Bedouin’s sometimes does not go beyond elementary or secondary level. As a result, a few of them could be proficient in English. The participant needed Arabic to communicate with them.

“Yes, in many situations I needed to speak with people in the community most especially

when going to the market to get daily needs. (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020)
,(Participant I, Zoom interview, July 15, 2020).

"Yes, when I was getting around Amman by myself on buses" (Participant G, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). "Yes, I started to speak with some Arabs (most of them refugees or immigrants) in my city" (Participant H, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). "Yes! Every time in Jordan I had to speak with old people, especially outside Amman" (Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). "Going out of Amman means that you are going to find yourself in many situations where you will need Arabic. "Yes, in taxis, stores and occasionally hospitality situations and in public" (Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). In hospitality situations, there are certain terms and vocabulary limited to the occasion and the Jordanian culture no matter how Arabic you have learned. You need to learn the social occasion (context) related to these terms to understand them properly like the terms used in weddings, Funerals.

4.3.3 Summary:

According to the British Council: Arabic language is one of the most sophisticated and difficult languages. All participants choose to learn colloquial out of their desire to communicate with locals, with some of them showing interest in learning both varieties (MSA, Colloquial) because they wanted to communicate with locals and learn about the history of Arabic culture.

However, none of the participants chose to learn MSA only. Learners of Arabic may find him/herself learning two languages among the two (MSA or Colloquial), due to the huge

difference between Arabic varieties. Speaking another man's language can make one understand their culture easily. The researcher believes that learning colloquial Arabic will help learners of Arabic in communicating with locals and make the interaction process more efficient. This point was emphasized by one of the participants "Colloquial Arabic is the key to communication." (Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). It is the same participant who has learned MSA for four years at the university.

4.4. Positive Impression of the participant toward Arab culture and Jordanian culture:

Jordanians are widely recognized for their hospitality and generosity. Hospitality is so much a part of Arab-Gulf tradition that a number of ethnographies of the region have titles like "Ever a guest in our house" (Shryock and Howell, 2001), "Guests of the Sheik" (Fernea, 1965), and "Culture-Middle East: Arab hospitality runs deep" (Janardhan, 2002). By Tradition, a stranger is to be housed and fed for three days without expectation of reciprocity or even a question about who he is. The significance of hospitality in the Gulf region is attached to both its necessity in the harsh desert environment of Bedouins and its moral centrality in Islam. It is seen as closely associated with the compassionate treatment of strangers and the significance of sharing with others in the Arab/Muslim culture. All the participant expressed their feelings about the culture and character of the people of Jordan and how they are been treated in a good way.

Almost every book written about the Middle East dedicates a section to describing and explaining the sense of hospitality in Arab culture. Jordanians are very friendly; they enjoy having guests and results in their country and their homes. "Their positive attributes are the

hospitality, the openness to others and foreigners, the positive energy they give, the kindness. and a lot of things. "(Participant A, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020)" There are a lot of positives, one of the biggest that comes to mind is I always felt welcome and included. I was introduced to friends' families quickly and brought into family gatherings (Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020).

"I love Jordanian hospitality, and that almost everyone will help you even if you explicitly ask. I do like how Jordanian society seems to hold more value in friendships and family, and that's reflected a lot in how I've seen Jordanians interact with one another (and with foreigners)." (Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). Growing family is the most common way of life in the Middle Eastern culture.

Many social rituals and traditions involve the participation of all family members, this warmth of a family and the close relationship among its members do not exist in European and western culture. "Jordanians are very nice and always help you willingly." (Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020 "For sure the first positive aspect is hospitality. Everyone is very keen into helping you" (Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020) "The positives would be how kind and welcoming people are; they are always willing to help." (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020). "Positive good people everywhere, kind ready to help even if my Arabic is very poor" (Participant I, Zoom interview, July 15, 2020).

There's a term in Jordanian and Arab culture which is " Tabak Raha" which can be translated into English as "your burden is a source of relief to me" which means that the Jordanian

will do anything to help someone in need. They will give anyone in need help without even asking.

“The strong sense of hospitality and the flexibility with time” (Participant G, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). “Positive aspects: wonderful country, amazing people and food “(Participant H, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). “The positive aspect is that Arabs are nice” (Participant J, Zoom interview, July 9, 2020)

“Positive is I had the feeling of being included even though I was an outsider. Being able to be together without filling every minute of silence with words, sincerity, and the sense of welcoming that you don’t have in Norway” (Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020).

The sense of hospitality does not exist in her culture. it’s almost unheard of to hear about inviting a stranger to a Cup of coffee in UK or any other European country they are raised to be suspicious of too much kindness overall a random offer for help. They are raised with the concept of stranger danger.

