Linguistic and Educational Awareness among University Students in Jordan

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which Jordanian EFL university students demonstrate evidence of linguistic and educational (EFL) awareness. The study used data collected from a random sample of (120) junior (first and second year) EFL students studying English in two major state universities in Jordan during the summer semester of the academic year 2012-2013. The method of data collection was in-depth interviews with individual students in addition to a number of class group discussions. Also, short (self-report) essays were elicited from the students participating in the study. The data was analyzed thematically within a qualitative framework. The results revealed five aspects of linguistic and educational awareness among the students. These were: (1) importance of English; (2) English as culture; (3) English as communication; (4) English as pedagogy; and (5) English as application. The results are discussed in light of possible pedagogical implications for the EFL context.

Key words: language; awareness; EFL; Jordanian; university; students; education; learning

Introduction

Learners of English as a foreign language need to make conscious efforts while acquiring communication skills. They also need to make necessary reflections about their learning process. It can be argued that learning English as a foreign language just does not take place automatically. Therefore, learners of foreign languages need to be aware of how the foreign language is processed. It can be assumed here that the more conscious language learners are, the better results may be achieved. Also, being conscious of the learning process might help promote the level of learning autonomy which is useful for appropriate language learning. The learning does not happen unless learners feel what they are doing and make certain judgments as to how the learning is shaping their lives. Thus, research on students’ language and learning awareness becomes a necessity if we want to achieve better academic results in schools, colleges, and universities. The relationship between learners and the foreign language cannot be taken for granted and therefore much illuminating research is needed. We need to know how students grasp the foreign language and make it their suitable tool for communication when needed. This is why we need to explore ways in which our students reflect on their educational and linguistics experiences as they progress towards more mastery levels of language use.

Awareness of language and language learning is helpful for teachers and students alike. It is important to know what students bring to the classroom and how their awareness of the role language plays in communicating and understanding. Abu-Melhim (2009) points that, over the past several decades, there has been a growing interest in learning the English language in colleges and universities throughout Jordan. However, exploring aspects and levels of EFL learners’ is much needed in Jordan because we still lack a proper knowledge base that may help us understand the needs and aspirations of our students. According to Price (2006), "opinions of foreign language study, as well as attitudes toward specific cultures and languages, influence student motivation and success." That is why it is important to focus on the learners and to examine what, why and how they learn. In other words, we need to encourage EFL students to
develop a meta-cognitive capacity ability to think critically about language and to create an agenda for learning. The learning environment must ensure that learning is a process that is related to oneself. This implies the importance of being able to understand one’s own way of thinking and the use of language as a medium in order to learn a foreign language. This helps educators plan better for the educational process. To this end, we can support students well if we build profiles regarding the language learning process of our students. Of course, it is difficult to define what 'knowing a language' exactly means, but we can conceptualize knowing a language as the ability to use the communication mechanism and its codes to achieve pragmatic goals. To acquire a communicative ability in a second language, learners need to be engaged consciously with all different components of the language.

Carter (2003) discussed the concept of language awareness and its use in language teaching, which refers to the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language. He argued that the approach has been developed in the contexts of both second and foreign language learning, as well as in mother tongue education. According to Simard and Wong (2004), a movement called "Language Awareness" has received some attention in L2 acquisition and foreign language pedagogy circles during the past decade. They cite a definition for Language Awareness by Donnall (1985) which refers to "a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life" (p. 7). Moreover, Simard and Wong (2004) wrote an article to introduce readers to the language awareness movement and to demonstrate how language awareness can be used as a pedagogical tool in the L2 classroom. They also provided sample activities are provided for classroom application. In fact, Simard and Wong (2004) see the goal of this movement to encourage the development of language awareness among L2 learners in order to enhance L2 learning as well as to foster greater linguistic tolerance and cross-cultural awareness among L2 learners.

