

Attitudes and Motivations for Learning Italian as a Foreign Language in Jordan

Ahmed Al-Oliemat

Department of Modern Languages, Al al-Bayt University

P.O. Box: 832, Mafraq (25110), Jordan

Tel: 962-777-786-369 E-mail: a_oliemat@hotmail.com

Received: October 31, 2013 Accepted: November 15 2013 Published: December 25, 2013

doi:10.5296/ijl.v5i6.4982 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v5i6.4982>

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the attitudes and motivation Jordanian Italian majors have for learning Italian as a foreign language. It also aims to find out if there are statistical significant differences among the respondents attitudes and motivations for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan attributed to gender, age, schooling background, place of residence and academic year of study. The instrument used is a five-point Likert scale questionnaire based on Flaitz (1988) and Gardner and MacIntyre (1991). The results of the study show that Jordanian Italian majors have strong positive attitude towards learning Italian as a foreign language. According to the results, the types of motivation Jordanian Italian majors have for learning Italian as a foreign language are instrumental and integrative motivation; in fact they are found to be almost equally motivated (instrumentally and integratively). Also, the results demonstrate that there are no statistically significant differences among the respondents' attitudes and motivations for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan due to gender, age, schooling background, place of residence and academic year of study.

Keywords: Attitudes, Motivations, Foreign language learning, Italian

1. Introduction

It was not until recently that Italian as a foreign-modern language was adopted as an academic subject matter at the university level in Jordan. Universities like the University of Jordan and AlalBayt University have started their B.A. programs of double major (Italian-English) in which 60% of their study plans consist of Italian literary, cultural and linguistics courses.

In fact, it is this adoption of Italian as a foreign language in Jordan that evoked studying attitudes and motivations for studying Italian as a foreign language in Jordan. Researchers have long tried to trace attitudes and motivations for learning a foreign language. Studies revealed that some foreign language learners seem to be attracted only by the kind of benefits they can get and the advantages they may gain through learning a second / foreign language (Abdel Hafez, 1994).

Most of the researchers addressing the issue of attitudes and motivations have concluded that students' attitude is an integral part of learning and it should, therefore, become an essential component of second language learning pedagogy (Inal, et al. 2003). Further, they have stated several reasons why research on students' attitudes towards foreign language learning is important; among these are the following: first: "attitudes toward learning are believed to influence behaviors" (Kaballa and Crowley, 1985 in *ibid*). Second: "a relationship between attitudes and achievement has been shown to exist" (*Ibid*, P. 39).

In fact, discovering students' attitudes and motivations about language will help both teachers and students in the teaching-learning process.

Gardner (1980, p. 267) defines attitudes as "the sum total of a man's instincts and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, fears, threats, and conventions about any specified topic".

Unfavorable attitudes towards language learning can reduce learner's motivation and harm language learning, whereas positive attitudes can do the opposite. Thus, it is important for the language teacher to examine the attitudes of his or her students (Oxford, 2001).

The interest in studying motivation and attitudes in psychology and education dates back to the early beginnings of the 20th century where many language teachers and researchers assumed that attitudes and motivations affect students' education success in general (Dornyei, 2001, Gander, 2006).

Many models and theories were constructed to identify how motivation affects language learning (Keblawi, 2009); among these is Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition which was and is still widely used to study motivation (Garnder and Lambert, 1972). The model assumes that the learners who have positive attitude to the target people and culture learn their language more easily than those who have negative attitude, and they are expected to be more motivated to second language acquisition than others (Ushida, 2005).

According to Garnder's model (2006); motivation is defined as the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction

in the activity.

Gardner's model assumes that instrumental motivation and integrative motivation are good indicators of why people tend to study a foreign language (Keblawi, 2009, Yang, 2012).

Instrumental motivation refers to learners' desire to learn language to accomplish some non-interpersonal purposes such as meeting the requirements of graduation, applying for career and achieving higher social status (Ghanea et al, 2011). On the other hand, integrative motivation involves the learners' desire to learn language for the purpose of becoming more integrated into the society of the targeted language, thus, the learner tends to acquire the culture and values of the foreign language people (Tamimi and Shuib, 2009).

Though most researchers seem to disagree on a precise and concise definition of motivation, they still tend to indicate the crucial role it plays in foreign language learning.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there were no previous studies conducted to investigate the attitudes and motivations Jordanian universities' students have toward Italian as a foreign language.