“I spent the weekend up in the Dead Sea in a nice hotel there was a gentleman in the gift shop where I went there to buy 1 sunscreen and swimming ring so I chose the cream and then I wanted one of those rings and he said what color and I said Zarqaa “blue” please he looked at me and said you speak Arabic I said no I’m just learning a bit and then he went to put the cream in a bag and I said mafee kees bedoon (without a bag) and he looked at me and his eyes welled up with tears he was tearing up and he said okay I’m giving you 50% off the screen and I’m giving you another cream just because you’re learning our language, felt so humbled” (Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020).

4.4.2 Negative aspects of Arab culture and Jordanian culture:

Participants noticed several negative aspects about Arab culture and Jordanian culture:

"A huge negative aspect is hypocrisy; social appearance is very important." (Participant E, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020). Hypocrisy is a negative characteristic which unfortunately exists all around us. Many of us have different faces and masks what do they show based on situations, places, and people around us. Some many practices and behaviors are a product of heavy social and cultural pressures. "the only negative aspect I found is that they are often convinced of some things and it is difficult to make them change their mind" (Participant D, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020) stubbornness is a characteristic of known in all Arabs and Jordanian once they are convinced with something it is very hard to make them think the other way. "Negative weather is very hot, busy city" (Participant I, Zoom interview, July 15, 2020).

"Negative aspects would be sexual harassment and sexism. I also struggled with how loud and chaotic Amman can be, as well as personal boundaries/space are different here. Smoking indoors was a challenge for me to deal with" (Participant C, Facebook messenger, July 12, 2020). Smoking is a global phenomenon that has spread all over the world including Jordan the government set out laws banning smoking and vaping in all indoor public spaces however, a Guardian investigation revealed that tobacco use in Jordan had become the highest in the world. According to a study in 2019 by the World Health Organization showed that more than 80% of men frequently smoke cigarettes or use nicotine products near. The average Jordanian smokes 23 cigarettes per day and 45% of students aged between 13 and

15 have used some form of tobacco use. Smoking water pipes, known as it is also hugely popular throughout the country it has become a part of pop culture. Personal space is one of the cultural differences. Personal space has become crucial in social interaction (Hall 1966) observed different cultures and concluded that personal space is smaller among South Americans. Southern and eastern Europeans and Arabs and larger among Asian, North European, and North America. These differences are based on the sensory exposure and intimacy typical of each culture. Personal space in Arab and Jordanian culture is very small.

According to Hall, cultural norms are the key elements in determining the preferred social distances; since what is intimate in one culture may be social in another. He classified cultures into contact culture which uses closer interpersonal distance and involves more touching and noncontact cultures which show opposite preferences and behaviors. Reducing or increasing interpersonal distance or contact has been a part of behavioral adaptation against epidemics (Fenichel,2013) due to the circumstances the world is witnessing with the spread of Covid -19, social distance has been imposed by all countries. In fact, some countries set out some rules and regulations to enforce maintaining social distance.

It is in our tradition to shake a hand and give hugs even if it is the first time you are being introduced to a person. “A pat on the shoulder or a tap on the head is highly expected when engaging in a conversation with an Arab or a Jordanian. A negative was being catcalled or hissed at by men on the street, but I’ve had that worse elsewhere. (Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020).

However, “the negatives would be the Cat calling in the streets, which happens everywhere.” (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020). “Negative aspects: a little bit of harassment, dirty places.” (Participant H, Facebook messenger, July 9, 2020).

Sexual harassment could reflect a negative side of any culture and generate a negative impression towards it. Jordanian government listed many rules against these acts. According to a study conducted by Arab Barometer (2016), verbal sexual harassment is more frequent than physical sexual harassment in Jordan (one of the participating countries in the study). Any woman who will find herself in a situation where she is being sexually harassed, when asking for help she will find many men coming to the help her and defend her honor. This act is not widely spread in Jordanian society the same participant stated that she had worse elsewhere.

4.4. 3 Summary:

Every culture has its positive and negative aspects. Jordanian and Arab cultures are no different. All the positive aspects listed by participants are unique to this culture and represent the essence of it while the negative aspect could be common to any other culture it is even expressed by the participant when she talked about sexual harassment she had worse elsewhere.

4.5 The Role of Learning Arabic on Increasing the Intercultural Competence of the Participants:

Learning Arabic and improving intercultural competence, language and culture are inseparable. It opens the door for interaction between people and provides them with the knowledge need to get to know the culture. Some participants answered this question with yes without elaborating, others chose to elaborate and explain why they believe that learning Arabic has helped them improve their intercultural competence.