According to Ellis (2012), language awareness is widely considered to be an important dimension of ESOL teachers’ professional knowledge. A current definition of language awareness is that of the Association for Language Awareness (ALA), which states that language awareness can be defined as “explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use” (ALA, 2012). Language awareness, according to ALA, is relevant for the learner, the teacher, the teacher-learner, the bilingual and the layperson. Therefore, it is important to give more attention to the role of language awareness as a concept in promoting language acquisition. The Association of Language Awareness (ALA), founded in 1994 by for example Garrett and van Lier, is an organization that aims at supporting and promoting activities and research on language awareness. ALA gives the following definition: “Language Awareness can be defined as explicit knowledge about language, and conscious.

In the language teaching profession, Wright and Bolitho (1990) state that much recent work on language awareness in teacher education programs has focused on teachers' knowledge about the language they are teaching. Equally important, then, is the need to realize language and learning awareness among students populations so that the two ends of the equation receive due attention by researchers.

Research Problem
Research on language and educational awareness has attracted much international attention over recent years. Svalberg (2012) put a research agenda for language awareness in language learning and teaching. The proposal discusses specific research tasks which are centrally concerned with different aspects of language awareness such as explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use. The overall argument is that research is needed into how language awareness is constructed by language learners and teachers through "engagement with language" (Svalberg 2007; 2009).
It is widely recognized now that awareness of language and educational principles has significant pedagogical bearings. Therefore, our knowledge gap regarding the extent to which our EFL students demonstrate awareness of language and education seems worthy of research effort. However, in Jordan, this area of study does not seem to have captured the attention of EFL researchers. Little research has been conducted into how conscious EFL college learners are of English as a foreign language in the Jordanian educational system.

Research Objective
This study aims at identifying the aspects of linguistics and educational awareness among junior Jordanian EFL college students. It is hoped that the perceptions held by this group of college students can be of use to educators, authors, and administrators who design postsecondary language curricula and materials. A better understanding of these students’ beliefs and concerns can improve the teaching / learning process through the development of appropriate language learning environments.

Research Question
This study aimed at answering the following question: To what extent are Jordanian university EFL students are aware of linguistic and educational principles?

Literature Review
Much literature seems to have been carried out on language awareness recently. In a state-of-the-art article, Svalberg (2007) provided a very useful update of language awareness research. The article calls for more contributions by language awareness researchers in order to enhance literacy, multi-lingual and multi-cultural competence and tolerance. This is badly needed, the article argues, as we live in a world that is full of conflicts, tensions, and power abuse. Unfortunately, the article does not list any contribution from Arab EFL researchers. Cross-cultural awareness and how to integrate it in EFL education in Taiwan was the focus of research by Ya-chen (2008). The study examined effect of ethnographic interviews on Taiwanese students' cognitive development in understanding the English language and its culture. The study also aimed at identifying the changes in students' self awareness of the target culture as well as the mother culture. Data were collected through pre–post questionnaires, oral and written reports, classroom observation and interviews. The findings revealed that participating in the interview project helped the students increase their cross-cultural awareness and communication skills.

On the other hand, Salkie (1994) discussed language awareness in the context of UK higher education. This is because language awareness "has often been discussed in relation to primary and secondary education, but rarely in relation to higher education." The research describes an innovative approach to linguistics which shares many of the aims that advocates of Language Awareness have put forward. It was found that course objectives, content and teaching methods have all changed as a result of this new thinking. The insight provided in this study is helpful for the Jordanian context as it appears that Jordanian higher education is still lagging.
Green and Hecht (1993) reported research on language awareness of German pupils. They stated that language awareness has been a curricular aim in German schools for some time. They discussed the aims, content and methods of this area of the curriculum in the Gymnasium and compared them with English models. Pupils’ command of meta-language is also investigated. They presented results of a test to assess the level of pupils’ awareness of language and investigates whether there is any correlation between their test results and their linguistic competence. It was found that both teachers and pupils regarded looking at language as very important. However, pupils were found to have only a shaky command of meta-language, and their awareness of language was not well developed. It was not possible to establish any relationship between their level of awareness and their linguistic competence.