Given the fact that there is a gap in the literature with regard to Jordanian Italian majors' attitudes and motivation for learning Italian as a foreign language, this study aims to investigate the types of the attitudes and motivation Jordanian Italian majors have for studying Italian as a foreign language.

Further, it seeks to trace the effect of gender, age, schooling background, place of residence and academic year of study on attitudes and motivations towards learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

2. Literature Review

Many studies were conducted to identify students' motivations and attitudes towards foreign language learning.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) examine the effect of attitudinal and motivational variables on success in learning a second language among French language learners in different socio-linguistic environments. They found that attitudinal / motivational factors play a great role in the dynamic of second language acquisition and use.

Chamber (1999) stated that learning occurs more easily when the learner has a positive attitude towards language.

Benson (1991) surveyed over 300 freshmen to investigate their motivation towards learning English. The results showed that integration motivation and personal goals are preferred over instrumental ones.

Inal et al. (2003) in a study on the relation between students attitudes toward foreign language and achievement found out that there is a significant relation between students academic achievement and student attitudes toward a foreign language but they stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between attitudes and achievement attributed to gender.

Ghanea, et. al. (2011) conducted a study to reveal the relationship between learners' motivation (integrative and instrumental) and English proficiency among Iranian EFL, the results showed that there is a significant relationship between the integrative motivation and instrumental motivation and English proficiency among Iranian English majors. Other studies revealed that students' motivation for studying a foreign language is affected by many factors, such as: students' self-concept, goals, social environment, teacher's behavior, values, needs of the students and ethnic background (Chastain, 1988; Brohy, 2001, Tragant and Munoz, 2000).

Tamimi and Shuib (2009) in a study conducted to investigate motivations and attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language at Hadhramout University of Sciences and Technology concluded that students have greater support for instrumental motivation for learning English. Moreover, results clarified that learning English as part of the culture of its people had the least impact upon students' integrative motivation.

Abdel Hafiz (1994) investigated the influence of attitudes and motivation on the proficiency of English majors at Yarmouk University in Jordan. The results demonstrated that Jordanian English majors have strong positive attitudes towards English as well as towards Americans and British and their culture. In addition, the results showed that students are integratively as well as instrumentally motivated. However, students were found to be more instrumentally than integratively motivated.

Bernaus and associates (2004) in a study entitled "motivation and attitudes towards learning language in multicultural classroom" showed that students hold more positive attitudes towards Spanish and English than towards Catalan, although Catalan is the main language of teaching at school.

Strobelt and Chen study (2003) investigated the reasons why students choose to study a certain foreign language. They found that students tend to choose the language that is the easiest to learn, and that provides greater future career opportunities for them.

3. Research Questions

- 1) What kind of attitudes do Jordanian Italian majors have towards Italian as a foreign language?
- 2) Are Jordanian Italian majors integratively or instrumentally motivated?
- 3) Are there statistically significant differences among the respondents' responses to the above-mentioned questions due to demographic variables, namely: gender, place of residence, schooling, age, academic years?

4. Methods

This study is conducted to investigate the attitudes and motivations Jordanian Italian majors have for studying Italian as a foreign language. A descriptive comparative design is employed to describe students' attitudes and motivations for studying Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

This section includes a description of the sample and instruments of the study.

4.1 Sample

The subjects of the study are fifty second, third and fourth year students, ten male students and forty female students, studying Italian within the B.A program of double major English-Italian at the university of Jordan, subjects were selected according to the following criteria:

- 1) They have all studied at least 12 credit hours of Italian, this means that they should be at least in their second year in the B.A program.
- 2) Their mother tongue is Arabic.

4.2 Instrument

For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire based on Flaitz (1988), Gardner and MacIntyre (1991), and others was adopted and slightly modified to suite the objective of this study.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first section was dedicated to the demographic variables of the sample (gender, place of residence, schooling background, age, academic year of study), the second section consisted of 16 items reflecting the students' attitudes and motivations (instrumental and integrative).

In this section, students' answers were rated on a five-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

To establish validity, the researcher asked experts in the field to read and rate the questionnaire; their recommendations were taken into consideration prior to the administration of the questionnaire.

To measure the reliability of the instrument, the researcher used split-half analysis of Cronbach's alpha, it achieved a high degree of reliability Cronbach's Alpha, a measure of internal consistency was 0.86. Students were informed that there were no correct answers and that their responses would remain confidential.