"I think it did! I learned a lot about the culture through the language", (Participant B, Facebook messenger, July 13, 2020). "I think yes, because Arabic is more sophisticated compared to English in many ways, and it helps to understand the culture by knowing where the words come from." (Participant F, Facebook messenger 9, July 2020) ."Yes, I believe that language is identical with culture. "I believe that language is the carrier of culture and it makes you more culturally competent to understand the people."(Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020). The researcher believes that the best way to understand a culture is by learning its language. Language is the cornerstone of any culture and the keeper of its heritage and legacy. Not learning the language limits the interactions with a specific group (educated) of the society and deprives you of interacting with simple and pure-hearted people. This was emphasized by one of the participants. "Not learning a language is cutting me out of so many information and is giving a sign that I am not trying "(Participant K, Zoom interview, July 18, 2020).

Chapter Five: Discussions and Recommendations:

5.0 Introduction:

This chapter introduces the objectives of the thesis, and presents research problem statement, research questions. Each question will be explained based on the methodology adopted. The finding of this study will be discussed along with some recommendations for future research.

5.1 Objectives:

As an employee at the American University of Madaba and working closely with several exchange students who despite spending a considerable amount of time in an Arab country, engaging with Jordanian students and professors. None of these students were inclined to learn Arabic. The first objective was to investigate if learning Arabic is essential for non-native learners to reach intercultural competence. The second objective was to investigate which variety of Arabic should be taught to non-native learners to help them develop a better understanding of socio-cultural practices. The third objective was to investigate the role of English as a lingua-Franca on non-native socio-cultural practices regardless if they are positive or negative.

5.2 Research Problem:

The problem of this study is to explore the effect of learning Arabic on non-native speakers' intercultural competence in Jordan.

5.3 Discussion of Research First Question Findings:

First Question: Is learning Arabic is essential for non -native learners to reach intercultural competence?

Learning another language is essential for international communication and co-operation. It facilitates knowledge of other countries and their culture. On the other hand, language learning requires an expanded theoretical understanding of the three fundamental concepts in the theory and practice of language teaching, learning language, and culture. Globalization has brought cultures into increased contact and conflict. It has changed our understanding of learning languages and culture, which language and cultures can be taught. How they are thought and their goals in terms of learning (Blommaert, Leppänen, Pahta, & Räisänen, 2012; Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Kramersch, 2014)

Cultural competence along with communitive competence were first introduced in the 80s as Europe focused on increasing dialogue and cooperation across national boundaries within a global economy (Kramersch,2013), Cultural competence represents a shift in perspective from the Standards. Intercultural Competence involves a comparison between the learners C1 and C2 in order to understand different worldviews. Agars' (1994) notion of lingua-culture, which is vital in intercultural competence understandings; focuses on what he calls “rich points” which are the moments where differences are perceived and how according to these differences, we consciously construct a new frame and modify our own existing frames to understand these differences.

The goal is to denaturalize individuals' own cultural point of view and understand the others by bridging the gap between the two positions as a result learners are not only observers of the differences but they experience these differences in order to appreciate them. Catford and McLaren (2003) argue that culture can't be perceived as an isolated bound and cohesive streaming system.

According to Williams (1977), a culture must be interpreted in relation to its underlying system of production since a culture is a whole way of life. Brislin (1992) defines intercultural sensitivity as the emotional response and attendant behavior that individuals bring to encounter with other cultures. At 2003 RAND Study titled "What Makes a Successful Career Professional in an International Organization", showed that intercultural confidence is more important than foreign language fluency, however, it did not ignore the importance of foreign languages to intercultural competence, stating that foreign language skills are "a predictor of cross cultural competency" (Matherly, 2006, p.91). (Bennett, 1993, p.16) discusses the notion that foreign language fluency accompanies a high degree of intercultural understanding in his article "How not to be Fluent Fool: Understanding the Cultural Dimension of Language", Where he argues that many students view language as a communicative tool. In this view language is considered as a set of words tied together by rules and learning a foreign language is a simple process of substituting words and rules to get the same meaning with a different tool.

