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The Attitudes of Jordanian University Students towards Language Planning in Jordan

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to investigate the attitudes of Jordanian university students towards language planning in Jordan. It aims at identifying the status and the use of Arabic and English in Jordan. An attitudinal questionnaire was developed and distributed to assess the attitudes towards language planning in Jordan. The sample consisted of 400 respondents, all undergraduates of English at four Jordanian universities: Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Science and Technology, Hashemite University and Al-Bayt University.

The findings of the study prove that language planning is ideologized. Arabic is associated with the religious ideology of Islam. Further, with the
increasing use of English in Jordan, English constitutes a threat to Arabic in various domains in Jordan i.e. it competes with Arabic at the level of usage.

Moreover, learning English is neither an indication of Westernization nor an indication and imitation of or assimilation to Western values. In addition, defending Arabic is not a claim of nationalism or culturalism, but in fact defending the language of Islam and its civilization. The study proves that Jordanians view English the language of the future, a language which its mastery would open wide the opportunities of education, business and trade. However, these attitudes do not negate the role of Arabic as an effective tool of daily communication, media, and education. Nor do they negate the role of Arabic as the language of the great Islamic Arabic civilization.