The questionnaire presented to the students was written in English since the respondents are qualified enough in English to understand and to deal with the questionnaire. Further, the researcher assisted the respondents who needed help in understanding certain items during the administration of the questionnaire.

The variables assessed, together with items concerned with each variable were as follows:

- 1) Attitudes towards Italian: five items (6, 7, 12, 13, 17), dealing with subjects' attitudes towards Italian. A high mean score on each of the above-mentioned items reflects a positive attitude.
- 2) Instrumental orientation: five items (1, 3, 8, 10, 14) dealing with instrumental reasons for studying Italian. A high mean score on each of these items reflects an instrumental motivation.
- 3) Integrative orientation: seven items (2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 15, 16) dealing with integrative

reasons for learning Italian. A high mean score on each of these items reflects an integrative motivation.

5. Data Analysis

The data obtained in the questionnaire were processed using the SPSS package (version 16). In addition to percentages which were used in the table concerned with the distribution of the respondents in terms of the demographic variables. the researcher used the following statistical procedures to answer the questions of the study:

- 1) Means and standard deviations were used to answer questions 1 and 2.
- 2) T-test and One Way ANOVA model were used to answer question 3; the purpose is to find out if there is a significant difference among the respondents' responses to question 1 and 2 due to demographic variables (gender, place of residence, schooling background, age and academic year).

6. Findings and Discussions

6.1 Introduction

The study was designed to explore the attitudes and motivations (instrumental vs. integrative) Jordanian Italian majors at the University of Jordan have towards Italian language.

The findings of the study are presented and discussed according to the three research questions stated above.

The first dimension of the analysis focuses on the distribution of the respondents according to their demographic variables (gender, place of residence, schooling background, age, academic year of study). Table 1 explains this distribution.

Secondly, means and standard deviations were calculated to answer questions 1 and 2 (tables 2 and 3 respectively).

Thirdly, T-test and One Way ANOVA model were calculated to investigate statistically significant differences among the students' responses to questions 1 and 2 attributed to the demographic variables mentioned above.

6.2 Distribution of the Sample According to the Demographic Variables

Table 1. Characteristics of the respondents (n=50)

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	10	20%
Female	40	80%
Place of Residence		
Urban	36	72%
Rural	9	18%

Bedouin	5	10%
Schooling Background		
Governmental	23	46%
Private	19	38%
Both	7	14%
Unspecified answer	1	2%
Age (years)		
19	3	6%
20	25	50%
21	13	26%
22	8	16%
23	1	2%
Academic Year of Study		
First	0	0%
Second	9	18%
Third	32	64%
Fourth	9	18%

Table 1 includes the distribution of the respondents according to the demographic variables.

This table illustrates that (according to age) 20% of the respondents are male students while 80% of the respondents are female students. This is probably due to the fact that foreign language learning is, generally speaking, preferred by female students more than males. Not to mention the fact that the number of female students at the University of Jordan is greater than the number of male students.

The table shows also that (concerning place) of residence that 72% (36 students) of the students live in big cities while 18% (9 students) of them are from rural areas, and 10% (5 students) live in Bedouin areas of Jordan. These percentages show that there is a greater interest of those students living in urban areas in learning Italian as a foreign language. This could be attributed to the fact that the opportunities available for those students, living in big cities, are much more than those available for rural and Bedouin students.

According to schooling background, the table shows that 46% (23 students) of the students are graduates of governmental schools; 38% (19 students) are graduates of private schools and 14% (7 students) of them have studied in private and governmental schools.

This is probably due to the fact that neither the rural areas nor the Bedouin areas have private schools.

The table, also, shows that the age of the sample is between (19-21) which is the essential age of the undergraduate students enrolled in the 2nd and 3rd year of their B.A. program.

Further, the table reveals that the sample include those students enrolled in their 2nd (18%),

3rd (64%), 4th (18%) year of study in the B.A. program.

6.3 Discussion of the Findings:

6.3.1 Attitudes towards Italian (Question 1)

The first research question dealt with the kind of attitudes Jordanian Italian majors have towards Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviation of items concerned with respondents' attitudes toward learning Italian as a second language

Item Number	Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
6	I prefer to read Italian novels	3.88	0.77
7	Italian is prestigious	3.98	0.78
12	Italian is the language of art	3.00	1.15
13	Learning Italian makes me lose Arabic values	2.71	1.00
17	Using Italian names for shops would stimulate me to buy from them	3.51	1.13
	Total	3.40	0.59

A quick glance at table 2 shows that Jordanian Italian majors have positive attitudes towards Italian as a foreign language, this is evident from the total mean score (3.40) concerning the respondents' responses on the items reported above.