According to Bennett this way of thinking can lead the learner to become a fluent fool which refers to someone who speaks a foreign language well but does not understand the social or

philosophical content of that language. This kind of people are likely to face some misunderstanding they might find themselves in social situation where they can't understand the context enough to avoid giving or taking offenses. Eventually, fluent fools develop negative attitudes toward native speakers whose language they understand but they do not understand their basic beliefs and values. Heymes (1972) argued that social linguistic competence which implies the knowledge of the rules of using language appropriately in context is as important as linguistic competence to account for language acquisition and language use. Socio-cultural competence refers to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge. How he or she expresses him/ herself appropriately within the social and cultural context of communication. It includes the knowledge of the language variation and the sociocultural norms of the target language. It is safe to say that a social or cultural blunder can be far more serious than a linguistic error when a learner is engaged in oral communication

5.4 Discussion of Research second Question Findings:

2. Second Question: which variety of Arabic should be taught to improve non-natives of Arabic socio-cultural practices?

The diglossic nature of Arabic rises serious challenges in teaching and learning the language, these challenges are; Learning two languages in one this is experienced by learners who have learned MSA and got into situation where they go exposed to a dialect; choice of a dialect (Al-Batal, 1992).

It is represented in the choice of which dialect should be taught. In learning Arabic in an Arabic-speaking environment, the choice of that's country's dialect is justifiable. However, the choice is much harder in a non- Arabic native speaking environment; the existence of intermediate forms of language, This is presented as many speakers of Arabic tend to mix elements from MSA and a spoken variety in a certain context. This intermediate-level is referred to as the middle language (Al. Maatouq,2005). All these challenges resulted in learners of Arabic need to be competent in both MSA and at least one dialect (Palmer, 2007)

According to Palmer (2007, P.113)" each regional variety of Arabic represents a unique culture and People". In the past three decades, foreign language pedagogy focused on developing the communicative competencies of the learners along with focusing on learner's proficiency and in particular oral proficiency. Palmer (2008, P.88) suggested that spoken Arabic should be taught at the same time as MSA but in separate courses, maybe they should be taught in an integrated fashion. Wahba (2006) expressed that considering the current theories of foreign language acquisition. Choosing only one variety of Arabic for instruction will limit the ability of non-native learners to communicate effectively in an Arabic speaking community. He added that both varieties should be taught as occurs in a natural speak context. Wahba (2006) Described MSA and spoken Arabic as one entity with different signs, he wrote, Each side of the system is used in situations and for functions for which it is uniquely suited, and both sides are necessary for functioning in full range of situations where an educated speaker expected to function (P.159).

In 1966, Dell Hymes introduced the term communicative competence which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology as well as to social knowledge about how and when to use it appropriately.

According to Savignon (1997), communicative competence should be the center of foreign language education along with good classroom practice. This measure to what extent learners of Arabic is prepared to be communicatively efficient in Arabic-speaking world and in real-life situations. For years, Arabic variationist socio-linguistic research focused on relating variation in language usage to demographic factors like education, age, and gender along with relating language to identity and ethnicity. Maamouri (1998 P.33) stated that "MSA is nobody's mother tongue and there's rarely I almost never used at home in the Arab world" Haugen, 1956 argued that mastering two different mutually comprehensible dialects of the same language is a kind of bilingualism which requires the same kind of learning.

5.5 Discussion of Research Third Question Findings:

3. Research Third Question: what is the effect of the spread of English as a lingua-Franca on non-native socio-cultural practices, be it negative or positive? Engle and Engle (2004) argue that the prevalence of English as a global lingua franca may support the validity of studying experiences in English speaking environment the prevalent use of English is often associated with the process of globalization. Waters (1995) defines globalization as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangement decreases. Others viewed globalization as a type of universalism.

One of the major outcomes of globalization is the massive spread of English as a global language. English has become essential for development. Kachru, Kachru, and Nelson(2006) define a global language as a language which has moved beyond the nation. English has been growing faster due to it seems as a lingua franca by the majority of people around the world. Crystal 2003 expresses that almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of the world's population is fluent or proficient in English. He states that English is spoken all over the world more than any other language and recognized by more countries as a lingua franca than any other language. This widespread usage of English makes it as Kachru 1982 describes the most widely thought, read, and spoken language the world has ever known. English has become the main channel of interaction among the natives Kachru 1992 Crystal 2003 expresses that language reaches global status when it becomes the priority foreign language all over the world. Today, English is heavily used as a common language by people from different languages .According to Qian 2008, English language proficiency has been an important factor for University graduates in securing employment as he describes that the more proficient in English a young graduate is, the better job he/she will get. Wood 2001 States that English is the language of science since any scientist who wants to be recognized and successful must write in English. English language has established its status as the main leading international language in countless domains of usage in the 21st century , Crystal 2003 states that there are geographical - historical factors and socio-cultural aspects that have led English to have this global status. English is recognized as the most pervasive means of international and intercultural communication. The world becomes more interconnected with English.