Students’ language awareness through intercultural communication was explored by Yang (2013) in a computer–supported learning environment. To arouse students’ awareness while learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP), this study formed a computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) community to engage teachers and students from different domains and countries in intercultural communication. Participating were (208) students, including (83) international students from one of the eight vocational and technological universities which composed the CSCL community. The results indicated that students’ language awareness is stimulated when students monitor the accuracy of their language usage (process-oriented) and assess their language performance (product-oriented) during intercultural communication with their peers from different backgrounds (across majors, colleges, and universities) and countries (China, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Thailand, and Vietnam). The intercultural characteristics of the CSCL community fostered students’ language awareness as they acquired expressions from different cultures and contexts on the levels of lexical, syntactic, and textual organization. Students’ improvement of language awareness was further revealed by nine assessments examined by means of a repeated one-way analysis of variance.

Moreover, Rinkevičienė and Zdanytė (2002) dealt with students’ awareness in language learning at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania. The results of the students’ survey conducted as a part of Socrates project INSTAL have supported the theoretical research stressing that the development of meta-cognitive awareness in the learner, or knowledge about learning, is of vital importance in enhancing language learning efficiency. They cited (Kohonen, 1991) who argued that “Raising the awareness of one’s own learning and gaining an understanding of the processes involved is thus another important key for the development of autonomous learning”.

Within the context of teacher education, Griva and Chostelidou (2011) investigated the role of language awareness from the teachers’ perspective as well as its relationship with other aspects of EFL teacher knowledge. Questionnaires were distributed to a total of (150) EFL teachers employed in public primary and secondary schools in Northern Greece. The findings indicated that the participants were conscious to a certain degree of the need for raising language awareness in the EFL classroom and developing students’ language learning strategies.

Similarly, Razfar and Rumenapp (2012) analyzed the role of awareness in language ideological inquiry in second language learning. Classroom surveys, observations and teacher interviews were conducted and analyzed using content and discourse analysis. When probed for language issues within their classrooms and over their lives, students were able to articulate explicit awareness of how rules of language use mediated their lives. Teachers also expressed explicit rules regarding language use for instructional purposes. It was concluded that language ideologies provided a valuable and necessary reference point for understanding the implicit ways in which language ideologies frame interactions within ESL classrooms.

Language and culture teaching produces, through the development of linguistic and intercultural competence, alternative conceptualizations of the world and contributes to the education building of the individual in society. This was the result reported by Byram (2012) who considered some ways in which relationships between cultural awareness and language awareness might be conceptualized and then have
some impact on language education. He drew on the Council of Europe's concept and platform for "Languages in Education, Languages of Education" and intercultural education to provide an overview of the issues involved.

Useful insights can be found in the study by Kennedy (2012) who explored the relationship between language awareness and second language use. The study aimed to focus on classroom learners' language awareness and L2 pronunciation. The findings revealed that for some learners the pathway to increased qualitative awareness may not include increased L2 use, especially if learners already show a certain initial level of qualitative awareness. For other learners, however, the qualitative aspects of language awareness and L2 use seem to be interlinked, such that seeing language as a way to communicate meaning is associated with using the L2.

Bowker (1999) explored the potential of a corpus-based approach for promoting language awareness in student translators. She examined criteria required to produce a good translation and discussed obstacles to language awareness that can be found in the classroom. These included: resistance to correction, lack of motivation, and lack of awareness of the distinction between language for general purposes and language for special purposes. Similarly, Kiely (2009) reported two case studies in which he explored the role of language awareness in the learning experience of students on a one-year full-time master's program in TESOL in Britain. It shows how language awareness drives students' general English language knowledge and academic literacy skills, and supports an appropriate learner identity for the learning experience. The focus was on the students' engagement with language and the data included student e-journals, narrative workshops, individual interviews, and documentation from the assessment processes.

Andrews (2001) examined the ways in which teachers' language awareness affects their pedagogical practice and proposed a model in which the second language teacher's language awareness is seen as a sub-component of pedagogical content knowledge, forming a bridge between content knowledge and communicative language ability. In addition, Price (2006) reported perceptions and attitudes of incoming college students (freshman and transfer students) concerning foreign or second language study and foreign language requirements. The results gave insights into students' beliefs and concerns which can be used to inform and improve the teaching learning process through the development of suitable language learning environments.