The most positive scores were measured in response to item 7 (mean = 3.98). In this item the respondents view Italian as a prestigious language. This view plays a crucial role in adopting a positive attitude not only towards Italian, but also towards Italian people as well.

Respondents also demonstrated a positive attitude in response to item 6 (mean = 3.88) where they express their preference to read Italian novels.

This preference indicates that subjects have positive attitudes towards Italian literature which consequently leads to positive attitudes toward learning Italian as a foreign language.

Responses to item 17 (mean = 3.51) show that the subjects seem to be attracted to shops with Italian names. This may explain why a high percentage of shop signs in Jordan –particularly in big cities like Amman (the capital) and Irbid- have Italian names. In fact, most of these shops are named after famous Italian cities, artists and monuments. This attraction reflects positive attitudes towards Italian as a foreign language.

In response to item 12 (mean = 3.00) respondents seem to hold a positive attitude towards Italian as the language of art. In this regard, in fact, UNESCO reported that over 60% of the world's art treasures are found in Italy (Sacramento Italian Cultural Society, 2013).

In response to item 13 (mean = 2.71) the respondents state clearly that they do not perceive learning Italian as a foreign language as a threat to Arabic.

This positive perception of Italian contradicts with the perception of English where in a study conducted to investigate attitudes and motivations for studying English in Jordan, results showed that Jordanian English majors perceived the influence of English to be a threat to Arabic (Abdel Hafiz, 1994). This is probably due to the fact that Italian is not as widely spread as English, not to mention the fact that English is the medium of instruction for many scientific-university subject matters in Jordan like medicine, engineering, economics, etc.

This is very interesting because it shows that Jordanian Italian majors are in favor of spreading Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

To conclude, subjects' responses show that Jordanian Italian majors have positive attitudes towards learning Italian as a foreign language.

6.3.2 Instrumental vs. Integrative Motivations (Question 2)

The second research question deals with the motivation (instrumental vs. integrative) Jordanian Italian majors have for studying Italian as a foreign language.

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations for items concerned with respondents' Instrumental Motivation

Item Number	Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
1	I think studying Italian will someday be useful in getting a good job	3.96	0.88
3	A knowledge of two languages will make me a better educated person	4.52	0.61
8	Studying Italian will give me the chance to know the Italian art and artists	4.20	0.83
10	Studying Italian can be important to me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of a foreign language	3.45	1.06
14	I would feel a less confident person if I spoke one foreign language than if I spoke two or more	3.33	1.14
	Total	3.91	0.48

The table shows that the range of the mean scores of the respondents' responses is (3.31 – 4.52).

This indicates that Jordanian Italian majors are instrumentally motivated for studying Italian. The most positive score was measured in responses to item 3 (mean = 4.52), this indicate that most of the respondents view learning Italian in addition to another foreign language will make them well-educated persons. In fact, foreign language knowledge is considered to be as an indication of prestigious education.

Another strong positive response was made in response to item 3 (mean = 4.20); this indicates that studying Italian gives them the chance to know more about the Italian art and

artists.

The third strong positive reaction was made in response to item 1 (mean = 3.96) where respondents view Italian as a means of offering them a better job opportunity when they graduate. This type of motivation could be considered to be an instrumental one associated with the reward the students expect after learning Italian. The subjects, in this regard, seem to be attracted by the kind of benefits they can get through learning Italian as a foreign language.

In response to items 10 (mean = 3.45) and 14 (mean = 3.33) respectively, the subjects seem to have positive instrumental motivation for studying Italian as a foreign language in Jordan. They tend to consider Italian language knowledge as a means of gaining respect. This could be attributed to the view the society has towards educated people and those speaking foreign languages. This type of motivation is an instrumental motivation where the subjects view their learning for Italian as a means of obtaining praise.

Further, subjects seem to gain self-esteem as a result of their achievement in learning foreign languages. In fact, some researchers consider self-confidence an important psychological motivation for learning a foreign language (Clément et al, 2006).

These results show beyond doubt that the Jordanian Italian majors seem to be aware of the usefulness of Italian as a foreign language.

To conclude, subjects' responses show that Jordanian Italian majors are instrumentally motivated for learning Italian. In this respect, they view Italian as a means of getting advantages and benefits.