Even though there have been other international languages, English language is different in many ways the extent of its diffusion geographically, then numerous cultural diversity of its

users, and the various domains it is used and served its purposes. It is acknowledged in applied linguistics that non-native speakers of English outnumber the native speakers, in fact, most interactions in English take place in the absence of the latter crystal 2003, Craddol 1997, 2006. Being a lingua franca has become the most frequent characteristic and most significant defining feature of English. English is used internationally, primarily for international communication

5.6 Recommendations for Further Studies:

This research tried to investigate the influence of learning Arabic on the intercultural competence of speakers of other languages in Jordan. It did not, nonetheless, investigate much deeper into the cultural perspective and impact of learning. The researcher recommends investigating the relation between learning host Language in his study Arabic and Cultural sensitivity. It is also highly recommended conducting a comparator between speakers of other languages who lived in Jordan however they choose not to learn Arabic and those who learned Arabic and how. Learning or not learning Arabic has affected their intercultural competence. Additionally, a clear comparison should be made between intercultural competence and learning a language in a native speaking environment.

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:العربية المراجع

بغيرها للناطقين العربية اللغة تعليم في (والعامي الفصيح) اللغوية الازدواجية تأثير, عوني, والفاعوري توفيق, القفعان
39(1),2012, والاجتماعية الانسانية العلوم, دراسات

Appendix(1)

Interviews Questions

What is your name?

Gender (Female/ Male)

How old are you?

Where are you from?

How many languages do you speak?

Why did you come to Jordan?

What is your major?

How long have you been in Jordan?

How did you come to Jordan, as part of exchange program or on your own?

Where do you live in Jordan?

With whom do you socialize?

What kind of impression did you have towards Arabs, Jordan, Muslims and Arab culture
before coming to Jordan?

Did your impression change after coming to Jordan?

Are you taking Arabic courses? if not are you planning?

Which variety of Arabic would you study (classic or colloquial)?

Do you think that learning Arabic would have helped in changing your impression towards Arabs, Jordan, Muslims and Arab culture?

From the time that you have been in Jordan what are the positive and negative aspects that you have about Arab culture and Jordanian culture?

Do you think that learning Arabic would have increased your inter- cultural competence?

Have you ever been in a situation where you needed Arabic?

What language do you use in your daily interactions?

Appendix (2)

Interviews Outline

No.	Type of Interview	Date	Country	Name	Age	Level of Education
1	Written	13 July	Italy	Participant A	23	Bachelor
2	Written	13 July	USA	Participant B	21	Bachelor
3	Written	12 July	USA	Participant C	23	Bachelor
4	Written	12 July	Italy	Participant D	24	Bachelor
5	Written	9 July	Italy	Participant E	25	Master
6	Written	9 July	USA	Participant F	20	Bachelor
7	Written	9 July	USA	Participant G	22	Bachelor
8	Written	9 July	Italy	Participant H	24	Bachelor
9	Taped	15 July	Italy	Participant I	30	PH.D.
10	Taped	8 July	Nigeria	Participant J	20	Bachelor
11	Taped	18 July	Norway	Participant K	66	Bachelor

Appendix (3)

Checklist of the Semi-Structured Interviews

Dear Participant,

My name is Bayan Mufleh Al-Ajoulen, a graduate student at Middle East University ,I am conducting a research study to obtain a Master degree in English Language and Arts titled The Influence of Learning Arabic on the intercultural competence of speakers of other languages in Jordan .

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between language and culture and the effect of the spread of English as a lingua franca on speakers of other languages in Jordan desire to learn Arabic.

The study aims to investigate the following objectives

- 1- investigating if learning Arabic is essential for non- native learners to reach intercultural competence
- 2- investigating which variety of Arabic should be taught to non- native learners in order to help them develop a better understanding of socio cultural practices
- 3- investigating the role of English as a lingua franca on non -native sociocultural practices regardless of if they are positive or negative

This interview will help in achieving the objectives of this study. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for agreeing to be a part of this study and answering the interview questions.

The information's included in this interview will be confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix (4)

Frequency Tables

Number of Languages spoken by participants	Number of Participants
two langaugs	3
three languages	3
four languages	2
five languages	2
six languages	1

Period of Time spent in Jordan	Number of Participants
3 months	1
4 months	3
5 months	2
6 Months	2
1 year	2
2 years	1

Taking or Took Arabic courses didn't take any Arabic Courses

10

1

Variety of Arabic Participants would learn

MSA

Colloquial

Both

0

3

8

Uncategorized References

Wahba, K., Taha, Z. A., & England, L. (2014). Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century: Routledge.