Stepp-Greany (2002) presented survey data from beginning Spanish classes using a combination of technologies: Internet activities, CD-ROM, electronic pen pals, and threaded discussions. Goals of the study were to determine students' perceptions of (a) the role and importance of the instructor in technology-enhanced language learning (TELL), (b) the accessibility and relevance of the lab and the individual technological components in student learning, and (c) the effects of the technology on the foreign language learning experiences. Students attributed an important role to instructors and perceived that cultural knowledge, listening and reading skills, and independent learning skills were enhanced but were divided in their perceptions about the learning or interest values of the individual components.

The perceptions of EFL instruction at the collegiate and university levels in South Korea with 2nd year students and their instructors were examined by Thornton (2009). The study attempted to describe. This project applied a quantitative survey method, complemented with qualitative interviews, to a cross-section of 2nd year students from a two-year junior college, a private university, and a national university in Busan, South Korea. The raw survey data has been comparatively analyzed through mean, standard deviation, and T-test results, whereas the interviews have provided information that has been organized in support of developing themes. The results showed that the students shared similar perceptions toward second language acquisition. Likewise, the instructor’s results were also consistent.

In the Malaysian context, Hiew (2012) gathered English as a second language (ESL) learners perceptions pertaining to their experience in learning English language in secondary schools, colleges and local universities in Malaysia. The research methodology incorporated dialogue journal using Facebook.
Dialogue journal is a written communication between a teacher and students or other writing partners, which provides a natural context for language development and a new channel of communication outside the classroom. Respondents from public and private colleges and universities (n=46) discussed various learning issues including impediments that they encountered during English lessons in secondary school, college and university; learners’ views and comments on the issues pertaining to local English language teaching and learning; and suggestions to improve the teaching and learning of English. The discussion revealed varying viewpoints such as difficulties and reasons that students faced in learning the four language skills i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing; and the lack of confidence which hampered their language improvement. The study concluded that learners’ perceptions towards the teaching and learning of English should be taken and reviewed seriously as it is a two-way process involving teachers and learners.

However, as far as the Jordanian educational system is concerned, it appears that little research has been done on this area, i.e., language and educational awareness among university students. On the school level, Abdul-Fattah (1998) examined meta-linguistic knowledge of (15) English grammatical concepts among Jordanian ESL learners and also explored the link between meta-linguistic knowledge and proficiency in using those concepts or their exponents in both formally and situation-oriented contexts. Subjects were (233) grade (10) students. The results indicated a considerable awareness of both exemplary and descriptive meta-linguistic knowledge. The study concluded that meta-linguistic knowledge enhanced language learning.

Another study was reported by Abu-Melhim (2009) who investigated the attitudes that Jordanian EFL college students have towards learning English and how these attitudes might impact the outcomes of the learning process. The (45) female students involved in this project were asked to explain why they wished to become English teachers. The results revealed a wide range of attitudes and motivations. Surprisingly, almost half of the students exhibited negative attitudes towards learning English and entering the teaching profession.

Having reviewed the related literature on language and educational awareness, it can be noted here that although at the international level much research is done, not much can be said about investigations within the Arab as well as the Jordanian situation. This research gap needs to be filled and that is the rationale behind the current study.

Method

The study used data collected from a random sample of (120) junior EFL students studying English in two major state universities in Jordan during the summer semester of the academic year 2012-2013. The method of data collection was in-depth interviews with (40) students in addition to a number of class group discussions. Short essays were elicited from the students participating in the study. The data was analyzed thematically within a qualitative framework. Also, (120) students were asked to write a short essay on what learning a foreign language meant to them. They were asked this question: From your experience in learning English at school, and in light of your study at the university so far, explain what learning of English means to you. The essays were written as part of the final examination of writing courses. These essays were coded for each participant. Paragraphs were skimmed first then scanned for relevant answers. A qualitative approach was adopted. The content was examined thematically. Illustrative examples from the students utterances and / or statements.