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations of Items Concerned with Respondents' Integrative Motivation.

Item Number	Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
2	I think it will help me to better understand Italian people and their way of life.	3.98	0.91
4	It will help me to better understand Italian people and their culture.	4.08	0.72
5	It will allow me to meet and converse with more varied people	4.06	0.74
9	Studying Italian can be important to me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.	3.90	0.84
11	Because I would like to live in the country where it is spoken.	3.56	0.97
15	Speaking or learning Italian is important to me because I will be able to enjoy Italian films and books.	4.02	0.83

16	If I learn Italian it will help me to have more friends.	3.51	1.02
	Total	3.89	0.45

Table 4 shows that the most positive score was measured in response to item 4 (mean = 4.08) where most of respondents indicate that they view Italian as a means of understanding Italian people and their culture. This could be explained as a sign of integrative motivation towards the target language group. A possible interpretation could be attributed to social tendencies affected by globalization (Tamimi and Shuib, 2009).

An integrative motivation is also evident in the respondents' responses to item 5 where the respondents assert that learning Italian will give them a better chance to converse with more foreign people, in this regard, thanks to Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp (a mobile phone application) which make it possible for different people from all around the world to communicate with each other with a cost next to zero. Obviously, this communication needs a common in-between language to be fulfilled successfully.

Another strong positive integrative motivation is measured in response to item 15 (mean = 4.02) where subjects express an important cultural aspect of learning a foreign language expressed by watching Italian films and reading Italian books.

Responses to item 2 (mean = 3.98) show that learning Italian will help students to understand Italian people and their way of life, which consequently, leads to integration in the targeted language society.

Participation in the cultural activities is found to be an important motivation for the subjects to learn Italian as a foreign language. This is evident in responses to item 9 (mean = 3.90), in this respect, the cultural office at the Italian Embassy in Amman plays a fundamental role in promoting Italian cultural activities in Jordan where in most cases Italian majors as well as Italian teachers are invited to attend and participate in these activities.

Expressing desire to live in the targeted language society is obvious; in response to item 11 (mean = 3.56) where the subjects expressed their desire to live in Italy; this result shows an Integrative motivation towards Italian as a foreign language.

The least, but still noticeably positive, integrative motivation is revealed in response to item 16 (mean = 3.51) where subjects tend to consider learning Italian as a means of having more friends. This is totally true, thanks to the new advances in the field of communications, Internet, and new mobile phone applications, most important among these: Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp (a mobile phone application).

The total mean score for the whole dimension concerned with subjects' integrative motivation is 3.89. This result helps us to rightly conclude that Jordanian Italian majors are integratively motivated for learning Italian.

Comparing the total mean scores of instrumental motivation with integrative motivation, one could conclude that the respondents are almost equally motivated (instrumentally and integratively) for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

To conclude, Jordanian Italian majors' responses on the above-mentioned items reveal strong instrumental and integrative orientation for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

6.3.3 Findings concerned with the differences due to demographic variables

This section discusses the relationship, if any, between the demographic factors included, namely, (gender, place of residence, schooling background, age, academic year of study), and the respondents' motivations for and attitudes towards learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

In this section T-test and One Way ANOVA model were used to identify the effect of the demographic variables, mentioned above, on the respondents' responses to research questions (1 and 2) at the level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Table 5. The results of the T-test for the influence of gender on respondents' motivations and attitudes towards Italian

Item	Mean		T	P
	Male	Female		
Instrumental motivation	3.90	3.91	0.053	0.958
Integrative motivation	4.05	3.86	1.140	0.260
Attitude	3.58	3.36	1.019	0.314

Table 6. The results of the One Way ANOVA model for the influence of place of residence on respondents' motivations and attitudes towards Italian

Item	Means			F	P
	Urban	Rural	Bedouin		
Instrumental motivation	3.93	3.70	4.08	1.114	0.337
Integrative motivation	3.87	3.91	4.06	0.390	0.679
Attitude	3.38	3.25	3.85	1.827	0.173

Table 7. The results of the One Way ANOVA model for the influence of schooling background on respondents' motivations and attitudes towards Italian

Item	Means			F	P
	Governmental	Private	Both		
Instrumental motivation	3.96	3.84	3.77	0.583	0.662
Integrative motivation	3.95	3.77	3.92	0.852	0.433
Attitude	3.49	3.29	3.29	0.681	0.511

Table 8. The results of the One Way ANOVA model for the influence of academic year on respondents' motivations and attitudes towards Italian

Item	Means			F	P
	Second	Third	Forth		

Instrumental motivation	3.91	3.87	4.05	0.430	0.653
Integrative motivation	3.86	3.86	4.09	0.898	0.415
Attitude	3.34	3.31	3.81	2.497	0.094

Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8 show the data obtained after applying the T-test and the One Way ANOVA model to questions 1 and 2.

Unexpectedly, the data obtained illustrate decisively that there are no statistically significant differences at the ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) level among the respondents' responses to questions 1 and 2.

This result means that the demographic variables, mentioned above, have no effect on the students' motivation (instrumental and integrative) and attitudes towards Italian as a foreign language in Jordan.

These results show that male and female students are equally motivated towards Italian as a foreign language in Jordan regardless of their age, place of residence, schooling background and academic year in which they are enrolled.

These findings, also, show that students living in urban, rural and bedouin areas (table 6) have almost the same attitudes and motivations for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan. This could be attributed to the fact that Jordan is a small country with a well-developed infrastructure which makes it possible for people to easily move from Bedouin and rural areas to those urban areas. This means that mobility between these areas is ensured regardless of distance.

Further, the results reveal that there are no statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) among the respondents' responses to questions 1 and 2 (table 7) attributed to schooling background (private vs. public schools); this result is quite unexpected since one could hypothesize that private school graduates would have more favorable attitudes and motivations for learning a foreign language since they usually learn foreign languages -other than English- at school. In fact, this explanation is supported by Gardner & Lambert's (1972) study which showed that bilingual students have markedly more favorable attitudes another language and culture.

Moreover, results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) among the respondents' responses to questions 1 and 2 (table 8) attributed to academic year (the year in which the student is enrolled), this result shows that Jordanian Italian majors share the same hopes, inspirations, desires and motivations for learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan regardless of their academic year in which they are enrolled.

7. Conclusion, implications and Recommendations

This study was initiated to investigate the attitudes Jordanian Italian majors at the University of Jordan have towards Italian as a foreign language. Another aim of the study was to investigate the kind of motivation Jordanian Italian majors have towards Italian as a foreign language. The study also investigated the influence of (gender, age, schooling background, place of residence and academic year of study), on the students' attitudes and motivation.

The results show that Jordanian Italian majors have strong positive attitudes towards Italian as a foreign language. The study also concluded that the subjects are almost equally motivated concerning instrumental and integrative motivation for Italian as a foreign language in Jordan (mean=3.91, 3.89) respectively.

Further, the findings showed that there are no statistically significant differences attributed to gender, place of residence, schooling background, age and academic year of study, and Jordanian Italian majors' motivation for and attitudes towards learning Italian.

In light of the results of this study, further research is needed to reveal the relationship between attitudes and motivations and Italian language proficiency among Jordanian Italian majors.

Further research is needed to assess the role of religion in attitudes towards learning Italian as a foreign language since Italy is nowadays the cradle of Christianity.

Furthermore, the results of this study could be used as a base and a reference point for instructors and syllabus designers to improve and further promote Italian language teaching in Jordan.

References

- Abdelhafez, M. (1994). *The Influence of Attitudes and Integrative Motivation on the Language Proficiency of English Majors at Yarmouk University*. M.A. Thesis. Yarmouk University.
- Al-Tamimi, A., & Shuib M. (2009). Motivation and Attitudes towards Learning English: A Study of Petroleum Engineering Undergraduates at Hadharmout University of Sciences and Technology. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 9(2), 29-55.
- Benson, M. (1991). Attitudes and Motivation towards English: A Survey of Japanese Freshmen. *RELC Journal*, 22(1), 34-48. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/003368829102200103>
- Bernaus, M., Masgoret, A., Gardner, R., & Reyes, E. (2004). Motivation and attitudes towards learning languages in multicultural classrooms. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 1(2), 75-89. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14790710408668180>
- Brohy, C. (2001). Generic and / or Specific advantages of bilingualism in a dynamic plurilingual situation: The case of French as official L3 in the school of Samedan (Switzerland). *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 4(1), 38-49. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13670050108667717>
- Chamber G. (1999). *Motivating Language Learners*. Clevedon Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing Second Language Skills: Theory and Practice*. 3rd edition, New York, Harcourt Brace and Javanovich.
- Chen, J., Wardn, C. and Cheng, H. (2005). Running head: Motivators that do not motivate. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(4), 609-633. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3588524>

Clément, R. (2006). Motivations, Self-Confidence, and Group Cohesion in the Foreign Language Classroom. *Language Learning*, 44(3), 417-448. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01113.x>

Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and researching motivation*. Harlow, England: Longman.