Results

A number of insightful issues arose from this investigation. These can be categorized as follows:

Issue One: Importance of English: Almost all students expressed positive views about English and its value in modern life. Few people in Jordan would dispute the fact that learning a foreign language; particularly English is 'good'. One student put it this way:
"Learning English as a foreign language is very important."
Another student said this:
"Jordanians have a motivation to learn English language... They have the ability to change themselves."
This is very true as the majority of Jordanians now want to use English for many practical purposes such as travel, work, study, and business. Another student made this observation:
"In Jordan, the idea of learning second language it became improved."
It is clear from the students’ reactions to the prompt that they appreciate the process of learning a foreign language as shown in the following quotation:
"Learning English as a foreign language was a step for me to live a new experience by opening a new door for another world."
There is a clear sense how badly English is needed in The Jordanian society. It is by all means a way for self improvement and personal success. Consider this example quotation:
"Anything nowadays need English language. It helps us to communicate, interact and improve ourselves."
Despite their poor English, students in this survey were enthusiastic about expressing their love to English. This is how one student put it:
"Foreign language the most important thing can we learned..."
It is also observed that the students do see the pragmatic value in learning a foreign language by relating it to uses in real life. Other statements showing students’ positive views are presented below:
"English is important in every field of our life; it's important in work, social life, economic, and media. For me, the person who doesn't know how to use or speak English is the new illiterate nowadays."
"Learning a language is an important issue especially these days. We need foreign language for many purposes like work, communicate with other people, even we travel to another country and so on."
"Learning English language has become very necessary in the recent years."
"Every innovation thinkers confirm for important learning foreign language to be successful in your life."
"When you know other language you will be more cultured."
"Learning more than one language became an important need for humans."
"The difference between human and animals it's the language... Learning make us, build us."

**Issue Two: English as Culture**

It is interesting to note here that almost all students demonstrated a strong awareness of the value of learning the culture of the foreign language. Some students related the learning of English to awareness of other cultures. This has been expressed by the following statement that indicates why they were enthusiastic about English:
"Know more about other languages as well as other cultures."

The association between foreign language learning and the curiosity to understand other cultures was apparent throughout the students’ utterances and statements. This is obviously an evidence of 'intrinsic' motivation which can be utilized for greater gains in the academic achievement of the students. This shows an open-mind attitude among young Jordanians which could be interesting to agencies working on world peace. Consider the following quotation as an example:
"...know about what is going around the world and communicate with different people from different cultures..."
Learning a foreign language is also seen by the sample Jordanian college students as a way of change through cultural awareness. This is a rather mature level of relating to learning a foreign language. The following statement was one of many similar examples provided by the students in this study:

- "When you learn a new language, you will live a new life..."
- "By learning a foreign language, we can become intelligent, live a new life."

The value of culture learning was prevalent in almost all paragraphs written by the students. This was also repeated in the interviews. One student equated learning English without exposure to a foreign culture with 'nothing'!

- "If we don’t expose to English language as culture, this means nothing."

This is what one student said while expressing her views about learning English:

- "It's require culture knowledge to know what is appropriate to say..."

It seems clear here that students are eager to get involved in assimilating the culture behind the texts they are required to study. They see cultural awareness as a kind of pre-requisite to communicative ability. This is apparent in the following statements provided by one of the student:

- "For example, you have to know about the culture of the language and it's values such as how to express yourself."
- "If you want to learn a language you need to know the culture of the native speaker."
- "You live with other people and many cultures"
- "Learning a foreign language is very important to each one because you don’t live alone in this world."

**Issue Three: English as Communication**

The results showed a strong sense among the students of the value of communication in the process of learning English. They seem to know the role of language as a communicative tool. Some students stressed the importance of viewing language as communication. This is clear in the following quotations:

- "Learning a language is not about facts... it needs communication."
- "You have to know the language skills firstly then apply them in the real life."