Dornyei, Z. (2001b). New themes and approaches in second language motivation research. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 43-59.

Dornyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research and applications. *Language Learning*, 53 (1), 3-32. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.53222>

Flaitz, J. (1988). *The Ideology of English*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Gardner, R. (1980). On the Validity of Affective Variables in Second Language Acquisition: Conceptual, Contextual and Statistical Consideration. *Language Learning*, 30, 255-270. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1980.tb00318.x>

Gardner, R. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*, London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. (2006). *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition*. Manuscript addressed to the Seminario Sobre Plurilingüismo: Las Aportaciones Del Centro Europeo de Lenguas Modernas de Graz.

Gardner, R. and Lambert, W. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. Newbury House Publishers, Rowley, Massachusetts.

Gardner, R. and MacIntyre, D. (1991). An Instrumental Motivation in Language Study. *SSLA*, 13, 57-72.

Ghanea, M. Pisheh, H. And Ghanea, M. (2011). The Relationship between Learners' Motivation (Integrative and Instrumental) and English Proficiency among Iranian EFL Learners. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 59, 458-464.

İnal, Sevim and Evin, Ilke and Saracaloğlu, Seda (2003). *The Relationship between Students' Attitudes towards Foreign Language and Foreign Language Achievement*". 1st International Conference on Approaches to the Study of Language and Literature. İzmir, October 1-3 2003.

Keblawi, F. (2009). A review of language learning motivation theories. *JAMEEA*, 12, 23-57.

Lifrieri, V. (2005). *A sociological perspective on motivation to learn EFL: the case of escuelas plurilingües in Argentina*. M. A. thesis, University of Pittsburgh.

McDonough, S. (1983). *Psychology in foreign language teaching*. George Allen & Unwin: London.

Oxford, R. (2001). Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom. *ESL Magazine*, 6 (1).

Strobelt, J., & Chen H. (2003). Motivations and Attitudes Affecting High School Students'

Choice of Foreign Language. *ADOLESCENCE*, 38(149), 161-170.

Ushida E. (2005). The Role of Students' Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning in Online Language Courses. *CALICO Journal*, 23(1), 49-78.

Yang, X. (2012). Attitude and Motivation in L2 Learning among UM Master Students. *International Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 1(1), 13-22.

Web References

Sacramento Italian Cultural Society, Reasons to Learn Italian, [Online] Available: www.italiancenter.net/pdfs/reasons_to_learn_italian.pdf (March 1, 2013)

Appendix

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Attitudes and motivations towards learning Italian as a foreign language in Jordan

By: Ahmed Oliemat

Please fill out the first section, 'Biographical data', then for the following statements, show the extent of your agreement or disagreement by using 5-points scale (write x):

Biographical Data

1. Gender:

_____ Male _____ Female

2. Place of residence:

_____ Urban _____ Rural _____ Bedouin

3. Schooling Background:

_____ Government _____ Private _____ Both

4. Age: _____

5. Academic year:

_____ First _____ Second _____ Third _____ Fourth

Attitudes and motivations toward studying Italian (Why are you studying Italian?), please choose the answer which represents your choice:

Items	Degree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I think studying Italian will someday be useful in getting a good job.						
2. I think it will help me to better understand Italian people and their way of life.						

Items	Degree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. A knowledge of two languages will make me a better educated person.						
4. It will help me to better understand Italian people and their culture.						
5. It will allow me to meet and converse with more varied people.						
6. I prefer to read Italian novels.						
7. Italian is a prestigious language.						
8. Studying Italian will give me the chance to know Italian art and artists.						
9. Studying Italian can be important to me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.						
10. Studying Italian can be important to me because other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of a foreign language						
11. Because I would like to live in the country where it is spoken.						
12. Italian is the language of art.						
13. Learning Italian makes me lose Arabic values.						
14. I would feel less confident if I spoke one foreign language than if I spoke two or more.						
15. Speaking or learning Italian is important to me because I will be able to enjoy Italian films and books.						
16. If I learn Italian it will help me to have more friends.						
17. Using Italian names for shops would stimulate me to buy from them.						

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright reserved by the author(s).

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).