It is interesting to note here that the students at this stage of their language learning realize the distinction between viewing language as facts or as applicable skills. This is very important for designing language courses at the university level. One student gave the following general advice:

- "You have to know to communicate with people in different cases."

This probably shows the awareness of language varieties where English may be used for different purposes in a variety of situations. This is also the essence of the communicative approach stressing where language is used. Students also associate the purpose of learning a foreign language with communication. They have grasped the idea of language as a tool for communication. This is shown in examples like this:

- "The purpose of learning a language is to communication."
- "Language is a communication work."
- "Learning a foreign language allow to ourself to communicate with people."
- "Languages are the main way for communication."

This is very true. Communication is at the heart of the language learning process. Students seem to have embedded the core value of language learning. This is of course a very helpful ideology to embrace by these students who are expected to "apply" English language skills once they graduate and enter the labor market. This concept has been expressed in further instances like the following:

- "The communication helps the students to learn language and applied it in the real life."
- "Applying the language and learn how to use it in context is very important."
It may be reassuring to know that these students show awareness of "application" in connection with the learning of a foreign language. Also of interest is the fact they do mention words like 'context' in their discourse. This pragmatic view of foreign language learning is quite promising as it shows a commitment by the students to put English language knowledge and skills in direct use.

**Issue Four: English as Pedagogy**

A great number of students' contributions were related to their concept of teaching and learning English. Again, the students were basically positive and somewhat mature as to how they have viewed the language learning process. They emphasized the role of active and positive environment in language learning. This is shown in the following statements:

- "Learning English need the best learning environment and facilities than any other course taught in school or universities".
- "Learning environment is also important in learning English."
- "I think a student can learn more than one foreign language if good teaching and supportive environment are provided."
- "I think the learning environment is very important to have good learning."

It is interesting to observe here that some of the students showed some deep understanding of what a learning environment entails. The following quotation is an example:

- "The learning environment includes anything physical or psychological."

The students stressed the role of the teacher in the process of learning English. One student expressed the impact of the teacher as follows:

- "The student is the mirror of the teacher."

What she meant by this was that "everything depends on the teacher." Another student phrased the concept as follows:

- "To learn foreign language we need supporting and encouraging from the teacher."
- "A student should be encouraged to give all his abilities in learning English language."
- "I think the teacher is one of the most effective factor in the learning process."

This sheds light on how important the role of motivation can be during the process of learning English. Some students viewed the learning of English as a process. This is shown in statements such as:

- "Learning a foreign language is a process that takes time."
- "Learning is a process of how to change your behavior to the best..."
- "You need to be involved in the learning process."
- "Learning a foreign language is a process of mastering a group of skill."

Also interesting is the idea of time. The students here believe that to acquire English language competency, much time is needed. Moreover, some expressions reported by the students emphasized the necessity of being 'natural' to learn this foreign language. This implies that much of foreign language teaching is artificial by definition. Consider the following example:

- "Language learning is essentially active and fun, if it is done effectively and naturally.

In addition, it seems that students are aware of the importance of 'humanizing' the language teaching process. This is implied in the repetition of the word 'fun' as a necessary requirement to learn a language. This was echoed in many other utterances such as:

- "I think learning English must be fun and useful at the same time."
- "The interest becomes an essential thing everywhere."
- "Language learning is fun if is done in a good way."
Issue Five: English as Application

Not least in the categories of students awareness was the concept of language as application. The students' responses showed a good sense of language use as an indicator of the success of the language learning process. The students were quite explicit in their views of language as use. Consider the following quotations:

- "Language needs to be applied and practice through conversations..."
- "With language, our brains need to practice and reinforce the language..."
- How can we learn a language without interaction?"
- "Learning has to be natural as possible..."
- Successful learners of the foreign language have to know all the skills of the language and apply the in order to build a strong language."
- "To learn means to practice."

In fact, some students provided some hints as to how the process of language learning may be improved. This idea was shown in the following examples:

- "We need practical ways...In order to be able to communicate with others..."
- "To learn a foreign language you have to know the best way to do that. I mean by that...In my opinion the language is a way of life so you have to know everything about the language not only the structure."
- "We need to visit the foreign language country in order to know about its culture..."
- English is a foreign language for us, which means that we need more flexible ways to help us in understanding this foreign language..."
- "Learner is not slaver to teacher and exam"
- "Students need to feel secure and know what there is some obvious reason for using English language."
- "Language is not just learning grammar and vocabulary..."
- To learn the second language successfully requires full understanding of the first language. Jordanians need to learn more Arabic."

Behind the above quotations are some useful insights. The students clearly understand the value of practice for a better acquisition of English as a foreign language. They stress the need for a communicative model in the way language is taught in Jordan. There is some clear criticism of overreaching of vocabulary and structure in their curricula. They call for more 'flexible' ways in language learning. They need to feel 'secure' and they need to know the reasons and purposes for which they do leaning tasks. Equally interesting is the call for learning of mother tongue as first language. Of course, the issue of using the first language as support for learning a foreign language remains to be controversial.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which Jordanian EFL college students show awareness of language and language learning. This came in response to calls made by previous researchers to further investigate the ways in which EFL students relate to their own language learning experience. At least in Jordan, research into language awareness does not seem to have emerged as a field of study. It is hoped that this study paves the way for more and better research insights on how Jordanian language learners perceive or reflect on the process of language learning.

This study used a qualitative approach to analyze statements and utterances made by a group of junior Jordanian college EFL students. The results brought at least five major issues that characterize the students' linguistics and pedagogical awareness. In connection to these issues, the students demonstrated, despite their relatively poor language proficiency, an impressive positive awareness as to each issue raised. It was clear throughout the report essays as well as the interviews and class discussions that these
students have grasped why they are learning English. They all stated that English was of vital importance for them and for their future careers as well as for the country. They showed that learning a foreign language is good for self-improvement of an individual. They were outspoken on this matter. It was very clear that they almost unanimously shared an appreciation and understanding of the role and importance of English as a means of communication and intercultural understanding.

Furthermore, the results indicated a deep appreciation to the value of English as culture. They linked the learning of English to the value of building cross-cultural understanding which is a dear goal to many peace-loving nations. It is clear that these students are connected to the world, perhaps because of the immersion in modern social media and means of communication widely available nowadays. It was also clear that the attitudes towards other cultures were positive as they indicated an open appetite to use English as a means to learn about other nations. Nearly all students agreed that being aware of the foreign language culture would be a suitable pre-requisite for a good mastery of communication skills.

The third issue the students have proved being aware of was English as communication. In every statement or utterance reported by the sample was some evidence on the relationship between language and communication. It is interesting to note also that the students saw the void of looking at language as structure or vocabulary. The holistic nature of language study was acknowledged by these students. The students showed awareness of the concept of context as a criterion in language use.

Moreover, the sample of the students showed a clear awareness of pedagogical principles pertaining to language learning. They stressed the importance of appropriate learning environment for language learning. They also indicated a good sense of the concept of motivation necessary for language learning. They appreciated the role of the teacher and said in many instances that learning of English should be made fun and 'natural'. The last issue of concern was English as application. The overall tone of the students' statements showed to a great extent a clear preference to 'application'. They called for conversational practice and skills-based interaction in the learning process. Some sense was shown for independent learning and also for the role of the first language. However, these issue need to be further investigated in further research.

**Conclusion & Recommendations**

In light of the findings of this study, it is possible to conclude that aspects of language and educational awareness are observable in the writings and spoken utterances of Jordanian university EFL students as exemplified by the sample of students in this study. What remains to be done is further research into further aspects of awareness among more populations of EFL students in Jordan. Further researchers can look into more specific issues such as semantic or lexical awareness as related to the communication process. Equally important would be qualitative research on awareness spoken language use in relation to communicative contexts. In terms of pedagogical implications, it is suggested here that language awareness as well as pedagogical awareness should be integrated into EFL educational curricula and university programs. Probably, educators need to consider designing language awareness instructional materials that would enhance the levels of awareness among students as well as teachers in schools and universities.

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